



Washington State Building Code Council

Improving the built environment by promoting health, safety and welfare

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STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. 15-06

CODE: 2012 International Building Code

SECTION: IBC/WAC51-50- 0504.3 Stair enclosure pressurization increase

QUESTION: The state amendment to the IBC section 504.3 allows an additional story, or a total of five-stories of Type VA construction in Group R-2 occupancies:

504.3 Stair enclosure pressurization increase. For Group R1 and R2 occupancies in buildings of Type VA construction equipped throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1, the maximum number of stories permitted in Section 504.2 may be increased by one provided the interior exit stairways and ramps are pressurized in accordance with Section 909.20 and Section 909.11.

Table 503 limits R-2 occupancies to a maximum of three-stories for Type VA construction, with an additional increase of one-story provided the building is equipped throughout with an automatic fire sprinkler system. IBC section 510.4 states in part:

510.4 Parking beneath Group R. "...where a maximum one-story above grade plane Group S-2 parking garage...of Type I construction, with grade entrance, is provided under a building of Group R, the number of stories to be used in determining the minimum type of construction shall be measured from the floor above such parking area."

Thus a one-story above grade plane Type I, S-2 parking garage would be allowed to have a maximum of four-stories of Type VA, Group R-2 above, resulting in a total height of five stories.

Can the increase allowed in WAC 51-50-0504.3 be applied to the Special Provisions for mixed-use buildings addressed in Section 510, specifically Section 510.4 (e.g. five-stories of Type VA, Group R-2 over one-story of Type I, Group S-2)?

ANSWER : **Yes.** The intent of the stair enclosure pressurization increase is to allow an increase by one story for Group R1 and R2 occupancies in addition to other increases permitted by the IBC, but is limited to the maximum height in feet allowable.

SUPERSEDES: None

REQUESTED BY: Bothell