



Bobby Jindal  
GOVERNOR

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONS

### Public Safety Services



H. Butch Browning  
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

## INTERPRETIVE MEMORANDUM 2011 - 01

To: Licensed Architects  
Licensed Engineers  
Licensed Sprinkler Contractors  
Felicia Cooper, Deputy State Fire Marshal Administrator  
Stephen Gogreve, Manager of Inspections  
Pat Aronstein, Manager of Inspections  
Gail Lorio, Supervisor of Health Care Inspections  
Plan Review Staff

From: Don Zeringue, Chief Architect

Date: January 24, 2011

**RE: Sprinkler Protection for Skylights and Ceiling Pockets**

The requirements for skylights and ceiling pockets in the 2007 edition of the NFPA 13 was modified in the 2010 edition of NFPA 13. In an effort to clarify the requirements for these two items, the office of State Fire Marshal will base the review of these two items on the NFPA 13, 2010 edition.

NFPA 13:8.5.7.1 2010 Edition states that sprinklers shall be permitted to be omitted from skylights not exceeding 32 square feet in area, regardless of the hazard classification, that are separated by at least 10 feet horizontally from any other unprotected skylight or unprotected ceiling pocket.

NFPA 13:8.8.7.2 2010 Edition states that sprinklers shall not be required in ceiling pockets where all of the following are met:

- (1) The total volume of the unprotected ceiling pocket does not exceed 1000 cubic feet.
- (2) The depth of the unprotected ceiling pocket does not exceed 36 inches.
- (3) The entire floor under the unprotected ceiling pocket is protected by sprinklers at the lower ceiling elevation.
- (4) The total size of all unprotected ceiling pockets in the same compartment within 10 feet of each other does not exceed 1000 cubic feet.
- (5) The unprotected ceiling pocket has noncombustible or limited combustible finishes.
- (6) Quick-response sprinklers are utilized throughout the compartment.

In response to a request for clarification of these two code section, Bob Caputo replied. "You are correct in interpreting NFPA 13, 2007 edition as allowing sprinklers to be omitted from skylights limited to 32 square feet and less in area. Your assertion that the 2010 edition of NFPA 13 separated skylight to clarify the difference between the allowable omission for skylights versus the limits imposed on the allowable omission for ceiling

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pockets is also correct. The allowable omission of sprinklers applies regardless of the skylight depth (or height) and regardless of the presence of a plastic lens.”

It is noted that NFPA 13:8.8.7.2 2010 edition has removed all references to skylight. It is also noted in the NFPA 13 2009 ROP 13-138 Log #CP29 AUT-SSI and 13-138a Log #CP406 AUT-SSI that the intent is to separate the requirements of skylights from ceiling pockets.

DZ/lrb