

CODE QUESTIONS ?

Let's catch up with answers to **CODE QUESTIONS** from our readers. All answers based on the *2006 International Codes*.

- **QUESTION?:** "Is a concrete floor treated with an epoxy finish regulated for interior finishes and flame spread?"

ANSWER: A concrete floor is considered "traditional flooring materials" and therefore is exempt based on exception in Section 804.1.

- **QUESTION?:** "Where in the code are smoke barriers required?"

ANSWER: Only in **I** (Institutional) use groups Sections 407.4 and 408.6. No others use groups require smoke barriers.

- **QUESTION?:** "Is a mezzanine limited to one-third of the floor area or just the room it is located?"

ANSWER: Section 502.1 defines mezzanine as one-third (1/3) of the room, not the floor. The mezzanine does not increase the allowable area (Table 503) per floor but must be included in occupancy load and fire areas.

- **QUESTION?** "Can an unlimited area building have a basement?"

ANSWER: Basements are not permitted in unlimited area buildings.

- **QUESTION?** "Who actually owns the building permit? The applicant or the municipality?"

ANSWER: The building permit is a privilege, not a right that is granted by the municipality. Just like your driver's license does not belong to you, it is the property of the issuing state. The issuing agency owns the building permit, not the permit holder.

- **QUESTION?** "What is the limitation on glazing in a 20-minute door serving a 1-hour rated corridor?"

ANSWER: In Table 715.3.3 of the *2006 International Building Code*, wired glass panels are not limited. In previous editions of the code, they had to follow the requirements for a 3/4-hour door (1,296 sq. in.)

- **QUESTION?** "In measuring building area, do you include the thickness of walls?"

ANSWER: NO. The thickness of walls is not part of the total floor area calculation. The reason being that the wall thickness is not an occupiable space.