

STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. I-48-00

August 23, 2000

The following is offered in response to your letter in which you request a formal interpretation of the provisions of the 1999 National Electrical Code portion of the 1999 State Building Code as it pertains to renovations.

Question: As a result of a fire, renovations were performed at the kitchen of a single family residence. The electrical portion of said renovations consisted of replacement of one electrical box and the replacement of electrical convenience receptacles in the remaining existing boxes in the kitchen. Is there a requirement to provide two dedicated small appliance circuits and an island receptacle to bring the kitchen wiring up to the present code?

Answer: No, providing the wiring to the outlets was not replaced and the island is not a new cabinet in a new location. The 1999 National Electrical Code at Section 90-4 refers the code user to Chapter One of the BOCA National Building Code/1996 portion of the 1999 State Building Code for administration of the electrical code. Section 102.2 of the referenced code states in part that the legal occupancy of any structure existing on the date of adoption of this code shall be permitted to continue without change. The intent of this section is to make it clear that any existing work that was performed legally at the time of installation need not be changed simply because it is not in compliance with the new code. All new work must be code compliant, so that in the example you give, the new electrical box and the receptacles themselves must be code-compliant, but the wiring serving those receptacles, as long as it is not unsafe, need not be modified to be made code-compliant, nor is there a requirement to add additional outlets beyond those that exist, as long as the cabinet layout is not modified. Replacing old cabinets or countertops with new ones in the same location does not require electrical modifications, but adding or changing the countertop locations would require that the receptacle layout in the vicinity of the new countertop locations be made code-compliant.