TECHNICAL SAFETY BC

INFORMATION BULLETIN

LUMINAIRES IN BUILDINGS OF RESIDENTIAL OCCUPANCY

Date of Issue: March 04, 2025,

NO: IB-EL 2023-02
REVISION: 02

The following bulletin provides guidance on the application of rules pertaining to the 2021 BC Electrical Code Regulation. The requirements of local municipal authorities having jurisdiction may vary. Prior to undertaking work, installers should consult with local authorities having jurisdiction to determine their requirements.

Scope:

This bulletin provides clarification on the removal of the 30-500 series of rules governing lighting requirements in residential occupancies. With adoption of the 25th edition of the CSA C22.1-2021 Canadian Electrical code as the BC Electrical code, there have been changes to section 30 that may affect how FSR's and contractors interpret the requirements for luminaries in residential buildings. This Bulletin will explain the building code requirements that must be adhered to when designing lighting layouts for residency buildings.

Although the requirements of 30-500 have been removed from the BC Electrical Code they remain in whole in the BC Building Code. Section 9.34 of the BC Building code is the same set of rules as listed in previous BC electrical codes as section 30-500, below is a list of building code requirements.

BC Building code excerpt.

9.34.2.1 Lighting of Entrances

1) An exterior lighting outlet with fixture controlled by a wall switch located within the building shall be provided at every entrance to buildings of residential occupancy.

9.34.2.2 Outlets in Dwelling Units

1) Except as provided in Sentence (2), a lighting outlet with fixture controlled by a wall switch shall be provided in kitchens, bedrooms, living rooms, utility rooms, laundry rooms, dining rooms, bathrooms, water closet rooms, vestibules and hallways in dwelling units.

2) Where a receptacle controlled by a wall switch is provided in bedrooms or living rooms, rooms, such rooms need not conform to the requirements in Sentence (1).

9.34.2.3 Stairways

1) Every stairway shall be lighted.

2) Except as provided in Sentence (3), 3-way wall switches located at the head and foot of

every stairway shall be provided to control at least one lighting outlet with fixture for stairways with 4 or more risers in dwelling units and houses with a secondary suite including their common spaces.

3) The stairway lighting for basements that do not contain finished space nor lead to an outside entrance or built-in garage and which serve not more than one dwelling unit is permitted to be controlled by a single switch located at the head of the stairs.

9.34.2.4 Basements

1) A lighting outlet with fixture shall be provided for each 30 m2 or fraction thereof of floor area in unfinished basements.

2) The lighting outlet required in Sentence (1) nearest the stairs shall be controlled by a wall switch located at the head of the stairs.

9.34.2.5 Storage rooms

1) A lighting outlet with fixture shall be provided in storage rooms.

9.34.2.6 Garages and carports

1) A lighting outlet with fixture shall be provided for an attached, built-in, or detached garage or carport.

2) Except as provided in Sentence (3), outlets required in Sentence (1) shall be controlled by a wall near the doorway.

3) Where the outlet and fixture required in Sentence (1) are ceiling mounted above an area not normally occupied by a parked car, or are wall mounted, a fixture with a built-in switch accessible to an adult of average height is permitted to be used.

4) Where a carport is lighted by a light at the entrance to a dwelling unit, additional carport lighting is not required.

Contractors and installers should be aware these requirements are no longer in the BC Electrical Code, however they are in the BC Building Code, which is enforced throughout the Province of BC by the local building authorities.

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References:

Safety Standards Act
Electrical Safety Regulation
Safety Standards General Regulation