



California State Fire Marshal Information Bulletin

Exterior Ramps Group R-3.1

Issued: March 10, 2009

This Information Bulletin is being issued to clarify a State Fire Marshal regulation contained in California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 2 California Building Code (CBC). This Information Bulletin specifically addresses the requirements contained in CBC Section 425.8.5 *Changes in Level* relating to ramps in Group R-3.1 occupancies (Residential Care Facilities for 6 or fewer clients) and enforcement responsibilities of the local fire official.

Over the past several years the issue of mandating ramps on the exterior of Group R-3.1 occupancies has been a concern for fire and building code officials. The Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) has posted several code interpretations on this issue (00-019 & 02-025) and most recently the question arose regarding the 2007 California Building Code. During the rulemaking process to create the 2007 California Building Code, the OSFM had not revised the intent for changes in level in Group R-3.1 occupancies (Section 425.8.5), and further does not require changes in level for the exterior to be made by means of a ramp.

Re-searching back to previous editions of the CBC, the language has remained the same, and the intent remains the same; in that, it is not the responsibility of the local fire official to enforce exterior exit ramps as these code sections apply to the interior changes of level in the facility only. Enforcement of other provisions of the CBC relating to accessibility that may require exterior ramps are typically enforced by the local building official. Questions or comments regarding the application of Chapter 11A accessibility provisions should be referred to the California Department of Housing and Community Development and/or your local Building Official.

For more information please visit our website <http://osfm.fire.ca.gov>