STATE BUILDING CODE
TECHNICAL REVIEW BOARD

INTERPRETATIONS
of the
2003 EDITION
of the
VIRGINIA UNIFORM STATEWIDE BUILDING CODE

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PREFACE

The Virginia State Building Code Technical Review Board is a governor-appointed board within the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development. This board is responsible for hearing appeals arising under the application of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC), the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code and other regulations of the Department. As a secondary function, the Board interprets the provisions of those codes and makes recommendations to the Virginia Board of Housing and Community Development for future modification, amendment or repeal of such provisions.

Over the past years the Review Board has issued over 650 interpretations; the vast majority of which were under the earlier editions of the codes. This printing contains only those interpretations determined by the Review Board to be applicable to the 2003 edition of the USBC. The earlier interpretations are on file in the Department's records and may need to be considered in the case of an existing building constructed under an earlier edition of the code.

Code enforcement personnel may request the Review Board to reconsider older interpretations for applicability to the current code and may request new interpretations on confusing or unclear provisions. Inquiries should be directed to the Office of the Review Board, Department of Housing and Community Development, 501 North Second Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219 or may be submitted by email to "trb@dhcd.virginia.gov."

Note to users: This printing contains interpretations issued by the Review Board through April of 2006. Interpretations issued by the Review Board subsequent to this printing are distributed in the Department's *Code Connection* newsletter and are posted at the Department's website.

Section 113.8
Code Interpretation No. 7/90
First Issued: 7/19/91, 1990 Edition

QUESTION: Is the electrical service to a building (dwelling unit, etc.) required to be energized in order for an electrical inspector to perform a final inspection?

ANSWER: The building official is authorized by Sections 113.1, 113.3 and 113.4 to perform various inspections of buildings under construction to determine compliance with the provisions of the USBC. In accordance with Section 113.8, the building official is required to perform a final inspection to insure that all work conforms with the USBC. The building official has authority to require that building electrical systems, components or devices be energized as part of the final inspection.

Section 308.2
Code Interpretation No. 13/96
First Issued: 03/16/01, 1996 Edition

QUESTION: What is the meaning of the term "resident counselor(s)" as used in the referenced section and must such staff person(s) be present at the licensed facility for any specific period of time?

ANSWER: Under Section 201.4 for undefined terms, for the context in which the term "resident counselor(s)" is used and based on the most applicable dictionary definitions, the term would mean, "one who has supervisory duties serving in a regular or full-time capacity." The USBC does not require the resident counselor(s) to be present for any specified period of time.

Section 310.3 (International Residential Code Section R408.2)
Code Interpretation No. 1/2003
First Issued: 11/18/05, 2003 Edition

QUESTION: Does Exception No. 2 provide an exception to the general requirement that one ventilation opening shall be within three feet of each corner?

ANSWER: Yes, provided the openings are placed so as to provide cross-ventilation.

Sections 903.2.7 and 1018.2
Code Interpretation No. 26/90
First Issued: 11/20/92, 1990 Edition

Table 1018.2 specifies the requirements for buildings with one exit. A building of Group R-2 with four dwelling units per floor, three stories above grade and equipped throughout with a sprinkler system in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1 or 903.3.1.2 would be allowed to have one exit.

QUESTION: Does the USBC permit that same building to have one exit when it meets Exception No. 2 of Section 903.2.7, which eliminates the requirement for a sprinkler system?

ANSWER: Yes. To achieve compliance with Section 1018.2, Section 903.2.7 equates a three story building in which every two dwelling units are separated with a two hour fire barrier to that of a three story building provided with sprinklers in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1 or 903.3.1.2.

Section 2801.1 (International Mechanical Code Section 602.1)
Code Interpretation No. 20/90
First Issued: 7/17/92, 1990 Edition

QUESTION: Does Section 602.1 prohibit completely sealed (combustion chamber and combustion air) fuel-fired mechanical appliances from being located in a return-air plenum?

ANSWER: Yes. Section 602.1 prohibits the installation of fuel-fired equipment in plenums. However, technical data, research reports or other information may be submitted to the code official to substantiate the approval of a modification request for the use of a specific unit listed for that purpose.