

# COCO NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION

Laurel W. Wright, Chief, Accessibility Code Section  
Submitted June 15, 2002

## ACCESSIBILITY UPDATES

**NOTE:** Starting the beginning of August, the information in this column will be posted to the internet on a monthly basis. Go to the DOI website at <http://www.ncdoi.com>. Scroll down to, then click on [State Building Code](#). This will bring up a page with **Engineering and Codes** selected on the first pull-down menu. On the second pull-down menu, select **NC Building Code Council**; then select **Accessibility Update** on the third pull-down menu. This will allow designers and contractors to access the information as well as inspectors, and to allow for more frequent updates. If you wish to see a particular topic addressed here, please let me know either by e-mail at [lwright@ncdoi.net](mailto:lwright@ncdoi.net) or by phone at 919-733-3901 Extension 247.

The following **hot topics** have been the subject of interpretations recently:

**§6.3.2.5 ARA 2-Way Communication.** The required two-way voice communication system installed in a building without a fire alarm shall have the capability to dial 911. The Area of Rescue Assistance is supposed to provide an area of relative safety only for the period of time it takes the fire department to respond to the scene and rescue someone. If there is no fire alarm system in the building to alert the fire department, a **911-dialer** is the only other option. Emergency power for the system is also required. Battery back-up is acceptable.

**§7.9.2 Swimming Pool Gate Latch Heights.** The DENR requirements concerning swimming pool gate latches put the gate latch at 54" to minimize the potential for unattended children gaining access to the pool. Although the Accessibility Code's mounting height for operating hardware is typically between 30 and 48 inches, the following may be accepted as an **alternate method** for swimming pool gate latches: provide a side approach allowing the gate latch to be at **54 inches** (not 48" inches as indicated in the pre-typo version of this column). The side approach requires that: 1) a 30" x 48" wheelchair space be centered on the latch; 2) a 60" turning area be located adjacent to the gate to allow maneuvering into the side approach; 3) a level landing is required at the gate (no more than 1/4" per foot cross-slope); and 4) the areas in question shall be a fixed, firm and non-slip surface. This is required for both sides of the gate.

**§10.3.1 Protruding Wall-Mounted Fire Extinguishers.** Most fire extinguishers are more than 4 inches wide. When hung directly on the wall where the lower edge is located more than 27 inches above the floor, the extinguisher is permitted to protrude no more than 4 inches from the wall. Extinguishers that protrude more than 4 inches shall either be recessed into the wall or provided with a wing wall that extends to within 27 inches of the floor. The provision and location of fire extinguishers is often not considered until after the building is constructed, when it becomes more expensive to have to recess cabinets in a wall. Cost-effective construction means planning for these in advance.

**§11.6.1(4) Flush Valve and Grab Bar.** In a toilet room, where a flush valve is located at a height where it conflicts with the rear grab bar (either in a children's environment or an adult situation), the rear grab bar may be split or as shown in the illustration on **page 398**.

**§11.8.2.1 Individual Toilet Rooms.** The **page 187** and **188** minimum clear internal dimensions for individual toilet rooms are minimums only for toilet rooms with the exact layouts shown. An individual toilet room may be of any internal dimension provided that the room is of a size to accommodate the required clear floor spaces at each fixture as well as an internal clear floor area complying with **11.3.1**. The clear floor areas may overlap.

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Page 2

**§15.11.1 Lifts.** The NC Department of Labor is now accepting the use of **incline platform lifts**, but only where the lift complies with ANSI A18.1 with the 2000 Addendum. For more information, please contact the NC Department of Labor. An incline lift shall not obstruct the minimum required exit width of the stairs when in the down position.

*Please call or e-mail any interpretation requests, with name, jurisdiction and phone number, to Laurel W. Wright, Accessibility Section at: by e-mail at [lwright@ncdoi.net](mailto:lwright@ncdoi.net) or by phone at 919-733-3901 Extension 247.*