



NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS  
DIVISION OF CODES AND STANDARDS  
BUREAU OF HOUSING INSPECTION

**TECHNICAL  
BULLETIN  
NO. 1**

SUBJECT: Rear Porch Enclosures

DATE: December 3, 1990

Revised: December 9, 2015

GOVERNING CODE: State of New Jersey Uniform Fire Code

CODE REFERENCES: N.J.A.C. 5:70-4.9; N.J.A.C. 5:10-19.2(a)2, 16.1 & 16.2

**QUESTION:** How should rear porches of buildings that contain a required means of egress be addressed during an inspection, when the porches' exterior walls have been altered in order to enclose the previously opened porches?

**ANSWER:** First, determine if such alterations were executed prior to January 1, 1977, and building is not over three stories in height. If so, in order for these spaces to remain as enclosed porches, the following conditions must be met:

1. A.C. powered smoke detectors must be installed on the ceiling at all porch floor levels, and be interconnected into the building's common area fire alarm system.
2. Minimum natural light and ventilation requirements per N.J.A.C. 5:10-16.1 & 16.2, must be met for all interior rooms of dwelling units that adjoin and open onto the enclosed porches. The minimum glazed and / or openable window areas within the porch walls must satisfy the minimum requirements for the summation of both the porch and the adjoining rooms.
3. Space located within the porch enclosures shall not be utilized for any type of storage, except for minimal sitting type furniture as commonly found on open porches.
4. No type of permanent or portable heating devices shall be located within the porch enclosures.
5. As per N.J.A.C. 5:10-19.2(a)2, no type of locking devices or doors shall exist that would obstruct the means of egress travel from the porch stairs to the exterior. Also, no encumbrance of any type shall exist within or upon the means of egress travel path that would reduce its minimum required width.

It is to be understood, that the acceptance of an existing porch enclosure when in compliance with the above conditions, is only permitted when such enclosure was constructed prior to January 1, 1977. Any porch enclosure constructed subsequent to that date, or which is over three stories in height, must comply with the requirements of the State of New Jersey Uniform Construction Code.

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