

HEALTHCARE INTERPRETATIONS TASK FORCE INTERPRETATION

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Code: NFPA 101, 18.3.6.2 and 19.3.6.2.1, Exceptions 1, 2 & 3; 2000 Edition

Subject/Background: Top of the wall blocking to protect the cavity in corridor walls.

Regarding barrier construction, some healthcare facilities would like to create corridor walls with open tops (drywall on two sides, no blocking to close the cavity of the smoke partition. In sprinklered buildings some healthcare facilities would like to create corridor walls that limit the transfer of smoke with drywall on two sides below the lay in ceiling, and either a) run one side to the deck above or b) stop both sides just above the ceiling, thus creating an opening on the occupied side, with no blocking to close the cavity of the corridor wall. Both of these design features could allow the products of combustion to enter the barrier cavity, compromising the integrity of the construction.

Question 1: In a fully sprinklered new healthcare occupancy (18.3.6.2) with non-rated corridor walls is it acceptable to:

- a. Have the wall constructed of noncombustible material that limits the transfer of smoke on both sides up to the lay-in ceiling or extend only one side to the deck above?

Answer 1a: Both arrangements are permissible.

- b. Does a corridor wall constructed as mentioned in a) above need to be blocked at the top of the cavity to prevent products of combustion from entering the assembly?

Answer 1b: NO. This is not a required element.

Question 2: In a fully sprinklered existing healthcare occupancy (19.3.6.2.1, Exceptions 1, 2 & 3) with non-rated corridor walls, is it acceptable to:

- a. Have the wall constructed of noncombustible material that limits the transfer of smoke on both sides up to the lay-in ceiling or extend only one side to the deck above?

Answer 2a: Both arrangements are permissible.

- b. Does a corridor wall constructed as mentioned in a) above need to be blocked at the top of the cavity to prevent products of combustion from entering the assembly?

Answer 2b: NO. This is not a required element.

Question 3: Are penetrations such as waste lines, electrical back boxes, recessed equipment such as charting stations that enter the corridor side of the wall, required to be wrapped or blocked to prevent smoke from entering the corridor wall cavity?

Answer 3: NO. There is no requirement to wrap or block such components but they must be trimmed to limit the transfer of smoke.