

STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. I-17-09

July 7, 2010

The following is offered in response to your email in which you seek a formal interpretation.

Scenario:

Section 3.3.14, of the 2002 Edition of NFPA 13, defines limited-combustible material as a building construction material that does not comply with the definition of noncombustible material that, in the form in which it is used, has a potential heat value not exceeding 3500 BTU per lb (8141 kJ/kg) (see NFPA 259, Standard Test Method for Potential Heat of Building Materials) and that complies with either of the following (a) or (b). Materials subject to increase in combustibility or flame spread rating beyond the limits herein established through the effects of age, moisture or other atmospheric condition shall be considered combustible. (a) Materials having a structural base of noncombustible material, with a surfacing not exceeding a thickness of in. (3.2 mm) that has a flame spread rating not greater than 50. (b) Materials, in the form and thickness used, other than as described in (a) having neither a flame spread rating greater than 25 nor evidence of continued progressive combustion and of such composition that surfaces that would be exposed by cutting through the material on any plane would have neither a flame spread rating greater than 25 nor evidence of continued progressive combustion.

Question:

Your question concerns whether Trex Escapes decking material is considered to be a limited combustible material as defined in NFPA 13 2002 Edition.

Answer:

The submitted documentation does provide evidence as meeting the requirement for the decking in the form in which it is used and it has a potential heat value not exceeding 3500 BTU per lb in accordance with NFPA 259 Standard Test Method for Potential Heat of Building material. Therefore, based on the information submitted Trex Escapes decking material would not be considered a limited combustible material as defined within the above NFPA standard.