

By Laurel W. Wright, Chief Accessibility Code Consultant, NC Dept of Ins/OSFM (919) 661-5880 Ext 247 Laurel.Wright@ncdoi.gov

NC ACCESSIBILITY CODE

2009 NC Bldg Code Ch. 11

2003 ICC/ANSI A117.1

Effective date: 1 Jan 2010

2010 ADA STANDARDS:

- Published in Federal Register 9/15/10
- Effective 3/15/11
- Mandatory 3/15/12
- Copy available: www.ada.gov

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NCBC 1007.2 Bldg Exits on LED

2004 NC Accessibility Code Section 6.3.1

stated it very clearly: *On the level of exit discharge, all means of egress provided shall be accessible.*

It does not seem so clear in the **2009 NC Building Code** because the egress options consist of a list of the following 8 items:

1. Accessible route per 1104
2. Stairways per 1007.3 and 1020.
3. Exterior stairways per 1007.3 and 1023.
4. Elevators per 1007.4
5. Platform lifts per 1007.5.
6. Horizontal exits per 1022.
7. Ramps per 1010.
8. Areas of refuge per 1007.6.

This is an easy section to overlook since it is at the bottom of page 201 and labeled **Continuity and components**. Why would that

look important? But if you think about coming out onto grade level, there are really only two options that may be really workable: #1 (accessible route) and #7 (ramps).

Both (#1 and #7) coordinate with the **ANSI A117.1 303.3** provision that also requires any changes in level of more than ¼" in height and not more than ½" to be ramped and to comply with **ANSI 405** (ramps).

You can put in stairs, but then an exterior rescue assistance area is required at the stair. From that point to the public way, an accessible route per **1104**, including any required ramps per **1010** shall also be provided. Stairs could be an option, coupled with a companion ramp.

NCBC 1105.1 Building Entrances

The 2009 NCBC section addressing entrances is **NCBC 1105.1**. In the 2004 NCAC, since the requirements for access and egress were in the same chapter and **NCAC 6.2.1** required that the number of accessible entrances be equal to the number of required exits, there was a thought that the two were tied together. They really were separate requirements, something that is more apparent now that the egress requirements are in Ch. 10 and the access requirements are in Ch. 11.

NCBC 1105.1 addresses all building entrances. It is relatively simply. 60% of building entrances are required to be accessible.

IF YOU HAVE X ENTRANCES	# ACCESSIBLE ENTRANCES REQUIRED
1	1
2	2
3	2
4	3
5	3

Typically, the way you go in is the way you come out.

The above number is in addition to any other specific building entrances that may exist.

For example:

1. Parking garages
2. Restricted entrances
3. Inmate entrances
4. Service entrances
5. Tenant spaces
6. Dwelling units/sleeping units

There are some exceptions to **NCBC 1105.1** **Exc. 1** exempts loading and service entrances that are not the only entrance to a tenant space. Yet, if a service entrance is the only entrance to the tenant space, it is required to be accessible per **NCBC 1105.1.5**.



A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new.

Albert Einstein

NCBC 1108.2.2 Bleacher Exits

Over the years, the excitement about bleachers has been directed at press boxes. It is so easy to forget the basic premise that exits from a bleacher follow the same egress system as from a building: *all the exits from a bleacher shall be accessible.* This means a few things:

1. Use ramps for all the exits from the front down to the field.
2. Maintain separation between all four exits.
3. If you have accessible (handicapped) seating

at the upper levels of the bleachers and either

- a. do not have a ramp or
- b. only have a single ramp,

provide an area of rescue assistance at the inaccessible exit.

4. Egress down from the accessible seating area at the top via the bleacher stairs to the ramp at the front of the bleacher is not considered a separate exit if the end result is to move exit discharge

patterns closer together. Typically, exits should maintain minimum 30' between different discharge points so a single event will not take out two exits.



Access Path of Travel to Mezzanines



Is an accessible path of travel required to NCBC 505 mezzanine? Assuming that the building is private, single story, with the mezzanine, then the **NCBC 1104.4.8** provisions will apply and no elevator is required.

This means that if you have one of the following occupancies:

1. Storage, or
2. industrial

there is no requirement for an accessible path of travel to the mezzanine.

However, please remember that an accessible egress path from the mezzanine is required per **NCBC 1007.3**, unless the building is fully sprinklered [**NCBC 1007.3 Exc.3**], and that everything on the mezzanine is required to be fully accessible, including any restroom facilities.

If what you have is a mezzanine that is a true industrial-related space that is frequented only by personnel for maintenance, repair or monitoring of equipment,

then the **NCBC 1103.2.9** provision states that it is not required to be accessible. This section covers, but is not limited to, such places as:

- Elevator pits,
- Elevator penthouses,
- Mech/elec/comm. Equipment rooms,
- Piping or equipment catwalks,
- Water or sewage treatment pump rooms,
- Electric substations + transformer vaults and similar places

If access is not required, then accessible egress is not required per **NCBC 1007.3**

US Access Board Video Series



The US Access Board has an excellent video series in accessible sidewalks that is well worth watching. There are four different videos, and each one runs about ten minutes, giving you good examples of how to design a sidewalk and

what the issues may be if the sidewalk is or isn't designed a certain way. This takes "a picture is worth a thousand words" a step further. This is definitely something to check out.

The series covers:

Pedestrians who

- Use wheelchairs
- Have ambulatory impairments
- Have low vision
- Who are Blind

It is located at:

<http://www.access-board.gov/provac/video/index.htm#>

NCBC 1105.9.2 Drinking Fountains vs. Water Coolers

The **NC Plumbing Code 410.1** permits bottled water dispensers to be substituted for not more than 50% of the drinking fountains in a project. Many designers do not realize that **NC Building Code Section 1105** also addresses drinking fountains as well. Currently there is a disconnect between these two codes.

NCBC 1105.1 requires no fewer than two drinking fountains: one for persons using a wheelchair and one for standing persons. Even when more than the minimum number of drinking fountains is provided, **NCBC 1109.5.2** requires that 50% of the number of fountains provided be for persons in a wheelchair and 50% provided be for standing persons. There are no other options or exceptions, i.e., no room for providing the water coolers or dispensers, thus the disconnect.

As side information, water coolers typically were never acceptable from an accessibility point of view because 1) they were only available as long as the cups were available, 2) not everyone may have been able to hold a cup, and 3) once the water cooler service is discontinued; there is no 'drinking fountain' available any more.

This discrepancy between the two codes will be corrected in the **2012 NC Plumbing Code**.



**Non-drinking
fountains
are
not permitted.**



Bank Counters



Recently there have been multiple questions concerning bank counters and the concern for security. Here is the latest Q + A on the topic.

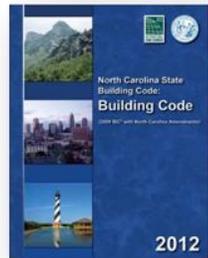
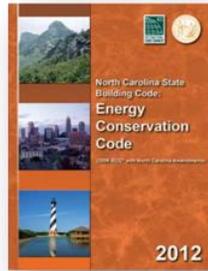
Q: My question is on Sales and Service Counters, specifically in a bank. **904.3.1** in **A117.1** states the counter height for the accessible portion shall be 36 inches max. It goes on to say in the commentary, that the intent is to have an accessible portion the full depth of the counter; a lower shelf is not adequate.

I have a bank that wants to do the lower shelf for security reasons. I know we can't enforce the commentary, so I was wondering what your interpretation on the subject was.

A: While the commentary language is accurate, the explanation to the bank supporting **ANSI 904.3.1** would be framed this way:

1. The lower portion of the counter is so that the customer can see the transaction taking place:
 - a. Passing money back and forth.
 - b. Signing documents.
 - c. Producing similar transactions.
2. In order to maintain the security that the bank is concerned about, a see-through window (think 'movie theater sales office') can be provided across the opening.
 - a. The see-through window shall be located to allow sufficient space for the customer to sign documents.
 - b. There shall a pass-through window of sufficient size to allow for document transfer.

The 2012 Resid + Energy Codes



2012 Resid + Energy Codes

All of the Building Code Council items on the Rules Review Committee agenda were approved in the latest meeting. **Senate Bill 708** was ratified by the legislature to make the **2012 NC Energy Conservation** and **2012 Residential Codes** effective 1/1/2012 along with 8-offset items (below) that were on the Rules Review Committee agenda for the Residential Code.

2012 NC Fire Code – App. 101.2.1;

2012 NC Residential Code

- Egress Door **R311.2**;
- Minimum Width of Footings **Table. R403.1**;
- Concrete Masonry Foundation Details **Fig. R 403.3(1)**;
- Foundation Vent Sizing **R408.1.1**;
- Ground Vapor Retarder **R408.2**;
- Framing Details **R802.3**;
- Attic Access **R807.1**.

NCBC App. E107.2 Signs

The requirement for signage for room signs is located in **NCBC Appendix**

E. So whenever you have a room number for a room that will not change over time, look at **NCBC App. E 107.2**. This section will also remind you that Grade 2 Braille is required.

What rooms are these likely to be? These will be rooms not likely to change over time. Along with some of the examples given in the ICC Commentary, these will

include any location wherever there are room numbers being provided:

1. Hospitals
2. Hotels
3. Conference centers
4. Apartments
5. Dwelling units
6. Offices
7. Restrooms

There is a difference in size between the sign at the strike jamb side of the door and on the building. Check **ANSI Table 703.2.4** for that. The above is a sample list.



ANSI 604.5.1 Vertical Side Wall Grab Bars Exc. 1+2

On page 5 of the last news letter, there was an article concerning the fact that **2010 ADA Standards** had discontinued the requirement for the vertical sidewall grab bar that is required in both the **2003** and the **2009 ANSI 604.5.1**.

The 2011 Vol. 2, Issue 2 Newsletter stated that: "Until the 2009 ANSI Standards (referenced in the 2012 NCBC) have been revised) or someone submits a code change to the NC Building Code Council that is approved; NC will continue to enforce the ANSI604.5.1 vertical side wall grab bar."

There has been some misunderstanding that the last newsletter article on this subject meant that a vertical grab bar was required in all locations and that the exceptions under **ANSI 604.5.1** were no longer valid. This was an incorrect assumption.

The provisions of ANSI 604.5.1, *including* the exceptions, which apply to Type A and Type B dwelling units, remain in effect and will continue to be applicable. When something is stated to remain in effect, that means all requirements, all exceptions, unless specifically noted. Please call with any questions!