

STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. I-02-00

January 19, 2000

The following is offered in response to your letter requesting a formal interpretation regarding the provisions of Section 1301.1 of the BOCA National Building Code/1996 portion of the 1999 State Building Code, the Model Energy Code and ASHRAE 90.1 as they would apply to a research laboratory and the animal holding facilities associated with the laboratory.

Question: “Is it the intention of MEC Section 101.4 and Codification of ASHRAE 90.1 Section 101 Exception (1) to exempt process (laboratory) and special support spaces from the requirements of Section 1301.1 of the Connecticut Building Code?”

Answer: Section 1301.1 of the BOCA National Building Code/1996 portion of the 1999 State Building Code provides a path from the BOCA document to the 1995 CABO Model Energy Code (MEC). Section 101.4 of the MEC directs the code user (through Chapter 7 of the MEC) to the Codification of ASHRAE 90.1 for energy compliance requirements for buildings other than low-rise residential buildings. Section 101.4 of the MEC also provides scoping information for energy compliance requirements for, among others, “portions of factory and industrial occupancies designed primarily for human occupancy.” Section 101 of the ASHRAE 90.1 includes exception (1) which exempts “Buildings or portions thereof intended primarily for manufacturing or commercial or industrial processing.”

The laboratory portion of the building your inquiry is based upon is designed primarily for human occupancy by virtue of the fact that it is utilized by scientists during normal working hours. The laboratory would therefore not be exempt from the requirements of ASHRAE 90.1. It is possible, however, that the unique nature of the laboratory and the concurrent special ventilation requirements might be sufficient basis for the approval of a modification of certain requirements of the code.

The animal holding facility differs in that this portion of the building is not designed primarily for human occupancy. As described, there are humans in the holding facility from time to time to retrieve the animals and to care for them, but otherwise, the facility is designed primarily for animal occupancy, not for human occupancy. As such, that portion of the facility is exempt from the requirements of Section 101.4 of the MEC, and therefore also exempt from Section 101 of the Codification of ASHRAE 90.1 and Section 1301.1 of the BOCA National Building Code/1996 portion of the 1999 State Building Code.