



California State Fire Marshal **CODE INTERPRETATION**

Date Issued	8/14/09	Interpretation	09-042
Topic	Definition of Accessible Concealed Space		
Code Section(s)	NFPA 25, Chapter 2		
Requested by	John Robinson, Estimator American Automatic Fire Protection 2525 Q Street Rio Linda, CA 95673 916-921-9174 916-921-0108 FAX 916-997-6451 Cell		

In the form 'Inspection, Testing and Maintenance Fire Sprinkler System NFPA 25, Chapter 2 as amended by CCR, Title 19' you reference NFPA 25. Items #1.20 through 1.23 are unclear to me. Item 1.20 for example, references 5.2.3.3 which states, "Hangers and seismic braces installed in concealed spaces such as above suspended ceilings shall not require inspection." Annex A goes on to describe a couple of examples of inaccessible areas.

1. What would be an example of an accessible concealed space as referenced in the description?

NFPA 25 California Edition, Section A.5.2.1.1.4 states: Suspended ceilings are those ceilings utilizing ceiling tiles installed on a grid where the ceiling tiles can be removed. This includes ceiling tiles held in place with hold-down clips as in fire rated ceiling construction. This does not include a suspended gypsum wallboard ceiling which is not provided with an access opening.

Certain concealed spaces are required by the California Building Code to be provided with access openings. Such concealed spaces include attics, mansard spaces, under-floor spaces, under stages, under platforms or decks, and similar accessible spaces.

Accessible concealed spaces are provided with access openings for maintenance of mechanical and electrical services. Although the general

public or building occupants do not normally access these spaces, maintenance personnel and contractors do access these spaces. While servicing mechanical or electrical equipment these people may damage or create an obstruction to sprinklers. In addition, during the normal life of a building, roof insulating materials may fall and cover a sprinkler, thereby obstructing the sprinkler in terms of insulating the thermal response element of the sprinkler and in terms of obstructing the spray pattern.