

BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing

AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 24-0123

INTERPRETATION

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Interpretation Date: July 15, 2025

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Subject: Ceiling products tested to CAN/ULC S102.2

Keywords: Ceiling, noncombustible, FSR, CAN/ULC S102.2

Building Code Reference(s): 3.1.5.12.(3), 3.1.12.1.(2)

Questions:

In a sprinklered building that is required to be noncombustible construction, can a combustible interior ceiling finish be used if it is installed in accordance with Sentence 3.1.5.12.(3) using CAN/ULC S102.2 for determining the flame-spread rating (FSR)?

Interpretation:

Yes (but use with caution).

Sentence 3.1.5.12.(3) permits the use of a combustible interior ceiling finish, other than foamed plastic, with the following conditions:

- Maximum thickness of the combustible ceiling finish is 25 mm,
- Maximum 25 FSR on the surface and on the exposed material when cut with a knife, and
- Up to 10% of the ceiling area in a fire compartment can have up to 150 FSR

Sentence 3.1.12.1.(1) states that, except as required by Sentence (2), FSR shall be determined on the basis of not less than 3 tests conducted in conformance with CAN/ULC S102.

Sentence 3.1.12.1.(2) states that flame-spread ratings shall be determined on the basis of not less than 3 tests conducted in conformance with CAN/ULC S102.2, Standard Method of Test for Surface Burning Characteristics of Flooring, Floor Coverings and Miscellaneous Materials and Assemblies”.



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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The following types of materials and assemblies can be tested to CAN/ULC S102.2:

- a) that are designed for use in a relatively horizontal position with only its top surface exposed to air (i.e. flooring materials).
- b) that cannot be tested in conformance to Sentence (1) without the use of supporting materials that is not representative of the intended installation, or
- c) that is thermoplastic

From this list, 3.1.12.1.(2)(a) clearly applies to flooring materials, but Clauses (b) and (c) could apply to wall and ceiling finishes.

A Bulletin from ULC describes the purpose and types of materials that can be tested to CAN/ULC S102.2 as follows:

Purpose:

CAN/ULC-S102.2 helps evaluate how quickly flames spread across the surface of a material and how much smoke is produced when the material is exposed to a fire.

Materials Tested:

It's specifically used for flooring, floor coverings, and other materials that may not be suitable for the ceiling-mounted test configuration of CAN/ULC-S102. This includes materials like thermoplastics, loose-fill materials, and those that melt or drip.

Although Clauses 3.1.12.1.(2)(b) & (c) do not restrict products tested to CAN/ULC S102.2 from being installed on walls or ceilings, designers should seriously consider if it is appropriate to use products that melt and drip as a ceiling material.



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