

STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. I-09-14

October 20, 2014

The following is in response to your correspondence in which you seek a formal interpretation. The question would apply to Section R302.2 of the 2009 International Residential Code portion of the 2005 State Building Code.

Question:

Does the above mentioned code section prohibit through penetrations of a common 2 hour fire separation wall that separate townhouses?

Answer:

No, according to Mr. Mike Pheifer from the International Code Council, the exception to Section R302.2, of the 2009 International Residential Code portion of the 2005 State Building Code, prohibits plumbing and mechanical equipment, ducts, and vents within the cavity of the common 2-hour fire resistance rated wall that separates townhouses and would only allow penetrations of the membrane at the common wall for required electrical outlet boxes. Mr. Pheifer explained that Section R302.4 of the above mentioned code requires penetrations at walls or floor/ceiling assemblies that are required to be rated in accordance with Section R302.2 (townhouse) or R302.3 (two family dwelling) shall be protected in accordance with Sections R302.4.1 through R302.4.2. Section R302.4.1 deals specifically with through penetrations of walls separating either townhouse or 2-family detached dwelling. If such through penetration does not meet the exception in Section R302.4.1, it would have to comply with Section R302.4.1.2 and be part of an approved penetration system tested in accordance with ASTM E814 or UL1479.