



# **TECHNICAL BULLETIN**

## **PERMIT AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT**

B-2X

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### ***Application of Building Code Provisions To Partially Developed Areas In Residential Construction***

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The following guidelines are provided as an aid in determining the code requirements for partially developed spaces in residential construction areas such as lofts and mezzanines. Attic spaces and similar areas should be clearly identified on the drawings. The intended use of such areas should be specified on the plans, including spaces for future use.

#### **TECHNICAL DETAILS**

- I. Space not designated for use and separated by walls, floors, or ceilings from designated usable areas.
  - A. Unfinished walls.
  - B. No sheathing on top of joists except for walkways to mechanical equipment, or as required for structural purposes.
  - C. Electric lights and receptacles as required for mechanical or attic access only.
  - D. No stairs.
  - E. No plumbing fixtures.
  
- II. Space intended for occupancy or use. Specify intended use on drawing.
  - A. Storage space (non-habitable space):
    1. Code complying egress (Section 1003).
    2. No minimum ceiling height.
    3. Minimum ceiling lights and convenience outlets.
  
  - B. Habitable space
    1. Code complying egress (Section 1003).
    2. Minimum ceiling heights and room areas required (Section 310.6).
    3. Meets energy standards.

III. Space intended for possible future use.

- A. May include framing and sheathing sized for the future use.
- B. Area should not be finished and a stairway will not be required. However, a location for a future complying stairway should be shown unless access will obviously not be a problem. The space should also be able in the future to accommodate other code requirements consistent with the proposed use.
- C. If a stairway is installed the space should be considered usable and be developed accordingly.

IV. Knick-knack and plant shelves and very low ceiling height storage areas.

Areas in buildings where decorations or minor storage may exist need not be developed with egress provisions or with rigidly applied live loads. These areas require judgement in application of code provisions consistent with the proposed use of the area. Small or narrow areas which would be accessible may be reached from portable ladders and which are unlikely to be used as walking surfaces fall in this category. Also areas with very low ceiling heights could fall in this category.

**REFERENCES**

1998 California Building Code, Section 301

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