

Inquiry: 2009-05

Subject: Heated Garage

Code: Minnesota Rule Chapter 1322, Residential Energy Code

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Approved By: Stephen Hernick, State Building Official

Issue Date: Oct. 28, 2009

Question: Is a heated garage subject to the energy code?

Answer: No.

Background Information: Minnesota Rule Chapter 1322.1101 states, in part,

N 1101.1 Scope. This chapter regulates energy efficiency for the design and construction of buildings regulated by the International Residential Code (IRC) as adopted and amended by the state of Minnesota. This chapter shall also be used to regulate the energy efficiency for the design and construction of new residential buildings regulated by the International Building Code (IBC) as adopted and amended by the state of Minnesota that are not more than three stories in height and contain no conditioned common space that is shared between dwellings, and each dwelling unit contains a separate means of egress.

Exceptions:

1. Portions of the building that do not enclose conditioned space, including garages.

The intent of this language was to add a new exception “including garages” to the model code to exempt garages from the requirements of the energy code. The SONAR for this rule explains the exemption.

SONAR

The proposed rule adds the words “including garages” to exception one of this part since garages are not typically considered conditioned spaces. The Division understands that some individuals will insulate and heat this portion of a structure; however, it is not required to be heated as conditioned space to comply with other provisions of the code or the occupancy classification. This language has been added to increase the clarity of the rule and what portions of the structure it does cover

It is virtually impossible to achieve an R –value or a U – value for the overhead garage door.

The garage doors and their installation practices would need to be tested to meet the requirements of NFRC 100-2001 for U-factors, they would need to meet and air infiltration rate of no more than 0.3 cubic foot per minute per square foot [1.5(L/s)/m²], when tested according to NFRC 400 or AAMA/WDMA/CSA 101/I.S.2/ A440 by an accredited, independent laboratory, and listed and labeled by the manufacturer, or obtain a R-value as a insulated product in accordance with Minnesota Rules Chapter 7640, the Thermal Insulation Standards. Since the garage door will have a difficult time in meeting any of these standards it was listed as exempt in the code and is not intended to meet the requirements of the Minnesota Rules Chapter 1322, the Residential Energy code