

## **City of Charleston, South Carolina**

### **Department of Public Service, Building Inspections Division**

#### **Chief Building Official's Interpretation & Guidelines**

#### ***Electrical Switches and outlets Below Design Flood Elevation (DFE) on New 1 & 2 family dwellings within the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA)***

Below are the current City of Charleston interpretations and enforcement of electrical outlets and switches below DFE within the SFHA. The City's working policy is based on the 2021 SCRC §R322.1.6; alternatively, refer to the below exception. The only electrical components permitted below the DFE are the minimum necessary for life safety. No electrical wiring, switches, and outlets can be attached to breakaway walls.

#### **Required Locations**

***Stairway illumination*** - 2021 SCRC §R311.7.9 → §R303.7 & §R303.8

- *Interior stairways* shall have artificial light source illuminating landings and treads. There shall be an electrical switch at each floor level to control the light source where the stairway has six or more risers.
- *Exterior stairways* shall have artificial light source illuminating the top landing of a stairway.

***Electrical Receptacle Outlets*** - 2021 SCRC §E3901.7→ §E3901.9

- *Outdoor Locations* - A receptacle outlet that is readily accessible from grade level and located no more than 6.5 feet above grade shall be installed outdoors at the front and back of each dwelling unit having direct access to grade level.
- *Attached and detached Garages* - One electrical receptacle outlet shall be installed 5.5 feet above the garage floor in each vehicle bay.

#### **Required Installation**

***Indoor/outdoor wet locations*** - 2021 SCRC §E4001.7→ §E4002.10

- *Electrical switches or circuit breakers* are required to meet 2021 SCRC §E4001.7
- *Electrical receptacles* are required to meet 2021 SCRC §E4002.8, §E4002.9 and §E4002.10
- *Electrical Luminaires (lights)* are required to meet 2021 SCRC §E4003.9

#### **2021 SCRC §R322.1.6 Exception**

Electrical systems, equipment and components, heating, ventilating, air conditioning, plumbing appliances and fixtures, duck systems and other service equipment is permitted below DFE if they are designed and installed to prevent water from entering or accumulating with the components and to resist hydrodynamic loads and stresses, including the effects of buoyancy, during the occurrence of flooding to the required elevation in accordance with ASCE 24. Electrical wiring systems are permitted to be located below DFE if they conform to the provisions of the electrical part of this code for wet locations.