

STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. I-18-09

September 11, 2009

RE: I-18-09

The following is being offered in response to your letter in which you request a formal interpretation. The question applies to Section 608.16.4, of the 2003 International Plumbing Code portion of the 2005 State Building Code.

Scenario:

This issue has to do with the installation of a double check valve assembly (DCVA) verses a reduced pressure backflow preventer (RPD) and past issued Formal Interpretation No. I-38-00. Your concern is as to when such device is required when potable water is being used.

Question 1:

When a fire department pump truck supplies water thru use of hoses and the fire department connection (Siamese) is this water considered potable?

Answer 1:

Potable water, as noted in Section 202.0 of the above noted code is defined as

“Water free from impurities present in amounts sufficient to cause disease or harmful physiological effects and conforming to the bacteriological and chemical quality requirements of the Public Health Service Drinking Water Standards or the regulations of the public health authority having jurisdiction.”

Water supplied by a pump truck has potential for pollution or contamination and a degree of high hazard and due to additives, such as foam, which is used in current firefighting methods. Water supplied from a pump truck is not potable water.

Question 2:

Is a reduced pressure backflow preventer (RPD) required when a fire department could supply it's tank water through the fire department connection (Siamese)?

Answer 2:

Yes, as noted in Section 698.16.4.1 of the above noted code requires that the potable water supply be protected against backflow by a reduced pressure principal backflow preventer (RPD) whenever sprinkler systems contain chemicals or where such systems are connected to a nonpotable secondary water supply, such as a Siamese connection.

Question 3:

Is Formal Interpretation I-38-00 still enforceable?

Answer 3:

Yes. Formal Interpretation I-38-00 addressed Section 608.16.4 and 608.16.4.1 of the 1997 International Plumbing Code (IPC) portion of the 1999 State Building Code. There has been no substantive changes in the published language of this code document from these sections from 1997 IPC edition to the 2003 International Plumbing Code.