



Code Outreach Program – Technical Bulletins vs Code Interpretations

This edition of the Code Outreach program is intended to clarify the difference between a Technical Bulletin and a Code Interpretation, both of which are issued by the Division of Building Standards and Codes (DBSC).

Technical Bulletin

DBSC's technical support unit provides technical support for the Uniform Code and Energy Code via [email support](#), [telephone support](#), [online FAQ's](#), technical presentations and trainings, and [technical bulletins](#).

Technical bulletins are issued by DBSC and do not alter the code. Instead, they provide general guidance and understanding of the code. The bulletins address specific questions that the technical support unit receives on a regular basis and are an effective way to provide consistent technical information to all code users at once, rather than responding to multiple individual emails or phone calls.

Technical bulletins are effective only for the code cycle for which they were drafted. Because they do not alter the code, they do not have an effective date that is different than the code cycle effective date. For example, the DBSC's website currently lists technical bulletins effective for the current code cycle [effective October 3, 2016](#) in addition to the [historical bulletins](#) for previous code adoptions. Code users must be careful to only use the bulletins that are applicable to the particular code adoption cycle with which they are working.

Code Interpretation

The Secretary of State is authorized to issue written interpretations of the Uniform Code via Article 18 of the Executive Law. Executive Law § 376(4), states as follows:

“The secretary is authorized and empowered: ... To issue and to publish or cause to be published, including but not limited to publication on the department's website, written interpretations of the uniform code upon written request of a permit applicant or an official responsible for the administration and enforcement of the provisions of such code. Subsequent enforcement of such code shall be consistent with such written interpretations...”

The Secretary of State has designated John Addario, Director of the Division of Building Standards and Codes, as the designee to issue such an interpretation, which has been termed “Code Interpretation”. These interpretations are typically triggered by the receipt of a Code Interpretation request form ([instructions and additional information can be found here](#)).

A Code Interpretation can alter parts of the previously adopted Uniform Code and becomes part of the Uniform Code from the date of issuance of the interpretation. They typically remain valid unless altered by the adoption of a new Uniform Code or new Code Interpretation. Code Interpretations are listed [here](#) on the DBSC website.

As a reminder, annual 1203 program review and reporting reports are due. Please see the following link for information on those reports and how to electronically submit them ([click here](#)).

Please look for our next edition of the Code Outreach Program at the beginning of next month.

DBSC - A Division of Department of State
OFPC – An Office of the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Services

If you have questions pertaining to the Code Outreach Program, email us at COP.codes@dos.ny.gov

If you have questions pertaining to the Uniform Code or Energy Code, email our technical support group at: codes@dos.ny.gov.

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