

STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. I-41-00

June 28, 2000

The following is offered in response to your request for an official interpretation of the provisions of Section 421.10.1 of the BOCA National Building Code/1996 portion of the 1999 State Building Code.

Question 1: When a raised terrace adjoins a pool enclosure that is at a lower elevation, is the guardrail at the terrace level required to be 48 inches above the terrace level to qualify as part of the pool enclosure?

Answer 1: Yes. The height of the pool barrier is required to be at least 48 inches above finished grade measured on the side of the barrier facing away from the pool. In this situation, not only is the guardrail at the raised terrace level required to be 48 inches above the terrace level, but it must also meet all the requirements for a pool barrier as listed in sections 421.10.1 and 421.10.3.

Question 2: If the answer to question 1 is yes, is there a point at which the difference in elevation between the raised terrace and the pool area would qualify as part of the pool enclosure, regardless of the guardrail height?

Answer 2: No, since the pool area is lower than the adjoining level. The height of the pool barrier must always be measured from the finished grade on the side of the barrier that is facing away from the pool. It may, however, be appropriate for the permit applicant to seek a modification of the guardrail height when the difference in elevation between the raised area and the pool level is such that it precludes one from jumping from the raised level down to the pool level. This office researches each request for modification individually based on the specific circumstances of the request.