

BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 24-0087

INTERPRETATION

Page 1 of 2

Interpretation Date: April 15, 2025

Building Code Edition: BC Building Code 2024

Subject: Sprinklers in Care Facilities for Residential Use

Keywords: Number of residents in care, sprinklers

Building Code Reference(s): 9.10.2.2.(6), 9.10.1.3.(8), 3.2.5.12.(3)(b)(ii)

Question:

An existing Part 9 single dwelling unit is being converted to a care facility for residential use in accordance with provincial legislation. The facility will have five residents in care and two 24/7 on-site staff. Can this facility be sprinklered to NFPA 13D?

Interpretation:

Yes.

Sentence 9.10.2.2.(6) permits a care facility to be classified as residential occupancy when the occupants live as a single housekeeping unit in a dwelling unit with sleeping accommodation for not more than 10 persons. If the 24/7 on-site staff is provided with sleeping accommodation, their beds would be part of the 10 sleeping accommodations permitted. In this case, there are only 7 sleeping accommodations so it can be considered as residential occupancy within a single dwelling unit.

Sentence 9.10.1.3.(8) requires sprinkler systems in Part 9 buildings to be designed to Articles 3.2.5.12. to 3.2.5.15. and 3.2.5.17.

Subclause 3.2.5.12.(3)(b)(ii) limits the residents to 5 in order to use NFPA 13 D for the sprinkler system. The 5 residents only apply to the residents in care and not the 24/7 on-site staff. However, since this is not a care occupancy Clause 3.2.5.12.(3)(b) does not apply.



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

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 *Authority Having Jurisdiction*. The views of the joint committee should not be construed as legal advice.

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Page 2 of 2

Subclause 3.2.5.12.(3)(a) permits a sprinkler system in a residential occupancy to be designed to NFPA 13D when there are not more than 2 dwelling units.

This project is a single dwelling unit, so it can be designed to NFPA 13D. This should be reviewed with the AHJ because it may be subjected to other provincial legislation related to care facilities.



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