



Office of Facilities Planning Newsletter Update #11 – January 2001

If you would like to have this Update sent directly to you by e-mail,
please send your e-mail address to Joe Levy at jlevy@mail.nysed.gov

Please continue to send in your comments and requests. Our purpose is to provide information, which will help all Consultants and Facilities Planning provide a quick concise review of all projects. This will help the schools get their construction projects out to bid in a timely manner.

Regulation Revisions:

The proposed revisions to sections 155.2, 155.9 and 155.22 of the Commissioner's Regulations were approved. These revisions are for the following:

155.2 - The revision to this regulation allows us to **accept one set of construction documents or addenda starting immediately**. The district is required to request a second set directly from their A/E's office when they receive approval for construction. If you were not aware of this change please begin sending only one set of drawings and specifications for document approval. Note: we are still requiring two copies of change orders.

155.9 - This regulation change involves SEQRA. It removes the requirement that we are automatically the lead agency, but does not prevent us from being the lead agency under certain circumstances. **In general, school districts will become the lead agency for their own projects** and will be responsible for the coordination of the SEQRA process. We expect to announce the school district requirements and SED role in late February. 155.22 - This is an addition to the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. It provides tax credits to school districts in lieu of interest payments through Qualified Zone Academy Bonds. The regulations are consistent with State and federal law.

A school district qualifies for the Federal QZAB program by having at least 35 percent of its district enrollment eligible for free or partial school lunch or the school district is located in an empowerment zone or enterprise community. The regulations provide for an annual determination by the Commissioner of the data- base used for allocations. The 1998-99 data- base is to be used for the initial allocation. QZAB bond holders receive tax credits in lieu of interest payments the district would normally pay on capital construction reconstruction projects. **These tax credits cannot be applied to projects that have already received bond approval.**

Application forms and the Commissioners Regulations were sent to eligible school districts in December 2000 through our office. Applications are due in facilities planning by March 31, 2001.

Manual of Planning Standards:

The Manual of Planning Standards (MPS) is no longer available in print through our office. It is available by downloading it off our web site at: <https://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplantest/ManualsGuidelines.html> (requires Adobe Acrobat PDF Reader). The latest version of the MPS is the 3/1/98 version. Please download and/or use this version. There are only a few changes from the 1996 version. They include a few stair changes and some corrections to other items, like plastics.

Fire Stopping:

In non-combustible buildings, fire stopping shall be of nonflammable material that can be shaped, fitted and permanently secured in position. Most people use gypsum, but remember fire stopping does not require a fire rating. It is a barrier to stop the heat and smoke of a fire. Combustible fire stopping materials of a two-inch nominal thickness shall be permitted in buildings of combustible framed construction.

Fire stopping is too often overlooked. There are many locations where it is required. As you use more metal studs in wall construction, more of these items will apply. In non-combustible buildings:

- Concealed spaces above a ceiling shall be fire-stopped or divided with noncombustible material into areas not exceeding 5,000 square feet, with no dimension greater than 100 feet. This should be applied to large rooms with ceilings and corridors with ceilings.
- Concealed vertical spaces in walls and partitions shall be fire-stopped at each floor level and at the ceiling of the uppermost story, so that such spaces will not be continuous for more than one story, or continue into concealed horizontal spaces in the floor or roof construction.
- Concealed space in stairs shall be fire-stopped so as not to continue at the top and bottom of the stairs into concealed space in the floor construction.
- Exterior cornices and eaves shall be fire-stopped at intervals of not more than 20 feet and at the ends of fire and party walls.

These are the most common locations requiring fire stopping. There are additional fire stopping locations and different requirements for combustible construction. See building code section 771.5(c) for additional locations.

Accessibility for the Physically Impaired:

Recently our office met with representatives of the Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association (EPVA). We discussed new accessibility requirements within the International Building Code, anticipated changes to the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines, and current issues and interpretations. Here are the conclusions we reached as a result of the meeting.

- On accessibility to risers in band and choral rooms and library reading areas: One playing level must be accessible. This may be achieved in a protected area at the top or at the bottom of a tiered area.
- On sinks in program areas: If there is at least one sink in a program area then there must be at least one accessible sink in the program area.
- On recessed doors: Doors recessed into thick masonry partitions are only considered accessible if they are recessed less than eight inches.
- On storage rooms: Storage rooms must be accessible.
- On auditorium viewing positions: In auditoriums where floors slope too steeply to integrate accessible viewing positions, viewing positions and companion seating may be provided at both the front and rear of the auditorium.
- On accessible parking provided off a one-way traffic pattern on the diagonal: There must be an unloading aisle on both sides of the vehicle and the appropriate signage must be provided for the spaces and the aisles.

We are happy to hear from you. If you have a subject you would like addressed, feedback on the material you read, input or general comments please send them to Joe Levy at jlevy@mail.nysed.gov.

We plan to address subject matter as discussed at our March 29, 2000 Workshop, common errors holding up reviews, solutions to repeat problems and any subject which will help the schools and consultants quickly and efficiently receive their project approvals.