

**CHAPTER 9
FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS**

**SECTION 903.3.1.2.1
IFC Interpretation No. 32-06
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903.3.1.2 NFPA 13R sprinkler systems. Where allowed in buildings of Group R, up to and including four stories in height, automatic sprinkler systems shall be installed throughout in accordance with NFPA 13R.

903.3.1.2.1 Balconies. Sprinkler protection shall be provided for exterior balconies and ground floor patios of dwelling units where the building is of Type V construction. Sidewall sprinklers that are used to protect such areas shall be permitted to be located such that their deflectors are within 1 inch (25 mm) to 6 inches (152 mm) below the structural members, and a maximum distance of 14 inches (356 mm) below the deck of the exterior balconies that are constructed of open wood joist construction.



Q: The provisions in Section 903.3.1.2.1 of the *International Fire Code* require sprinkler protection to be provided for exterior balconies and ground floor patios of dwelling units where the building is of Type V construction.

Is sprinkler protection required for a single balcony and/or ground floor patio where no balcony and/or ground floor patio is provided above or below?

A: Yes. Although an NFPA 13R automatic sprinkler system, as referenced in Section 903.3.1.2, allows sprinkler heads to be omitted from attics and similar unoccupied spaces, Section 903.3.1.2.1 of the *International Fire Code* specifically requires the sprinkler system to be extended to provide protection for all exterior balconies, exterior decks, and exterior ground floor patios of residential buildings of Type V construction regardless if such areas are covered by a balcony or deck.
