

**MINNEAPOLIS FIRE DEPARTMENT  
FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU POLICY #7-4  
FLOOR SEPARATIONS**

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**ISSUE:**

Fire rated separation between floors.

**CODE REQUIREMENTS:**

*Floors within a building are to be separated from other floors by one (1) hour fire resistive rated (FRR) construction.*

*Exceptions:*

1. *Two (2) stories may be open to each other.*
2. *Buildings protected throughout by an approved automatic sprinkler system.*
3. *Buildings with an atrium that complies with the MSBC.*

**PROBLEMS:**

1. Buildings with “garden level” basements plus two (2) stories above which contain open stair cases many times do not have a workable location to provide a separation between floors. Workable solutions many times do not meet the letter of the code.
2. Providing a floor separation at the under side of the first floor (basement ceiling) is many times un-workable due to pipe, ductwork, etc., this is the same issue addressed in policy #7-3 “Occupancy Separations”.

**ACCEPTABLE MEANS of COMPLIANCE:**

1. Two (2) story residential buildings with basements which are exempt from stair enclosure requirements by Minn. Statute #299F.011.4b are to have the basement or first floor ceiling be of 1 hour FRR construction.(MSFC)
2. Buildings with dwelling units no higher than two (2) floors above the lowest level of exit discharge, a “Certified Fire Alarm System” complying with MFD Policy #9-11 may be substituted for floor separation provided that the alarm system is not otherwise required by the fire code or other MFD Policy. All corridor and stairway enclosures are to be smoke stopped. (MFD Policy)
3. Buildings with dwelling units no higher than three (3) stories above the lowest level of exit discharge and where each dwelling unit has access to two (2) exits with separate atmospheres, a “Certified Fire Alarm System” complying with MFD Policy #9-11 may be substituted for floor separation provided that the alarm system is not otherwise required by the fire code or other MFD Policy. All corridor and stairway enclosures are to be smoke stopped. (MFD Policy)
4. Wood lath and plaster or ½ inch gypsum wallboard in good condition, or materials as required for one (1) hour FRR construction applied to the bottom side of the floor assembly are considered as an equivalent to a one (1) hour assembly. (MFD Policy)