



Information for councils, certifiers and industry on the Fire Sprinkler Standard – concealed spaces

BACKGROUND

The last advisory note issued by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure about fire sprinkler systems in residential aged care facilities in NSW indicated that additional advisory information on specific aspects of the new provisions would be issued.

The new provisions include the:

- Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Fire Sprinkler Systems) Regulation 2012
- *State Environmental Planning Policy Amendment (Fire Sprinkler Systems) 2012*
- 'Fire Sprinkler Standard' (FSS) which is adopted by the above laws for the purposes of providing technical requirements for installations.

The following information responds to a number of questions received by the department about the application of the FSS to concealed spaces in buildings. The FSS defines 'concealed space' as the space between a ceiling and a roof, under floors, and between a ceiling and the floor above, in accordance with the relevant Australian Standard.

DO ALL CONCEALED SPACES REQUIRE FIRE SPRINKLER PROTECTION?

Not all concealed spaces require fire sprinkler protection. Whilst Clause 4.2 of the FSS indicates that concealed spaces are not specifically exempt from sprinkler protection requirements, the method of determining which areas require sprinkler protection is dictated by the Australian Standard to which the fire sprinkler system will be designed (i.e. either AS 2118.1, AS 2118.4 or AS 2118.6).

For example, if a sprinkler system is being designed to comply with AS 2118.4 (2012), that Australian Standard eliminates the need to provide sprinklers within certain concealed spaces. See Clause 2.2.2.

The definition of concealed space in the FSS allows the exemptions permitted by the Australian Standard to which the fire sprinkler system will be designed – so long as the relevant Australian Standard criteria for exemption are met.

The standard to which a fire sprinkler system will be designed varies according to a number of factors including the number of storeys in a building and its use (i.e. Building Code of Australia classification). It can also depend on which standard the system designer chooses (e.g. edition AS 2118.4 (1995) or AS 2118.4 (2012)).

In summary, the FSS does not require sprinkler protection of concealed spaces that are exempt by the applicable Australian Standard.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information in relation to this advisory note please call the department's fire sprinkler enquiry line (02) 8575 4068.

Important note: This document does not constitute legal advice. Users are advised to seek professional advice and refer to the relevant legislation, as necessary, before taking action in relation to any matters covered by this document.

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