



RB14-038

PARTY WALLS OR SUITE SEPARATION WALLS CONTINUING INTO CRAWL SPACES

Reference: Alberta Building Code 2014 Sentence 3.1.10.3.(1), Sentence 3.2.3.4.(1), Sentence 9.10.11.1.(1) and Sentences 9.10.11.3.(1)

Sentence 3.1.10.3.(1) "A *firewall* shall extend from the ground continuously through, or adjacent to, all *storeys* of a *building* or *buildings* so separated, except that a *firewall* located above a *basement storage garage* conforming to Article 3.2.1.2. is permitted to commence at the floor assembly immediately above the *storage garage*. (See also Sentence 3.1.10.1.(3).)"

Sentence 3.2.3.4.(1) "A *party wall* shall be constructed as a *firewall*"

Sentence 9.10.11.1.(1) "Except as provided in Article 9.10.11.2., a *party wall* on a property line shall be constructed as a *firewall*."

Sentences 9.10.11.3.(1) "Where *firewalls* are used, the requirements in Part 3 shall apply."

Question:

Should the party wall acting as a firewall in an apartment building (whether it is under Part 3 or Part 9 of the Alberta Building Code) be a fire separation having a fire resistance rating within the crawl space?

Commentary | Relevant Facts | Conclusion:

Sentences 3.2.3.4.(1) and 9.10.11.1.(1) require that the party wall be constructed as a firewall. The requirements for construction of a firewall are within Subsection 3.1.10. "Firewalls". Sentence 3.1.10.1.(1) for continuity of firewalls requires it to be continuous from the ground up. The only exception involves a storage garage. Therefore a party wall constructed as a firewall must be constructed within any crawl space of the same fire resistance rating as the firewall above the crawl space. Adequate ventilating of the crawl space should also be a consideration.

Chief Building Inspector

Regulation Bulletin General Policy Statement

Unless stated otherwise, the Code references in this Regulations Bulletin are to Division B of the Alberta Building Code 2014 (ABC 2014). Regulation Bulletins do not overrule the ABC 2014 nor constitute a relaxation of the Code. They serve to clarify the Code in areas where the latter is ambiguous or does not cover a specific topic. Regulation Bulletins are City of Calgary clarifications for staff use to enable consistency in the application of the Code. Regulation Bulletins should always be read in the context of the appropriate requirements of the Code.