


BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 24-0010

INTERPRETATION

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| Interpretation Date: | July 16, 2024 |
| Building Code Edition: | BC Building Code 2024 |
| Subject: | Climbable Objects and Steps near Guards |
| Keywords: | climbable, objects, steps, guards |
| Building Code Reference(s): | 3.3.1.18.(4), 9.8.8.6.(1) |
| Question: | <p>Are permanently fixed objects permitted near guards if they form a climbable element that is between 140 mm to 900 mm above the level protected by the guard?</p> |
| Interpretation: | <p>Interpretation:</p> <p>No (unless the fall is less than 4.2m).</p> <p>For Part 3 buildings, Sentence 3.3.1.18.(4) prohibits climbable elements on guards between 140 mm and 900 mm above the level protected by the guard when the fall is greater than 4.2m.</p> <p>For Part 9 buildings, Sentence 9.8.8.6.(1) has a similar requirement.</p> <p>The intent of 3.1.18.(4) is:</p> <p><i>“To limit the probability that preschool aged children will climb a guard and fall, which could lead to harm to persons”</i></p> <p>Although these two Sentences only address climbable elements which form part of the guard itself and do not regulate other permanent fixtures that are near the guard, to meet the intent of the code and for safety reason it is recommended to apply this requirement to permanently fixed objects that are near a guard (such as planters, shelving, windowsills, door thresholds).</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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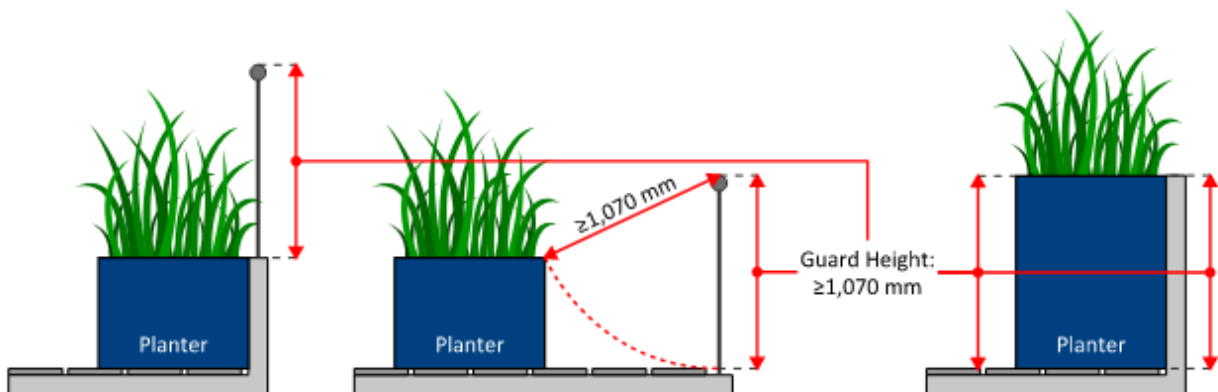
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This recommendation is supported by EGBC's professional practice guidelines "Designing Guards For Building Projects" [PP Guidelines - Designing Guards for Building Projects V.2.0 \(egbc.ca\)](#)

The Guide stated that :

"Guards should be designed to meet the requirements for non-climbable guards, as defined in the governing building code and this standard. Additionally, steps and curbs must be considered, and must not reduce the required height of the Guard. In general, the height of the Guard must not be less than the radial distance from the highest and nearest point on the step."

It is recommended that the climbable objects should be setback from the guard, or the guard height be increased so that the diagonal dimension from the top of the object to the top of the guard is a minimum 1070 mm as illustrated below.



Patrick Shek

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

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