BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing

AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

Interpretation Date:	December 16, 2025
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2024
Subject:	Fire separation of elevator control room with no elevator machinery
Keywords:	FRR, elevator, control room, machinery
Building Code Reference(s):	3.5.3.3.(1) & (2), 3.3.1.1., 3.2.7.10.

Questions:

Is an elevator control room required to have a fire separation to the adjacent floor area when the control room does not contain any elevator machinery?

1. In a low-rise building?
2. In a high building designed to Subsection 3.2.6.?

Interpretation:

1. Yes (with some exceptions).

Sentence 3.5.3.3.(1) requires a room containing elevator machinery to be separated from all other parts of the building by a fire separation with a fire-resistance rating not less than that required for the elevator hoistway.

Sentence 3.5.3.3.(2) waives the fire separation between the elevator machine room and the elevator hoistway that it serves.

If an elevator control room does not contain any elevator machinery, the requirements of Sentence 3.5.3.3.(1) do not apply, but additional requirements of CSA B44 do apply.

Sentence 2.7.1.1.1. of CSA B44–2016 requires spaces containing machines, motor controllers, sheaves, and other machinery to be separated from the remainder of the building by a fire-resistive enclosure conforming to the requirements of the building code.

So, CSA B44 requires an elevator control room that contains a motor controller to have a fire-resistive enclosure.

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

If the elevator control room does not contain a motor controller or any other elevator machinery it would not require a fire-resistive enclosure.

Designers should verify with the elevator supplier where the elevator motor controller is located.

2. Yes (except where otherwise required by the BCBC or CSA B44).

See response to Question 1 above. Note that Article 3.2.7.10. requires protection of emergency conductors in high buildings which could also impact the fire separation of elevator control rooms.

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