


BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 24-0012

INTERPRETATION

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Interpretation Date:	June 18, 2024
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2024, Book I: General
Subject:	Future Visible Signal Devices in Ensuite Bathrooms
Keywords:	Special Outlet Box, Visual Signal Device; Bathroom; Accessibility; Adaptability
Building Code Reference(s):	3.2.4.19.(1)(h)(i), 3.2.4.19.(4).(e), 3.2.4.19.(7)(c)
Question(s):	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Is an ensuite bathroom serving a bedroom in an adaptable dwelling unit required to be roughed in with a special outlet box for a future visible warning system?2. Is a small storage room in an adaptable dwelling unit required to be roughed in with the special outlet box for a future visible warning system?
	<p>1. Yes.</p> <p>Subclause 3.2.4.19.(1)(h)(i) waives the requirement for visible signal devices in washrooms in suites of residential occupancy, but this is superseded by Clause 3.2.4.19.(7)(c) in adaptable dwelling units which requires special outlet boxes and cover plates for future visible signal devices in locations described in Clause 3.2.4.19.(4)(e).</p> <p>Sentence 3.2.4.19.(4) provides requirements for visible signal devices to be installed in the rooms and spaces required by 3.2.4.20. and Section 3.8., for the purpose of notifying persons who may be experiencing auditory sensory impairment, such as reduced hearing or deafness, which could lead to delay in evacuation due to being incapable of hearing or distinguishing an alarm from being promptly notified of fire conditions.</p> <p>Clause 3.2.4.19.(4)(e) provides further clarification that it is required to be installed in each sleeping room or bed space, in addition to living area and hallways serving it, and various other rooms closed off from living areas, including bathrooms.</p> <p></p> <hr/> <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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The general intent of this is to provide visual information of an alarm condition, in areas likely to regularly contain occupants throughout the day.

Refer to Interpretation18-0288 for an option to use the electrical outlet boxes of fire alarm audible devices as the “special outlet box”.

2. No.

Subclause 3.2.4.19.(4)(e)(ii) requires all “rooms” that are closed off from the living area to be equipped with special outlet boxes for futures strobes, but this does not apply to “storage closets”.

Small storage rooms could be considered to be a “closet” if they are not large enough to accommodate prolonged usage.

Designers should confirm with the AHJ if the storage room is small enough to be treated as a closet.



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

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