This policy is promulgated in accordance with Section 104.1 of the 2018 International Fire Code and is an official interpretation of Section 8.15.7 of the 2016 edition of NFPA 13 and Section 903.3.1.2.1 of the 2018 International Fire Code.

The following shall apply to sprinkler coverage underneath exterior projections:

Section 8.15.7 of the 2016 edition of NFPA 13 allows for the omission of sprinklers under non-combustible or limited combustible, but requires sprinklers to be present if combustible materials are stored or handled. The following is the Des Moines Fire Prevention Bureau’s policy on when sprinklers shall be provided underneath exterior roofs, canopies, and porte-cochères as well as exterior balconies, decks, and ground floor patios:

1.) It shall be assumed that combustibles storage below the overhang is inevitable thus sprinkler protection is required, unless all of the following criteria are met:
   a. Overhang and the exterior wall below are constructed in accordance with the criteria in NFPA 13:8.15.7.2 or 8.15.7.3
   b. The overhang is located in such a way that storage is unlikely examples of overhangs are: public sidewalk below or public entrance to a building.

2.) Sprinklers SHALL be required for ALL exterior balconies, decks, and ground floor patios of dwelling units. This requirement does NOT apply to NFPA 13D systems. Sidewall sprinklers that are used to protect such areas shall be permitted to be located such that their deflectors are within 1 inch (25 mm) to 6 inches (152 mm) below the structural members and a maximum distance of 14 inches (356 mm) below the deck of the exterior balconies and decks that are constructed of open wood joist construction.

3.) Fabric canopies and canvas canopies shall not be required to adhere to this policy. However, compliance with the building and fire codes is required.

Any comments or questions regarding the above information may be submitted to:

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