

## STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. I-65-00

October 17, 2000

The following is offered in response to your letter to me dated October 6, 2000 in which you request a formal interpretation of section 700-12 (b) (3) of the 1999 National Electrical Code portion of the 1999 State Building Code.

**Question:** What constitutes a low probability for simultaneous failure of both public natural gas and public electricity systems as it pertains to the exception to section 700-12 (b) (3) of the 1999 National Electrical Code portion of the 1999 State Building Code?

**Answer:** The code section you cite prohibits the sole use of a public utility gas system to supply fuel for the prime mover of a required emergency system generator with the exception that the Authority Having Jurisdiction may accept other than on-site fuels where there is a low probability of a simultaneous failure of both the off-site fuel delivery system and the power from the outside electrical utility company. The code is saying that off-site fuel supplies may only be utilized when experience has shown that they are reliable during times when the electrical supply to the building may be interrupted. Sufficient proof, documented by historical data, would have to be submitted for the local building official's approval showing the anticipated frequency of simultaneous failure of both the electrical and natural gas distribution systems. Since "low probability" is a term that cannot be empirically determined, each installation would have to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.