



NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Division of Code Enforcement and Administration
Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code - 2002 Edition

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TECHNICAL BULLETIN

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U P D A T E D

Source Document: **19 NYCRR 1220, *Residential Code of New York State* (RCNYS)**

Topic: **Fire separation distance for two buildings on the same lot**

This document provides clarification on fire separation distance to a lot line and to other buildings on the lot. *Residential Code of New York State* (RCNYS) Section R302.1 requires exterior walls that have a fire separation distance of less than 3 feet to have at least a 1-hour fire-resistance rating and no openings. The term “fire separation distance” is defined in Section R202 as:

...the distance measured from the building face to the closest interior lot line, to the centerline of a street, alley or public way, or to an imaginary line between two buildings on the property.

Since Section 302.1 establishes the fire separation distance as 3 feet, and there is normally no lot line between a dwelling and an accessory structure, such as a detached garage or shed, the distance to an imaginary line would have to be 3 feet from each wall (6 feet total) for nonrated wall construction to be permitted for the dwelling and the accessory structure.

Connecting a garage and breezeway with any manor of enclosure would create a single building. Since the fire separation distance only applies to separate buildings, it would not apply to a fully or partially enclosed breezeway. However, in accordance with Section R309.2, the garage and residence must be separated horizontally and vertically, as applicable, with rated construction, or appropriately attached type-x gypsum board. Care must be taken to be sure that the prescribed fire separation between the residence and garage is not compromised with the breezeway roof construction.

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