

CODE APPLICATION NOTICE

Subject: Nurses' Stations

CAN NO. 2-407.2.2

EFFECTIVE: 04/21/09

CODE SECTIONS

Sections 407.2.2, 1224.14.2.1, 1225.4.9 and 1227.12.7
2007 California Building Code (CBC)

For reference only (enforced by Office of the State Fire Marshall)
Section 3.11(b)
Title 19, California Code of Regulations (C.C.R.)

2007 California Building Code

407.2.2 Nurses' stations. Space for doctors' and nurses' charting, communications and related clerical areas shall be permitted to be open to the corridor, when such spaces are constructed as required for corridors *and the smoke compartment is provided with an automatic fire sprinkler system throughout complying with Section 903.3.1.1. A minimum of one smoke detector interconnected to the facility fire alarm system shall be installed directly above the nurses' station.*

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1224.14 NURSING SERVICE SPACE.

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1224.14.2 Service Areas.

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1224.14.2.1 Administrative center(s) or nurse station(s). *This area shall have space for counters and storage and shall have convenient access to handwashing fixtures. It may be combined with or include centers for reception, charting and communication.*

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1225.4 NURSING SERVICE SPACE.

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1225.4.9 Nurses' station. *A nurses' station in free-standing skilled nursing and intermediate-care facilities shall be provided within each nursing unit. Nurses' stations shall be designed to serve no more than 60 beds.*

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1227.12 NURSING SERVICE SPACE.

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1227.12.7 Nurses' station. *A nurses' station shall be provided within each nursing unit.*

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Title 19, California Code of Regulations

Section 3.11. Exits, Aisles, Ramps, Corridors and Passageways.

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(b) No person shall install, place or permit the installation or placement of any combustible material or equipment in or exposed to any exit. Exceptions:

(1) Furniture or equipment constructed of wood or other material of similar combustibility may be permitted in an exit or exposed to an exit when approved by the enforcing agency

(2) When approved by the enforcing agency, combustible materials may be permitted in exit foyers and lobbies.

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this Code Application Notice is to clarify and coordinate the fire and life safety requirements for nurses' stations, doctors' and nurses' charting areas, administrative areas, communications stations and related clerical areas.

BACKGROUND

Sections 402.2.2, 1224.14.2.1, 1225.4.9 and 1227.12.7 of the 2007 CBC conflict with Section 3.11(b), Title 19, C.C.R. Although Sections 1224.14.2.1, 1225.4.9 and 1227.12.7 require nurses' stations in health facilities and Section 402.2.2 allows the nurses' stations to be open to the corridor, Section 3.11(b) prohibits the installation or placement of any combustible material or equipment in or exposed to any exit. This conflict has resulted in inconsistent designs and inconsistent code enforcement.

INTERPRETATION

The following items and equipment required for treatment and health care may be located in nurses' stations, doctors' and nurses' charting areas, administrative areas, communications stations and related clerical areas that open directly onto a fire-resistive exit access corridor:

- A. File cabinets and wall-mounted cabinets for records and/or medication use and storage in quantities necessary for the function of the station.
- B. A maximum of two (2) under-counter refrigerators or one (1) upright refrigerator limited to the storage of patient medications or patient foods.
- C. Information technology, patient monitors and patient or emergency communication systems necessary for the function of the nurses' station. This includes desktop printers, facsimile machines and personal "all-in-one" printer/copier/scanner/fax combination machines.

Note: Monitoring of security cameras is not generally considered a function of the nurses' station and as such is not permitted in a nurses' station unless it can be demonstrated that it is essential to patient care (for example, psychiatric nursing unit, newborn intensive care unit, pediatric unit, prenatal unit, etc.). It is not the intent to allow the nurses' station to function as a security station or a location for the monitoring of consoles or switchboards for the operation of Centrex, PBX, or similar systems. Alarm panels such as Medical Gas and Generator Remote Alarms are permitted at Nurse Stations.

- D. Mobile or fixed medication dispensing units classified as unit dose machines. If located outside nurses' stations, the unit shall be in a recessed alcove.
- E. Chairs in a quantity sufficient to accommodate the needs of the nurses' stations. Upholstered chairs shall meet the fire-retardant criteria of the Bureau of Home Furnishings and Thermal Insulation, Technical Bulletin 117 - Requirements, Test Procedures and Apparatus for Testing the Flame Retardance of Resilient Filling Materials Used in Upholstered Furniture. When a Group I building is not protected by an automatic sprinkler system, upholstered chairs shall meet the fire-retardant criteria of the Bureau of Home Furnishings and Thermal Insulation, Technical Bulletin 133 - Flammability Test Procedure for Seating Furniture for Use in Public Occupancies.
- F. Trash containers constructed of noncombustible materials or a fire-retardant type listed by an Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) approved testing laboratory.
- G. A minimum of one (1) 2A:10BC fire extinguisher shall be provided at all nurses' stations in an unobstructed and readily accessible location.

Refrigerated vending machines, commercial copy machines, automatic teller machines, ice making machines, coffee makers, toasters, toaster/ovens, microwave ovens, portable heaters, and similar equipment shall not be permitted in nurses' stations, nor shall they be located in or exposed to fire-resistive exit access corridor systems.

Nurses' stations, doctors' and nurses' charting areas, administrative areas, communications stations, and related clerical areas located in suites that meet the requirements of Section 1014.2.2 of the 2007 CBC are not considered open to a fire-resistive exit access corridor system and are not subject to this CAN.

Nurses' stations, doctors' and nurses' charting areas, administrative areas, communications stations, and related clerical areas shall be protected by an automatic sprinkler system located directly above the station or area. In existing buildings without an automatic sprinkler system, the automatic sprinkler system shall be permitted to connect to the domestic water system.

A minimum of one (1) smoke detector interconnected to the facility fire alarm system shall be installed directly above all new and altered nurses' stations, doctors' and nurses' charting areas, administrative areas, communications stations, and related clerical areas.

<u>Original Signed</u>	<u>4/21/09</u>
Paul Coleman	Date