

## CHAPTER 8

# INTERIOR FINISHES

### SECTION BC 801 GENERAL

**801.1 Scope.** Provisions of this chapter shall govern the use of materials used as interior finishes, trim and decorative materials.

**801.1.1 Interior finishes.** These provisions shall limit the allowable flame spread and smoke development based on location and occupancy classification.

#### Exceptions:

1. Materials having a thickness less than 0.036 inch (0.91 mm) applied directly to a noncombustible or fire-retardant-treated wood substrate.
2. Exposed portions of structural members complying with the requirements for buildings of Type IV construction in Section 602.4.

**801.1.2 Applicability in flood hazard areas.** For buildings in flood hazard areas as established in Appendix G, interior finishes, trim and decorative materials below the design flood elevation shall be flood-damage-resistant materials.

**801.2 Application.** Combustible materials complying with the requirements of this chapter shall be permitted to be used as finish for walls, ceilings, floors and other interior surfaces of buildings.

**801.2.1 Windows.** Show windows in the first story of buildings shall be permitted to be of wood or of unprotected metal framing.

**801.2.2 Foam plastics.** Foam plastics shall not be used as interior finish or trim except as provided in Section 2603.7 or 2604.

### SECTION BC 802 DEFINITIONS

**802.1 General.** The following words and terms shall, for the purposes of this chapter and as used elsewhere in this code, have the meanings shown herein.

**EXPANDED VINYL WALL COVERING.** Wall covering consisting of a woven textile backing, an expanded vinyl base coat layer and a non-expanded vinyl skin coat. The expanded base coat layer is a homogeneous vinyl layer that contains a blowing agent. During processing, the blowing agent decomposes, causing this layer to expand by forming closed cells. The total thickness of the wall covering is approximately 0.055 inch to 0.070 inch (1.4 mm to 1.8 mm).

**FLAME RESISTANCE.** That property of materials or combinations of component materials that restricts the spread of flame in accordance with NFPA 701.

**FLAME SPREAD.** The propagation of flame over a surface.

**FLAME SPREAD INDEX.** The numerical value assigned to a material tested in accordance with ASTM E 84.

**INTERIOR FINISH.** Interior finish includes interior wall and ceiling finish and interior floor finish.

**INTERIOR FLOOR FINISH.** The exposed floor surfaces of buildings including coverings applied over a finished floor or stair, including risers.

**INTERIOR WALL AND CEILING FINISH.** The exposed interior surfaces of buildings including, but not limited to: fixed or movable walls and partitions; columns; ceilings; and interior wainscoting, paneling or other finish applied structurally or for decoration, acoustical correction, surface insulation, structural fire resistance or similar purposes, but not including trim.

**SMOKE-DEVELOPED INDEX.** The numerical value assigned to a material tested in accordance with ASTM E 84.

**TRIM.** Picture molds, chair rails, baseboards, handrails, door and window frames and similar decorative or protective materials used in fixed applications.

### SECTION BC 803 WALL AND CEILING FINISHES

**803.1 General.** Interior wall and ceiling finishes shall be classified in accordance with ASTM E 84. Such interior finish materials shall be grouped in the following classes in accordance with their flame spread index.

Class A: Flame spread 0-25.

Class B: Flame spread 26-75.

Class C: Flame spread 76-200.

**Exception:** Materials, other than textiles, tested in accordance with Section 803.2.

**803.1.1 Smoke developed index.** Smoke-developed index shall range from 0-450 with the following restrictions:

Exits, corridors	25
Occupancy Group I	50
Rooms in which the net floor area per occupant is 10 square feet or less	100

**Exception:** Materials, other than textiles, tested in accordance with Section 803.2.

**803.2 Interior wall or ceiling finishes other than textiles.** Interior wall or ceiling finishes, other than textiles, shall be permitted to be tested in accordance with NFPA 286. Finishes tested in accordance with NFPA 286 shall comply with Sections 803.2.1 and 803.2.2.

**803.2.1 Acceptance criteria.** During the 40 kW exposure, the interior finish shall comply with Item 1. During the 160

kW exposure, the interior finish shall comply with Item 2. During the entire test, the interior finish shall comply with Item 3.

1. During the 40 kW exposure, flames shall not spread to the ceiling.
2. During the 160 kW exposure, the interior finish shall comply with the following:
  - 2.1. Flame shall not spread to the outer extremity of the sample on any wall or ceiling.
  - 2.2. Flashover, as defined in NFPA 286, shall not occur.
3. The total smoke released throughout the NFPA 286 test shall not exceed 1,000 m<sup>2</sup>.

**803.2.2 Toxicity.** Interior wall or ceiling finishes, other than textiles, upon exposure to fire, shall not produce products of decomposition or combustion that are more toxic in point of concentration than those given off by wood or paper when decomposing or burning under comparable conditions.

**803.3 Stability.** Interior finish materials regulated by this chapter shall be applied or otherwise fastened in such a manner that such materials will not readily become detached where subjected to room temperatures of 200°F (93°C) for not less than 30 minutes.

**803.4 Application.** Where these materials are applied on walls, ceilings or structural elements required to have a fire-resistance rating or to be of noncombustible construction, they shall comply with the provisions of this section.

**803.4.1 Direct attachment and furred construction.** Where walls and ceilings are required by any provision in this code to be of fire-resistance-rated or noncombustible construction, the interior finish material shall be applied directly against such construction or to furring strips not exceeding 1.75 inches (44 mm) applied directly against such surfaces. The intervening spaces between such furring strips shall be filled with inorganic or Class A material or shall be fire blocked at a maximum of 8 feet (2438 mm) in any direction in accordance with Section 717.

**803.4.2 Set-out construction.** Where walls and ceilings are required to be of fire-resistance-rated or noncombustible construction and walls are set out or ceilings are dropped distances greater than specified in Section 803.4.1, Class A finish materials shall be used except where interior finish materials are protected on both sides by an automatic sprinkler system or attached to noncombustible backing or furring strips installed as specified in Section 803.4.1. The hangers and assembly members of such dropped ceilings that are below the main ceiling line shall be of noncombustible materials, except that in Type III and V construction, fire-retardant-treated wood shall be permitted. The construction of each set-out wall shall be of fire-resistance-rated construction as required elsewhere in this code.

**803.4.3 Heavy timber construction.** Wall and ceiling finishes of all classes as permitted in this chapter that are

installed directly against the wood decking or planking of Type IV construction or to wood furring strips applied directly to the wood decking or planking shall be fire blocked as specified in Section 803.4.1.

**803.4.4 Materials.** An interior wall or ceiling finish that is not more than 0.25 inch (6.4 mm) thick shall be applied directly against a noncombustible backing.

**Exceptions:**

1. Class A materials.
2. Materials where the qualifying tests were made with the material suspended or furred out from the noncombustible backing.

**803.5 Interior finish requirements based on occupancy group.** Interior wall and ceiling finish shall have a flame spread index not greater than that specified in Table 803.5 for the group and location designated. Interior wall and ceiling finish materials, other than textiles, tested in accordance with NFPA 286 and meeting the acceptance criteria of Sections 803.2.1 and 803.2.2, shall be permitted to be used where a Class A classification in accordance with ASTM E 84 is required.

**803.6 Textiles.** Where used as interior wall or ceiling finish materials, textiles, including materials having woven or non-woven, napped, tufted, looped or similar surface, shall comply with the requirements of this section.

**803.6.1 Textile wall coverings.** Textile wall coverings shall have a Class A flame spread index in accordance with ASTM E 84 and be protected by automatic sprinklers installed in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1 or 903.3.1.2 or the covering shall meet the criteria of Section 803.6.1.1 or 803.6.1.2 when tested in the manner intended for use in accordance with NFPA 265 using the product mounting system, including adhesive.

**803.6.1.1 Method A test protocol.** During the Method A protocol, flame shall not spread to the ceiling during the 40 kW exposure. During the 150 kW exposure, the textile wall covering shall comply with all of the following:

1. Flame shall not spread to the outer extremity of the sample on the 8-foot by 12-foot (2438 mm by 3658 mm) wall.
2. The specimen shall not burn to the outer extremity of the 2-foot-wide (610 mm) samples mounted in the corner of the room.
3. Burning droplets deemed capable of igniting textile wall coverings or that burn for 30 seconds or more shall not form.
4. Flashover, as defined in NFPA 265, shall not occur.
5. The maximum net instantaneous peak heat release rate, determined by subtracting the burner output from the maximum heat release rate, does not exceed 300 kW.

**803.6.1.2 Method B test protocol.** During the Method B protocol, flames shall not spread to the ceiling at any time during the 40 kW exposure. During the 150 kW exposure, the textile wall covering shall comply with the following:

1. Flame shall not spread to the outer extremities of the samples on the 8-foot by 12-foot (2438 mm by 3658 mm) walls.
2. Flashover, as described in NFPA 265, shall not occur.

**803.6.2 Textile ceiling finish.** Where used as a ceiling finish, carpet and similar textile materials shall have a Class A flame spread index in accordance with ASTM E 84 and be protected by automatic sprinklers.

**803.7 Expanded vinyl wall coverings.** Expanded vinyl wall coverings shall comply with the requirements for textile wall

and ceiling materials and their use shall comply with Section 803.6.

**Exception:** Expanded vinyl wall or ceiling coverings complying with Section 803.2 shall not be required to comply with Section 803.1 or 803.6.

**803.8 Insulation.** Thermal and acoustical insulation shall comply with Section 719.

**803.9 Acoustical ceiling systems.** The quality, design, fabrication and erection of metal suspension systems for acoustical tile and lay-in panel ceilings in buildings or structures shall conform with the provisions of this chapter and other applicable requirements of this code.

**803.9.1 Materials and installation.** Acoustical materials complying with the interior finish requirements of Section 803 shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer’s recommendations and applicable provisions for applying interior finish.

**TABLE 803.5  
INTERIOR WALL AND CEILING FINISH REQUIREMENTS BY OCCUPANCY\***

GROUP	SPRINKLERED <sup>l</sup>			NONSPRINKLERED		
	Vertical exits and exit passageways <sup>a, b</sup>	Exit access corridors and other exitways	Rooms and enclosed spaces <sup>c</sup>	Vertical exits and exit passageways <sup>a, b</sup>	Exit access corridors and other exitways	Rooms and enclosed spaces <sup>c</sup>
A-1 & A-2	B	B	C	A	A <sup>d</sup>	B <sup>e</sup>
A-3 <sup>f</sup> , A-4, A-5	B	B	C	A	A <sup>d</sup>	C
B, E, M, R-1	B	B	B	A	A	C
F	B	C	C	A	B	B
H	B	B	C <sup>g</sup>	A	A	B
I-1	B	C	C	A	B	B
I-2	B	B	B <sup>h, i</sup>	A	A	B
I-3	A	A <sup>j</sup>	C	A	A	B
I-4	B	B	B <sup>h, i</sup>	A	A	B
R-2	B	B	C	A	A	C
R-3	C	C	C	C	C	C
S	B	C	C	A	B	C
U	No restrictions			No restrictions		

For SI: 1 inch = 25.4 mm, 1 square foot = 0.0929 m<sup>2</sup>.

- a. Class C interior finish materials shall be permitted for wainscotting or paneling of not more than 1,000 square feet of applied surface area in the grade lobby where applied directly to a noncombustible base or over furring strips applied to a noncombustible base and fireblocked as required by Section 803.4.1.
- b. In vertical exits of buildings less than three stories in height of other than Group I-3, Class B interior finish for nonsprinklered buildings and Class C interior finish for sprinklered buildings shall be permitted.
- c. Requirements for rooms and enclosed spaces shall be based upon spaces enclosed by partitions. Where a fire-resistance rating is required for structural elements, the enclosing partitions shall extend from the floor to the ceiling. Partitions that do not comply with this shall be considered enclosing spaces and the rooms or spaces on both sides shall be considered one. In determining the applicable requirements for rooms and enclosed spaces, the specific occupancy thereof shall be the governing factor regardless of the group classification of the building or structure.
- d. Lobby areas in Group A-1, A-2 and A-3 occupancies shall not be less than Class B materials.
- e. Class C interior finish materials shall be permitted in places of assembly with an occupant load of 300 persons or less.
- f. For churches and places of worship, wood used for ornamental purposes, trusses, paneling or chancel furnishing shall be permitted.
- g. Class B material is required where the building exceeds two stories.
- h. Class C interior finish materials shall be permitted in administrative spaces.
- i. Class C interior finish materials shall be permitted in rooms with a capacity of four persons or less.
- j. Class B materials shall be permitted as wainscotting extending not more than 48 inches above the finished floor in exit access corridors.
- k. Finish materials as provided for in other sections of this code.
- l. Applies when the vertical exits, exit passageways, exit access corridors or exitways, or rooms and spaces are protected by a sprinkler system installed in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1 or 903.3.1.2.

**803.9.1.1 Suspended acoustical ceilings.** Acoustical ceilings that are to be suspended below floor or roof construction by means of a framing system shall consist of supporting hangers of minimum 1/4-inch diameter (6.4 mm) steel rods, carrying channels of minimum 1 1/2-inch deep (38 mm) cold-rolled steel weighing 0.457 pounds per linear foot (0.707 kg/m), and a supporting grid complying with Appendix R. Use of wire hangers shall not be permitted. Direct hung suspension systems shall not be permitted.

**Exception:** Acoustical ceiling systems in Group R-2 and R-3 occupancies shall be permitted to be installed in accordance with ASTM C 635 and ASTM C 636 without modifications.

**803.9.1.2 Fire-resistance-rated construction.** Acoustical ceiling systems that are part of fire-resistance-rated construction shall be installed in the same manner used in the assembly tested and shall comply with the provisions of Chapter 7.

## SECTION BC 804 INTERIOR FLOOR FINISH

**804.1 General.** Interior floor finish and floor covering materials shall comply with this section.

**804.2 Classification.** Interior floor finish and floor covering materials required by Section 804.5.1 to be of Class I or II materials shall be classified in accordance with NFPA 253. The classification referred to herein corresponds to the classifications determined by NFPA 253 as follows: Class I, 0.45 watts/cm<sup>2</sup> or greater; Class II, 0.22 watts/cm<sup>2</sup> or greater.

**804.3 Testing and identification.** Floor covering materials shall be tested by an approved agency in accordance with NFPA 253 and identified by a hang tag or other suitable method so as to identify the manufacturer or supplier and style, and shall indicate the interior floor finish or floor covering classification according to Section 804.2. Carpet-type floor coverings shall be tested as proposed for use, including underlayment. Test reports confirming the information provided in the manufacturer's product identification shall be furnished to the department upon request.

**804.4 Application.** Combustible materials installed in or on floors of buildings of Type I or II construction shall conform with the requirements of Sections 804.4.1 through 804.4.4.

**Exception:** Stages and platforms constructed in accordance with Sections 410.3 and 410.4, respectively.

**804.4.1 Subfloor construction.** Floor sleepers, bucks and nailing blocks shall not be constructed of combustible materials, unless the space between the fire-resistance-rated floor construction and the flooring is either solidly filled with approved noncombustible materials or fireblocked in accordance with Section 717, and provided that such open spaces shall not extend under or through permanent partitions or walls.

**804.4.2 Wood finish flooring.** Wood finish flooring is permitted to be attached directly to the embedded or fireblocked wood sleepers and shall be permitted where

cemented directly to the top surface of approved fire-resistance-rated construction or directly to a wood subfloor attached to sleepers as provided for in Section 804.4.1.

**804.4.3 Insulating boards.** Combustible insulating boards not more than 0.5-inch (12.7 mm) thick and covered with approved finished flooring are permitted, where attached directly to a noncombustible floor assembly or to wood subflooring attached to sleepers as provided for in Section 804.4.1.

**804.4.4 Carpet-type floor coverings.** Carpet-type floor coverings are permitted where cemented directly to the top surface of approved fire-resistance-rated construction or directly to a wood subfloor attached to sleepers as provided for in Section 804.4.1.

**804.5 Interior floor finish limitations.** In buildings and spaces classified in Occupancy Group H and in all exits and exit passageways of any occupancy group, floor finishes shall be of noncombustible materials.

**Exception:** Interior floor finish may be of combustible materials in the following spaces. Carpet-type materials must be able to withstand a minimum critical radiant flux as specified in Section 804.5.1.

1. Buildings of Type VB Construction.
2. Interior stairs in buildings of Type III, IV and V construction in Occupancy Group B, F, M or S-2, when the buildings are two stories in height or less.
3. Interior stairs in buildings of Type III, IV and V construction in Occupancy Groups R-2 and R-3 when the buildings are three stories in height or less.
4. Interior stairs in buildings of Type III, IV and V construction in Occupancy Group R-2 when occupied by three families or less.

**804.5.1 Minimum critical radiant flux.** Interior floor finishes shall not be less than Class I in Occupancy Groups I-2 and I-3 and not less than Class II in Occupancy Groups A, B, E, H, I-4, M, R-1, R-2 and S. In all other occupancy groups, the interior floor finish shall comply with the DOC FF-1 "pill test" (CPSC 16 CFR, Part 1630).

## SECTION BC 805 DECORATIONS AND TRIM

**805.1 Decorations.** All decorations shall comply with the requirements of the *New York City Fire Code*.

**805.2 Reserved.**

**805.3 Trim.** Material used as interior trim shall have minimum Class C flame spread as required by Section 803.1 and smoke-developed index as required by Section 803.1.1. Combustible trim, excluding handrails and guardrails, shall not exceed 10 percent of the aggregate wall or ceiling area in which it is located.

**805.4 Foam plastic as trim.** Foam plastic used as trim shall be permitted in Group R-3 occupancies, within individual dwelling units of Group R-1 and R-2 occupancies, and where approved in accordance with the special provisions of Section

2603.8. Foam plastics used as trim in any occupancy shall comply with the requirements of Section 2604.2.

**805.5 Pyroxylin plastic.** Imitation leather or other material consisting of or coated with a pyroxylin or similarly hazardous base shall not be used in Group A occupancies.

