

BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 24-0124

INTERPRETATION

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Interpretation Date:	November 18, 2025
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2024
Subject:	Low Frequency Fire Alarm Audible Signal Devices In Sleeping Rooms
Keywords:	Low frequency, signal device, sleeping rooms
Building Code Reference(s):	3.2.4.18.(6), 3.2.4.20., 9.10.19.

Questions:

1. Does Sentence 3.2.4.18.(6) for the use of low frequency fire alarm audible signal devices in sleeping rooms contradict the requirements of CAN/ULC S524-19, "Installation of Fire Alarm Systems" which states that audible signal devices within a building generate similar sounds and sound patterns when activated?
2. Are smoke alarms within sleeping rooms also required to emit a low frequency signal?
3. Do sleeping rooms include bedrooms within a dwelling unit?

Interpretation:

1. Yes.

Sentence 3.2.4.18.(6) does contradict the requirements of CAN/ULC S524-19, but as stated in Sentence 1.5.1.2.(1) of Division A:

"In the case of conflict between the provisions of this Code and those of a referenced document. The provisions of this Code shall govern."

2. No.

Sentence 3.2.4.20.(2) requires that smoke alarms be design and installed in accordance with CAN/ULC-S531, "Standard for Smoke Alarms". This standard requires smoke alarms to have high frequency sound patterns. This is an anomaly which should be discussed in future code cycles.



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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3. Yes.

Sentence 3.2.4.18.(6) states that audible signal devices in sleeping rooms in a building of residential or care occupancy shall emit a low frequency signal.

A bedroom within a dwelling unit is a sleeping room in a building of residential occupancy.



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