



Municipality of Anchorage



Policy A.02

Fire Protection of Supporting Structural Framing within Crawlspace

In the past, there has been some confusion with regard to the need for fire protection of supporting structural elements in rated construction within crawl spaces. There have been some differences of opinions as to whether or not fire protection was required. When the requirement has been identified after construction was underway, it has proven difficult to take corrective action. This is a clarification of the policy and follows the recommendations of the majority of code officials and ICBO body as investigated by this office. In the future, our policy will be to enforce fire protection of structural members in crawl spaces of rated construction.

Structures requiring fire protection throughout, such as for one-hour construction, shall require fire protection of the supporting structural elements within the crawl space even if called unusable space. Construction plans shall clearly require an approved form of fire protective covering or coating, such as gypsum wall board wrap or spray applied fire proofing, to be applied to protect and isolate columns, supporting beams, bearing walls, etc., that directly support main system framing and framing for upper level load bearing systems above the crawl space. Where pipe piles are used to support main framing and edge or perimeter framing that supports walls, that portion of the piles above the ground and their brackets shall be protected.

Assemblies shall meet the requirements of the Building Code and be one of the normally approved and tested assemblies. Details shall be provided on the architectural or structural drawings and will be reviewed for correctness and completeness.

Intermediate floor joists for the floor above and the flooring itself, where they do not provide immediate support to a wall or column or where they are not integrated with the crawl space support system (unless otherwise required by the Building Code) do not need to be protected.

The use of a sprinkler system, a smoke detection system, a heat detection system, or a combination thereof, in lieu of such a protective measure will not be considered an acceptable, suitable substitute under the Alternate Means and Methods provisions of the codes.

Ron Thompson, Building Official

DATE: April 17, 2006

(Ref. 00-07; 06-03)