



California State Fire Marshal  
**CODE INTERPRETATION**

Date Issued	May 16, 2007	Interpretation	06-074
Topic	Use of Decorative Materials		
Code Section(s)	CFC 1103.3.3		
Requested by	Andrew R. Neilson Nixon Peabody LLP Two Embarcadero Center San Francisco, CA 94111-3996 (415) 984-8200		

***We request your office's interpretation of the scope and application of California Fire Code (CFC) section 1103.3.3 (2001) with regard to polyethylene "pennant banners".***

***As we understand it, the Fire Code provides that in certain locations, including drinking and dining establishments with occupancies of 50 or more people, combustible decorative materials must be flame resistant. The Code defines "combustible decorative materials" as materials used for decorative effect, including paper and plastics, but excludes any materials .9 mm or less in thickness applied directly to a noncombustible backing. CFC 204-C.***

While the State Fire Marshal does not adopt Section 1103.3.3 of the California Fire Code, Section 3.08, Title 19 CCR does address decorative materials in every Group A, E, I, R-1 and R-6 occupancies. Section 3.08 states, " In every Group A, E, I, R-1, R-2 and R-6 Occupancies all drapes, hangings, curtains, drops, and all other decorative material, including Christmas trees, that would tend to increase the fire and panic hazard shall be made from a nonflammable material, or shall be treated and maintained in a flame-retardant condition by means of a flame-retardant solution or process approved by the State Fire Marshal, as set forth in Subchapter 8, Chapter 1, Title 19, CAC. Exits, exit lights, fire alarm sending stations, wet standpipe hose cabinets, and fire extinguisher locations shall not be concealed, in whole or in part, by any decorative material. Exceptions:

(a) Cubical curtains and individual patient room window curtains and drapes in Group I, R-2 and R-6 Occupancies.

(b) Window curtains and drapes within dwelling units of Group R, Division 1 Occupancies.

(c) Christmas trees within dwelling units of Group R, Division 1 Occupancies."

CBC Chapter 8 addresses interior finishes which are not considered decorative materials.