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Proposed Change 1915

Code Reference(s):	NBC20 Div.B 3.2.5.13.(3) (first printing)
Subject:	Automatic Sprinkler System
Title:	Standardization of Terminology in NBC Sprinkler Requirements
Description:	This proposed change is one of a series of proposed changes that standardize the terminology related to sprinklers in the NBC.
Related Proposed Change(s):	PCF 1910, PCF 1912, PCF 1916, PCF 1917, PCF 1920, PCF 1921, PCF 1922, PCF 1924, PCF 1925, PCF 1926, PCF 1927, PCF 1928, PCF 1929, PCF 1930, PCF 1931, PCF 1932, PCF 1933, PCF 1934

This change could potentially affect the following topic areas:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Division A | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Division B |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Division C | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Design and Construction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building operations | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small Buildings | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Large Buildings |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fire Protection | <input type="checkbox"/> Occupant safety in use |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Structural Requirements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building Envelope | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy Efficiency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning | <input type="checkbox"/> Plumbing |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction and Demolition Sites |

Problem

Currently, various wordings and phrases are used in the National Building Code of Canada (NBC) 2020 to describe whether or not sprinklers are mandated in the space or area in question. Inconsistent use of terminology could create confusion or misunderstanding.

This proposed change standardizes Code wording to clarify where sprinklers are mandated by the NBC by using the defined term "sprinklered" and thereby eliminates any potential confusion.

Justification

As defined in the NBC, “sprinklered (as applying to a building or part thereof) means that the building or part thereof is equipped with a system of automatic sprinklers.”

In the NBC 2020 and National Fire Code of Canada (NFC) 2020, 11 different phrases are used to indicate where sprinklers are mandated, while 8 different phrases are used to indicate where sprinklers are not mandated. In all cases, the defined term “sprinklered” could be used. Not standardizing this terminology could potentially cause confusion among architects and designers as to where sprinklers are mandated. Revising the Code wording to use the defined term “sprinklered” would introduce consistency as well as eliminate any potential confusion.

Table 1 shows the different phrases used in the NBC and NFC to indicate where sprinklers are mandated, along with their frequency.

Table 1. Existing Phrases Indicating Where Sprinklers Are Mandated in the NBC and NFC

Phrase	Code	Number of Occurrences
“... to have an automatic sprinkler system installed throughout ...”	NBC	1
“... an automatic sprinkler system shall be installed in ...”	NBC	1
“... sprinklers shall be installed in ...”	NBC	2
“... sprinklers shall be provided for ...”	NBC	1
“... sprinklers shall not be omitted in ...”	NBC	1
“... in which an automatic sprinkler system is installed ...”	NBC	1
“... in which a sprinkler system is installed ...”	NBC	2
“... in which a sprinkler system has been installed ...”	NBC	1
“... area served by the sprinkler system ...”	NBC	1
“... sprinklers are installed in ...”	NBC	1
“... shall be equipped throughout with a sprinkler system ...”	NFC	1

Table 2 shows the different phrases used in the NBC and NFC to indicate where sprinklers are not mandated, along with their frequency.

Table 2. Existing Phrases Indicating Where Sprinklers Are Not Mandated in the NBC and NFC

Phrase	Code	Number of Occurrences
“... do not require the installation of an automatic sprinkler system ...”	NBC	1
“... in which an automatic sprinkler system is not required to be installed ...”	NBC	1
“... sprinklers are not required in ...”	NBC	1

Table 2. Existing Phrases Indicating Where Sprinklers Are Not Mandated in the NBC and NFC (Continued)

Phrase	Code	Number of Occurrences
"... that is not protected by an automatic sprinkler system ..."	NBC	1
"... in which sprinklers are not installed ..."	NBC	2
"... where a sprinkler system is not installed ..."	NBC	1
"... in which an automatic sprinkler system is not installed ..."	NBC	2
"... need not be equipped throughout with a sprinkler system ..."	NFC	2

PROPOSED CHANGE

[3.2.5.13.] 3.2.5.13. Combustible Sprinkler Piping

- [1] 3)** Except as permitted by Sentence (5), *combustible* sprinkler piping shall be separated from the *sprinklered* area ~~served by the sprinkler system~~, and from any other *fire compartment*, by ceilings, walls, or soffits consisting of, as a minimum,
- [a] a) lath and plaster,
 - [b] b) gypsum board not less than 9.5 mm thick,
 - [c] c) plywood not less than 13 mm thick, or
 - [d] d) a suspended membrane ceiling with
 - [i] i) steel suspension grids, and
 - [ii] ii) lay-in panels or tiles having a mass not less than 1.7 kg/m².

Impact analysis

This proposed change clarifies Code language by using the defined term for consistency. This proposed change would facilitate interpretation of the Code requirements and eliminate potential confusion. As a result, it is expected that a consistent and appropriate level of safety would be provided without any confusion. No additional costs are expected.

Enforcement implications

This proposed change is intended to clarify the intent of the requirements, which should aid in the understanding and enforcement of the Code.

Who is affected

Authorities having jurisdiction, designers and contractors.

OBJECTIVE-BASED ANALYSIS OF NEW OR CHANGED PROVISIONS

[\[3.2.5.13.\]](#) 3.2.5.13. ([\[1\]](#) 3) [F06-OS1.2]

[\[3.2.5.13.\]](#) 3.2.5.13. ([\[1\]](#) 3) [F06-OP1.2]