


BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 18-0288

INTERPRETATION

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Interpretation Date:	November 21, 2023
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2018
Subject:	Special outlet boxes for future strobe lights
Keywords:	Outlet box, future strobes
Building Code Reference(s):	3.2.4.19.(6), 3.8.2.12.(5), 3.8.5.3.(4)
Question:	<p>For Part 3 buildings that are provided with a fire alarm system, can the special outlet boxes for future strobe lights as described in Sentence 3.2.4.19.(6) be provided using the fire alarm audible device outlet box rather than a separate outlet box c/w cover plate?</p>
Interpretation:	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The purpose of the prewired special outlet boxes for future strobes is to make it simple for a person with hearing challenges to install strobe lights within their suite in the future.</p> <p>The latest electrical technology now includes combination fire alarm audible devices c/w built in strobe lights.</p> <p>It is a fairly simple exercise for a certified electrician to replace an existing fire alarm audible device with a combination speaker/strobe device. Therefore, the outlet box used for the fire alarm audible device can be used as a special outlet box as described in Sentence 3.2.4.19.(6).</p> <p>Additional prewiring is required to the fire alarm audible devices to accommodate the future strobes and should be permanently identified as "FIRE – Strobe Light Connection Only" as required by Clause 3.2.4.19.(6)(b).</p> <p>Sentence 3.2.4.19.(7) requires that adequate provision be provided in the fire alarm system to provide additional power to accommodate future strobes for at least 20% of the residential suites that are required to have special outlet boxes.</p> <p></p> <p>Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair</p>
<p>The views expressed are the consensus of the joint committee with members representing AIBC, EGBC and BOABC, which form the BC Building Code Interpretation Committee. The Building and Safety Standards Branch, Province of BC and the City of Vancouver participate in the committee's proceedings with respect to interpretations of the BC Building Code. The purpose of the committee is to encourage uniform province wide interpretation of the BC Building Code. These views should not be considered as the official interpretation of legislated requirements based on the BC Building Code, as final responsibility for an interpretation rests with the local <i>Authority Having Jurisdiction</i>. The views of the joint committee should not be construed as legal advice.</p>	

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It should be noted that the special outlet boxes must be located in accordance with Clause Sentence 3.2.4.19.(6)(c) which includes all rooms closed off from the living room by a door, including bathrooms. Since audible devices are not normally installed in bathrooms, a separate special outlet box could be installed in bathrooms in lieu of the audible device.



Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair

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