

STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO: I-09-10

October 18, 2010

The following is being offered in response to your faxed request in which you seek a formal interpretation. These questions would apply to Sections 311, 406 and 1007 of the 2003 International Building Code portions of the 2005 State Building Code.

Question #1:

“Is a hospital parking garage that is restricted to physicians and employees only considered a public or private garage?”

Answer #1:

A hospital parking garage is an S-2 occupancy group. Sections 311.3 and 406.2 of the 2003 International Building Code portion of the 2005 State Building Code provides specific code requirements for parking garages.

Question #2:

“Since I cannot find an Occupancy Group that lists parking garages, and none of the Groups listed in this section seem to apply to a garage, am I correct in requiring that the guardrails must comply with the 4 “ sphere rule?”

Answer#2:

Opening limitations for guardrails must comply with ornamental patterns such that a 4 inch diameter sphere cannot pass through any opening for specific heights. The code permits exceptions to this requirement for areas that are not open to the public within occupancies in Group I-3, F, H or S. Section 1012.3, as amended by the 2009 Amendment, of the 2003 International Building Code portion of the 2005 State Building Code provides specific code requirements for guardrail opening limitations.

Question #3:

“We have an enclosed stairway at one end of the garage and an enclosed stairway with elevators at the other. We are considering adding louvers to the doors for ventilation. Does the fact that these stairways are enclosed make them a perceived area of refuge and therefore require closures on the vents in the event of fire?”

Answer#3:

Section 1007.0 of the 2003 International Building Code portion of the 2005 State Building Code provides guidance for accessible means of egress requirements. Section 1007.3 specifically provides what is permitted for an enclosed exit stairway to be part of an accessible means of egress. This section also provides an exemption of an area of refuge for exit stairways serving open parking garages.