

PROPOSED CHANGE TO THE 2015 ONTARIO FIRE CODE

(O. Reg. 213/07, as amended current to January 1, 2015)

CHANGE NUMBER: N/A

CODE REFERENCE: Sentence 2.4.1.1.(2) and Article 2.4.1.2, Division B

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED CHANGE:

- Revise Sentence 2.4.1.1.(2) by adding a signpost to Article 2.4.1.2.
- Revise Article 2.4.1.2. to include criteria for all buildings that allows for the placement of furniture in corridors and lobbies that are part of an access to exit, and exit through lobbies in hotels.

Add a new requirement

Making a technical change to an existing requirement

Making an editorial/administrative change to an existing requirement

EXISTING OFC PROVISIONS

Subsection 2.4.1. Combustible Materials

Accumulation of combustible materials

2.4.1.1. (1) Combustible materials shall not be accumulated in or around a **building** in such quantity or such location as to create a fire hazard.

(2) Combustible materials shall not be accumulated in any part of an elevator shaft, ventilation shaft, **means of egress, service room or service space**, unless the location, room or space is designed for those materials.

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Furniture in corridors serving guest suites

2.4.1.2. Despite Sentence 2.4.1.1.(2), corridors serving as **access to exits** for **guest suites** may contain solid wood or other **approved** furniture, provided the furniture does not create an obstruction to the egress route.

PROBLEM

As currently written, there are limitations with use of Sentence 2.4.1.1.(2) for regulating the placement of furniture in corridors and lobbies as elements of the Sentence are interpretive in nature. For example, the amount of combustible furniture that constitutes an “accumulation” is subject to varying opinions amongst owners, inspectors and consultants. Also, establishing criteria for what constitutes an appropriate “design for the area” to permit the placement of combustible furniture is lacking specificity and therefore subject to interpretation. The subjectivity inherent in Sentence 2.4.1.1.(2) as applicable to placement of furniture, results in challenges regarding consistent application and enforcement across Ontario.

PROPOSED OFC CHANGE

Note for Proposed OFC Change:

- Black indicates existing text.
- Red underline indicates new text.
- Red strikethrough indicates existing text that is being deleted.

Subsection 2.4.1. Combustible Materials

Accumulation of combustible materials

2.4.1.1. (1) Combustible materials shall not be accumulated in or around a **building** in such quantity or such location as to create a fire hazard.

(2) Except as provided in Article 2.4.1.2., combustible materials shall not be accumulated in any part of an elevator shaft, ventilation shaft, **means of egress**, **service room** or **service space**, unless the location, room or space is designed for those materials.

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Furniture in corridors serving guest suites

~~—2.4.1.2. Despite Sentence 2.4.1.1.(2), corridors serving as access to exits for guest suites may contain solid wood or other approved furniture, provided the furniture does not create an obstruction to the egress route.~~

Furniture in corridors and lobbies

2.4.1.2.(1) Furniture may be located in lobbies, **public corridors**, corridors serving sleeping rooms and corridors used by the public, that are part of an **access to exit** provided one of the following Clauses is complied with:

- (a) the furniture is constructed of solid wood or noncombustible materials,
- (b) the furniture
 - (i) complies with California Technical Bulletin 133, “Flammability Test Procedure for Seating Furniture for Use in Public Occupancies” and
 - (ii) is affixed with a label or provided with other documentation confirming its compliance with sub clause (b)(i),
- (c) the furniture, when tested to ASTM E1537, “Standard Test Method for Fire Testing of Upholstered Furniture”,
 - (i) produces a maximum rate of heat release of less than 80 kW,
 - (ii) produces a total heat release of less than 25 MJ in the first 10 minutes of the test,
 - (iii) does not produce a carbon monoxide concentration within the test room of 1000 ppm or greater for 5 minutes, and
 - (iv) is affixed with a label or provided other documentation confirming its compliance with sub clauses (c)(i), (ii) and (iii),
- (d) where furniture is located in a lobby, the lobby is separated by a **fire separation** from those portions of the corridor that provide direct access to **suites**, provided
 - (i) the **fire separation** is at least equivalent to the existing corridor **fire separation**, and

- (ii) an alternate **means of egress** is provided for the **suite** occupants so that they can evacuate the **building** without passing through the lobby,
- (e) where furniture is located in a corridor, the furniture area is separated from the **access to exit** by a **fire separation** that is at least equivalent to the existing corridor **fire separation**,
- (f) sprinklers are installed in accordance with NFPA 13 and provide coverage over and 3 m beyond the provided furniture, or
- (g) the furniture is **approved**.

(2) Openings in the **fire separations** in Clauses (1)(d) and (e) shall be provided with closures that

- (a) have a minimum 20 min. **fire-protection rating** and if openable, are equipped with self-closing and latching devices, or
- (b) if existing, may consist of
 - (i) 45 mm solid core wood doors installed in solid wood or hollow metal frames and equipped with self-closing and latching devices, or
 - (ii) glass block or wired glass screens in fixed steel frames.

(3) Where furniture in compliance with Clauses 2.4.1.2.(1)(b), (c), (d), (e) or (f) is located in corridors or lobbies referred to in Sentence (1),

- (a) a **smoke detector** connected to the fire alarm system shall be installed in the furniture area if the **building** has a fire alarm system, or
- (b) a **smoke alarm** shall be installed in the furniture area if the **building** does not have a fire alarm system.

(4) For buildings with elevators provided with an automatic recall feature upon fire alarm activation, and furniture in compliance with Clauses 2.4.1.2.(1)(b), (c), (d), (e) or (f) is located in a corridor or lobby contiguous with the elevator recall area, the elevator shall automatically recall to an alternate floor level if smoke is detected in the elevator recall area.

(5) Sentences (1) to (4) also apply to exits through lobbies permitted under Sentences 9.9.3.6.(3) and (4) in **hotels**.

RATIONALE FOR CHANGE

- The proposed change introduces various options for owners that allow for furniture placement in corridors and lobbies that form part of an access to exit, as well as exits through lobbies in hotels.
- The change is required to address concerns raised by stakeholders regarding inconsistent Fire Code application and enforcement regarding furniture placement in corridors and lobbies.

IMPACT

- Owners will be provided with clear options for the placement of furniture in corridors and lobbies in an access to exit, as well as exits through lobbies in hotels.

- Some owners may face costs to upgrade furniture or building features if they choose to place furniture in such areas.
- The prescribed options will provide improved clarity for Fire Code application and enforcement purposes.

OBJECTIVE BASED ANALYSIS OF THE CHANGE OR NEW PROVISION

N/A

FUNCTIONAL STATEMENT(S) AND LINK(S) TO OBJECTIVE(S)

2.4.1.2.(1)(a) – [F01-OS1.1,OP1.1][F02-OS1.2,OP1.2]

(b) [F02-OS1.2,OP1.2]

(c) [F02-OS1.2,OP1.2]

(d) [F03-OS1.2,OP1.2]

(e) [F03-OS1.2,OP1.2][F05-OS1.5]

(f) [F02-OS1.2,OP1.2]

(g) Note1

(2) – [F02-OS1.2,OP1.2]

(3) – [F11-OS1.5]

(4) – [F10-OS1.5,OS3.2]

(5) – Note1