BUILDING OFFICIAL INTERPRETATION 2015-03  
March 09, 2020

CODE/EDITION: VIRGINIA UNIFORM STATEWIDE BUILDING CODE/2015

SECTION(S): IBC/2015, Section 603 Combustible Material in Type I and II Construction

QUESTIONS:

1. Is combustible cabinetry, millwork and stand-alone furniture allowed in Type I and II Construction?

2. Is combustible furniture that is built-in place allowed in Type I and II Construction?

3. Is regulated electrical and plumbing work allowed to be installed inside or through cabinetry, millwork and furniture?

OVERVIEW:

Type I and Type II Construction provide the highest safety standards by requiring the use of noncombustible material in the building's construction elements. However, the Code provides twenty-five (25) exceptions that allow for use of combustible materials in Type I and II Construction. Following are the applicable definitions (www.dictionary.com):

- Cabinetry: “Cabinetwork.”
- Cabinetwork: “Fine furniture or other woodwork, as cabinets, chests, shelves, etc.”
- Furniture: “The movable articles, as tables, chairs, desks or cabinets, required for use or ornament in a house, office, or the like.”
- Millwork: “Ready-made carpentry work from a mill.”
- Partition: “An interior wall or barrier dividing a room, area of a building, enclosure, etc., into separate areas.”

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ANSWERS

1. Yes. (See attached IBC Interpretation 63-13.)

2. Yes. (See attached IBC Interpretation 63-13.)

SPECIAL NOTES:

A. Furniture (standalone or built-in place) is exempt from the Building Code in relation to application of the IBC Chapter 6 requirements. Built-in place furniture is not a building element and is not a primary or secondary structural member of the building. Therefore, built-in place furniture can be constructed of combustible framing lumber and can be secured to the floor. Additionally, the built-in place furniture is not required to be constructed with Fire Retardant Treated Wood (FRTW).

B. There are some instances in which walls or partitions are constructed adjacent to or in conjunction with built-in place furniture. This must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis; and the designer is responsible to delineate and segregate the wall or partition from the built-in place furniture. A wall must be constructed of noncombustible material. A partition is allowed to be constructed of combustible material in accordance with Section 603, Exception 11.

3. Yes.

[Signature]
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Building Official