



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONS

Public Safety Services



V. J. BELLA
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

MIKE FOSTER, JR.
GOVERNOR

INTERPRETIVE MEMORANDUM 2002 - 04

To: Licensed Architects
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Licensed Fire Alarm Contractors
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Approved: Mark Gates, *MG*
Deputy Assistant Secretary

Date: April 18, 2002

Re: Definition of Parking Garage Regarding Vehicle Quantity and Type

The Standard Building Code, Section 411.4.2, offers an exemption from mechanical ventilation in enclosed parking garages used for the storage of no more than four automobiles or trucks of one ton capacity and not exceeding 850 square feet. The intent of this exception appears to be an attempt to quantify the potential hazard/fire load for this type of facility.

Taking guidance from this section of the Standard Building Code, which is recognized in LA R.S. 40:1738 as part of the Louisiana State Uniform Construction Code, this office shall use the following criteria in determining minimum status as a parking garage.

- An storage enclosure for more than four automobiles or trucks of 1 ton maximum capacity and exceeding 850 square feet shall constitute definition as a parking garage.

Note that this part of the Standard Building Code is only being used to help determine code

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intent. Once a facility has been determined to be a parking garage, the project review shall be performed using the applicable portions of the NFPA 101 Life Safety Code, pertaining to Storage Occupancies and NFPA 88A. For example, a business occupancy with a partially attached, 1,000 sq. ft., automobile parking enclosure having full height walls is required to comply with NFPA 88A.

Parking enclosures which are not considered "parking garages" shall be reviewed as miscellaneous storage occupancies and shall be subject to "protection from hazards" occupancy requirements. The "Parking Structure" Section of NFPA 101 shall not apply to small incidental parking facilities falling below the defining thresholds set forth in this document for "parking garage" determination.

DZ/FF/JC/HCR/tm

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