


BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 24-0108

INTERPRETATION

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Interpretation Date:	September 16, 2025
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2024
Subject:	Exit from a second storey dwelling unit
Keywords:	Egress from Dwelling Unit, Exterior Passageway
Building Code Reference(s):	9.9.8.2.(2), 9.9.9.2.(1) 9.10.8.8.(1)
Question: 1. A 2-storey apartment building has multiple dwelling units of each storey. One of the dwelling units on the second storey has a single exterior egress door that opens onto an exterior deck that is served by a single exit stair, where the deck has no occupied space below and is more than 1.5m above adjacent ground level. Can this dwelling unit be served by a single means of egress? 2. Does the exterior deck have to be fire-rated?	
Interpretation: 1. No. Sentence 9.9.8.2.(2) permits a single exit from each storey of a 2-storey building with certain conditions, except as required by Subsection 9.9.9. Except as permitted by Sentences 9.9.9.2.(2) and 9.9.7.3.(1), Sentence 9.9.9.2.(1) requires that where an exterior egress door from the dwelling unit opens onto an exterior passageway it shall be able to go in 2 different directions to 2 separate exits unless the dwelling unit has a second and separate means of egress. The exception in Sentence 9.9.9.2.(2) only applies to dwelling units in a house with a secondary suite, so it does not apply. The exception in Sentence 9.9.7.3.(1) refers to dead end corridor less than 6m in length which also does not apply. The exterior egress door that discharges to an exterior deck is not permitted unless the dwelling unit has a second means of egress.  <hr/> Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair	
<small>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.</small>	

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2. Yes.

As per Sentence 9.10.8.8.(1) an exterior deck that is an exterior passageway which is used as a means of egress is required to have a 45 minute fire-resistance rating, or be constructed with noncombustible construction.

It may also necessary to provide exit exposure protection from the unit below for the descending stairs.



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

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