



Municipality of Anchorage



Policy R.01

Unfinished Areas in One- and Two-Family Dwelling Units

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions, requirements and construction valuation apply:

Basement - any floor level below the first story in a building.

First story - the lowest story in a building that qualifies as a story, which is that portion of a building included between the upper surface of any floor and the upper surface of the floor above.

Finished basement – drywall has been installed.

Unfinished areas must meet the following minimums:

Exterior walls – insulation, vapor barrier.

Interior walls - bare studs. * (Note: drywall is not required under stairs if no other drywall has been installed. If any other part of the unfinished area is drywalled, then enclosed accessible areas under stairs must be drywalled and firetaped per code. The incidental installation of drywall behind equipment is permitted.)

Shear wall - plywood as required for structural; electrical wiring required if shear wall is sheathed on both sides.

Ceilings - no finishes required.

All unfinished basement areas will have construction valuation calculated at \$20 per sq. ft.

One smoke detector in basement (or unfinished area) per Building Code.

Required electrical wiring in unfinished areas:

- at least one wall switch-controlled light;
- one GFCI protected receptacle in basement;
- one 110 volt-battery back-up smoke detector;
- in general, NM cables installed parallel to framing members as per NEC Section 300-4(d) will not require physical protection other than that provided by its location;
- spare raceways, wiring, or wiring pathways must be provided from the panel location to these unfinished areas for future electrical installations.
- when installing electrical in exterior walls, it will not trigger the requirement that the entire room or area be prewired per the electrical code.

Any exposed vapor barrier must meet flame spread Class III index 76-200.

Requires a letter from the owner or contractor to end user stating the following requirements:

- that a new permit must be obtained by end user before the space is finished;
- that code-complying egress windows shall be added for any basement bedrooms as required by code;
- that additional 110V with battery backup interconnected smoke detection will be added in bedrooms and in hallway leading to bedrooms;

Future owners shall be notified of these requirements at closing, and these requirements will be noted on the certificate of occupancy.

Finished Areas: Installation of gypsum board (sheetrock) constitutes a finished area. All finished basement areas will have construction valuation calculated at \$50 per sq. ft.

* **NOTE:** Designer must verify that imposed bearing loads (axial and bending) can be resisted in both directions by unsheathed wall studs (i.e. - buckling of studs).

Ron Thompson, Building Official

Date: April 7, 2006

(Ref: 96-06, 97-03, 99-06, 99-10, 99-11, 99-12, 01-03, 01-12)