



Canadian Standards Association
Mississauga, Ontario
To the Part I Committee

Subject No. 3160

Chair: C.B. Chan

Date: January 25, 2005

Title: Abandoned Cables, Rule 56-XXX

Submitted by: D. Kendall of Carlon, Lamson & Sessions Inc., 25701 Science Park Drive, Cleveland, OH, 44122 **AND** J.K. Richardson of Ken Richardson Fire Technologies Inc., 891 Beauclaire Dr. Ottawa, ON, K1C 2J5 on December 19, 2003.

Proposal:

Add new Rule 56-XXX as follows.

Add new Appendix Note to Rule 56-XXX.

56-XXX Removal of Abandoned Optical Fibre Cables

Abandoned optical fibre cables located in plenum chambers shall be removed from the plenum chambers unless they are permitted to remain by the National Fire Code of Canada (See Appendix B).

Appendix B

56-XXX The requirement for the removal of abandoned optical fibre cables in plenums is located in the National Fire Code of Canada (2005 Edition) in Sentence 2.4.1.1.(5) as follows:

- 5) Abandoned optical fibre cables and electrical wire and cables, with combustible insulation, jackets, or sheathes, and nonmetallic raceways shall be removed from a plenum unless:
- a) they are permanently closed by the structure or finish of the building,
 - b) they are not capable of being removed without disturbing the building structure or finish, or
 - c) their removal will risk affecting the performance of cables in use.

Reasons for Request:

The Canadian Commission on Building and Fire Codes (CCBFC) has examined the fire spread potential as a result of the proliferation and non-removal of data and communications cables installed in plenums. Current practice in most cases is to abandon the existing cables and install new ones. The Standing Committee on Fire Safety and Occupancy of the CCBFC has determined that this cable build-up constitutes a genuine hazard that can best be regulated by requiring the removal of abandoned cable in most instances. (See Supporting Information) This proposed change to Section 56 of the CEC Part 1 reflects a complementary rule to ensure that the required

level of fire safety in plenums is achieved and coordination occurs between both codes. The CCBFC will make a final decision on this requirement in April 2004 but there has been no disagreement with this NFC requirement thus far.

This proposal reflects a similar rule in the NEC Section 770.53(A) which states that: "Abandoned cables shall not be permitted to remain." (See Supporting Information.)

Supporting Information:

- (1) Copy of NFCC Proposed Change to Sentence 2.4.1.1.(5)
- (2) Copy of NEC Requirement 770.53(A) 2002 Edition

Chair's Comments:

I strongly support this proposal. So far the CEC has not specifically dealt with treatment of abandoned cables. It is common practice to let abandoned cables accumulate, which eventually constitutes a genuine hazard and become a lot more expensive to remove. It is time to incorporate this in the CEC. I would suggest this proposal to include riser application to harmonize with similar rule in the NEC.

Subcommittee Deliberations: (First Round)

Four members responded; two agreeing and two disagreeing. One member who disagreed commented:

"Although I appreciate.... (from AZT's note of April 7 to us; hope you have it as I don't....)
.....or control conductors."

Chair's Comments: (Second Round)

As the Chair, I initially supported the proposal, but would like to switch positions after receiving the comments from the disapproval side. The proposal should be resubmitted to the Subcommittee on Section 2 to deal with the issue of abandoned cables and the controversies as raised by the Subcommittee member.

Chair's Recommendation:

That this Subject be closed and referred to the Section 2 Subcommittee with the comments from the dissenting members.

Subcommittee Deliberation(Second Round):

Out of 5 responses, all are in agreement with the Chair that this subject be closed and referred to Section 2 Subcommittee to mandate removal of all abandoned electrical equipment and cables, regardless, whether these are optical fiber cables, community antenna, communication cables, or power or control conductors. One commented that the requirement to remove unused cables be limited to buildings of combustible construction. In industrial buildings cables are seldom removed.

Comments from Subcommittee Members

Vince Rowe:

If this subject is referred to another section it should be recommended that the requirement to remove unused cables be limited to buildings of combustible construction. In industrial buildings cables are seldom removed. They are often left in place for possible future use and in many cases

they would be difficult to remove without damaging other cables as many of the runs are very long and would require disturbing other cables in the trays in order to remove them.

Peter Older:

I agree with the Chair that the subject be referred to Section 2. I applaud the move to encompass safety through the removal of abandoned cables; however this should be addressed in Section 2 where the removal of all abandoned electrical cables may be outlined.

As far as harmonizing with the NEC, the removal of abandoned cables needed to be addressed in various articles of the NEC since the general section does not reference a standard building code.

Art Tssiserev:

Here is my comment on the referenced subject.

Although I appreciate and support the intent of the proposal in principle, I disagree with the referenced submission for Section 56 S/C for the following reasons:

It is not appropriate to reference the NFCC for this purely regulatory purpose. The NFCC is adopted in different jurisdictions as a provincial/territorial Fire Code or municipal Fire By-law and is enforced by the respective jurisdictional authorities accordingly. If it is required by those documents - to remove abandoned cables, the enforcement is provided by the respective fire prevention officers.

However, if it is deemed to be necessary to place such a requirement in the CEC, perhaps, this subject should be re-submitted to Section 2 S/C as new general Rule 2-324 - to mandate removal of all abandoned electrical equipment and cables, regardless, whether these are optical fiber cables, community antenna, communication cables, or power or control conductors.

By the copy of this e-mail to C.B. and Ed I'm advising Chair of Section 56 and Chair of section 2 S/c on my comments.

Jacques Poulin, ing.

b) Agree with the Chair's recommendation with comments.

Comments:

I agree that this proposal should be sent to Section 2. I also agree with the Subcommittee member that if a Rule is placed in Section 2, it should state that all kinds of abandoned cables must be removed, including power, control, community antenna, optical, communication, etc.

S. Finnigan:

Agee with Chair

Subcommittee Recommendation:

Close the subject, refer to Section 2 Subcommittee to mandate removal of all abandoned electrical equipment and cables, regardless, whether these are optical fiber cables, community antenna, communication cables, or power or control conductors.