



Informal Interpretation Report Number 7421



Date November 05, 2014

Edition 2010

Section 4101.17.1.2

Question:

Is it the intent of FBC R4101.17.1.2 when indicating "squeeze through" to mean when the design of the fence/barrier has members (pickets) that shall not allow passage of a 4- inch diameter sphere to also address the rigidity of the members so they are not simple flexed allowing a young child to squeeze through?

Answer

Yes.

Commentary:

As written in the Code, rigidity is a feature of structural components. "...or structural components..."

While we may have regulated common sense out of the majority of the code, if you can push a 4" sphere through it with only a "reasonable" amount of force, it probably does not meet the requirement, whether the picket flexes or not. The Code does not contain specific numeric requirements and we, as an industry, must apply sound reasoning to a requirement such as this. The intent and background of the barrier requirement is to protect children, the elderly and the medically frail from having access to a pool without appropriate supervision. The 4" sphere requirement comes from stairs and guardrails as a way of preventing children from getting their heads caught between the balusters (vertical protection).

Notice:

The Building Officials Association of Florida, in cooperation with the Florida Building Commission, the Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulation, ICC, and industry and professional experts offer this interpretation of the Florida Building Code in the interest of consistency in their application statewide. This

interpretation is informal, non-binding and subject to acceptance and approval by the local building official.