



BUILDINGS 2023-009 BULLETIN TECHNICAL

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PURPOSE: This Bulletin describes alternative compliance of emergency escape and rescue openings for group R-3 occupancies required in section 1030.1 of the 2022 NYC Building Code.

SUBJECT(S): Emergency Escape and Rescue Openings, NFPA 13 and 13R sprinkler systems

RELATED CODE SECTIONS & RESOURCES

BC 1030, BC 903, NFPA 13, 13R

I. BACKGROUND

Section 1030.1 of the 2022 NYC Building Code (BC) requires emergency escape and rescue opening as an additional point of escape and rescue access in certain residential buildings.

BC 202 definition:

Emergency Escape and Rescue Opening. An operable window, door or other similar device that provides for a means of escape and access for rescue in the event of an emergency.

BC 1030.1 in relevant parts states:

“..., provisions shall be made for emergency escape and rescue openings in Group R-2 occupancies that are subject to Table 1006.3.2, and Group R-3 occupancies. Sleeping rooms below the fourth story above grade plane and below-grade stories shall have at least one exterior emergency escape and rescue opening in accordance with this section. Where below-grade stories contain one or more sleeping rooms, emergency escape and rescue openings shall be required in each sleeping room...”

Exceptions:

1. Sleeping rooms provided with a door to a fire-resistance-rated corridor having access to two remote exits in opposite directions.
2. Emergency escape and rescue openings are not required from below-grade stories or sleeping rooms that have an exit door or exit access door that opens directly into a public way or to a yard, court or exterior exit balcony that opens to a public way.
3. Below-grade stories without habitable spaces and having not more than 200 square feet (18.6 m²) in floor area shall not be required to have emergency escape and rescue openings.”

The purpose of this bulletin is to describe the applicability of the emergency escape and rescue opening requirement for buildings in Group R-3 occupancies.

II. GROUP R-3 OCCUPANCIES WITHOUT SPRINKLER SYSTEMS

Group R-3 occupancies without automatic sprinkler systems per BC 903.2.8 must provide emergency escape and rescue openings in accordance with BC 1030.1 to allow for additional egress during a fire emergency.

III. GROUP R-3 OCCUPANCIES WITH REQUIRED SPRINKLER SYSTEMS

Group R-3 occupancies with required sprinkler systems must also provide emergency escape and rescue openings in accordance with BC 1030.1 to allow for additional egress during a fire emergency. Sprinklers are required:

- a. in accordance with BC 903.2.8 (with allowance for NFPA 13D, 13R or 13) or the Fire Code; or
- b. where the building is more than six stories in height and are required to provide automatic sprinkler systems per BC 903.3.1.1 (NFPA 13)

IV. GROUP R-3 OCCUPANCIES WITH VOLUNTARILY INSTALLED OR UPGRADED SPRINKLER SYSTEMS

Group R-3 occupancies that are not required to provide automatic sprinkler systems pursuant to the Building Code or Fire Code but are voluntarily equipped with such systems that are in compliance with BC 903.3.1.1 (NFPA 13), BC 903.3.1.2 (NFPA 13R), or BC 903.3.1.3 (NFPA 13D) are not required to provide emergency escape and rescue openings.

Group R-3 occupancies that are required to provide automatic sprinkler systems pursuant to the Building Code or Fire Code but are voluntarily upgraded with such systems to comply with BC 903.3.1.1 (NFPA 13) or BC 903.3.1.2 (NFPA 13R) are not required to provide emergency escape and rescue openings.

V. CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS

The associated sprinkler application number shall be provided on the architectural drawings where sprinkler work is not filed under the general architectural application. A professional certification statement shall be provided indicating the building is fully sprinklered with a NFPA 13 or NFPA 13R system in compliance with BC chapter 903.