




City of Phoenix

FIRE DEPARTMENT
FIRE PREVENTION DIVISION

Explanatory Policy – Sprinkler Coverage for Balconies

SUBJECT: Sprinkler coverage for balconies in NFPA 13 Design Systems	EFFECTIVE DATE: April 15, 2016 July 19, 2019
REFERENCES: The Phoenix Fire Code (2018 Edition) Section 903.3.1.1	REVIEW DATE: July 2024
APPROVED:  John Mertens, Fire Marshal	

Scope:

Sprinklers Protection for Balconies with NFPA 13 design protection in all residential Group R Building of any construction type.

CODE REFERENCES:

PFC Section 903.3.1.1. Where the provisions of this code require that a building or portion thereof be equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with this section, sprinklers shall be installed throughout in accordance with NFPA 13.

NFPA 13, 8.15.7.5 Sprinklers shall be installed under roofs, canopies, porte-cocheres, balconies, decks, or similar projections greater than 2 ft. wide over areas where combustibles are stored.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The commentary in the appendix has two criteria for sprinkler protection and leaves the judgement to the Authority Having Jurisdiction which criteria to emphasize for protection levels. The first is: The presence of combustible furniture on balconies for occupant use should not require sprinkler protection.

The second is: ***however, judgment is needed, sprinklers may be justified where the balcony contains combustible loading such as patio furniture and where barbeque grills are allowed, or other ignition sources are present, such as a furnace located off of, and accessed from, the balcony.***

The City of Phoenix community experiences ideal weather patterns that allow residents to enjoy their outside patios and balconies year-around. Patios and balconies are often covered with a number of combustible materials that include patio furniture, heaters and barbeques.



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In most cases, side mounted sprinkler heads can be used where the piping is not exposed and is supplied from the inside system without an experienced danger of freezing in metallic pipe.

NEW REGULATION:

Patios and balconies for all construction types for Group R structures are required to comply with the City of Phoenix Fire Code and install an automatic fire sprinkler system throughout, including the patio and balcony.