

**CHAPTER 3
BUILDING PLANNING**

**SECTION R321.1
IRC Interpretation No. 41-03
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R321.1 Two-family dwellings. Dwelling units in two-family dwellings shall be separated from each other by wall and/or floor assemblies of not less than 1-hour fire-resistive rating when tested in accordance with ASTM E 119. Fire-resistance-rated floor-ceiling and wall assemblies shall extend to and be tight against the exterior wall, and wall assemblies shall extend to the underside of the roof sheathing.

Exception: A fire resistance rating of 1/2 hour shall be permitted in buildings equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with NFPA 13.

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Q: Is a two-family dwelling with a property line separating the dwelling units required to comply with the separation provisions in Section R321.1?

A: No. The code does not address a property line within an attached two-family dwelling. A dwelling is a building that contains one or two dwelling units. A building line, or property line, is a line established by law, beyond which a building shall not extend. An attached two-family dwelling with a property line between the two dwelling units is considered two separate buildings, located on two separate lots. Two individual dwellings must comply with the fire separation distance required in Section R302.1.

