

Subject: Allowance of Low Voltage Gas Fired Luminaires, Decorative Fireplaces, Fire Pits, and Similar Equipment within 5 feet of the inside walls of a pool.

This Technical Advisory is established to provide clarification on 680.22(B)(6) of the 2014 NEC and clarify the types of devices permitted.

680.22(B)(6) of the 2014 NEC states:

“Listed low-voltage luminaires not requiring grounding, not exceeding the low –voltage contact limit, and supplied by listed transformers or power supplies that comply with 680.23(A)(2) shall be permitted to be located less than 1.5m (5 ft.) from the inside walls of the pool.”

This was a significant code change from the 2011 NEC in which 680.22(B)(1-5) generally prohibited luminaires from being installed within 5 feet horizontally of the inside of a pool. No provisions existed for low-voltage luminaires in the 2011 NEC. Section 411.4(B), which specifically stated “Lighting Systems” shall be installed not less than 10 feet horizontally from the nearest edge of the water.

Although, the changes in 2014 NEC now allowed the placement of low voltage luminaires to be within 5 feet of the inside pool walls, new technologies being utilized created a new set of issues to contend with by various inspection entities. These technologies include electronically ignited gas-fired decorative luminaires, fire pits, and other equipment that otherwise meet the requirements of 680.22(B)(6) for low-voltage luminaires.

The definition of luminaire in Article 100 does not specify the type of light source, power source or fuel source. Therefore, gas-fired luminaires would be included in this definition, as are LED, incandescent, halogen, compact fluorescent, and other technologies not specifically mentioned in the definition of a luminaire. The 2017 NEC specifically addresses the rejection and exclusion of listed electronically ignited gas-fired luminaires and other similar equipment by specifically placing them within the body of the code.

680.22(B)(7) of the 2017 NEC states:

“Listed low-voltage gas-fired luminaires, decorative fireplaces, fire pits, and similar equipment using low-voltage ignitors that do not require grounding, and are supplied by listed transformers or power supplies that comply with 680.23(A)(2) with outputs that do not exceed the low-voltage contact limit shall be permitted to be located less than (5 ft.) from the inside walls of the pool Metallic equipment shall be bonded in accordance with the requirements in 680.26(B). Transformers or power supplies supplying this type of equipment shall be installed in accordance with the requirements in 680.24. Metallic gas piping shall be bonded in accordance with the requirements in 250.104(B) and 680.26(B).”

680.22(B)(7) of the 2017 NEC is more of a clarification than an actual code change to the 2014 NEC and should be taken into consideration when implementing 680.22(B)(6) of the 2014 NEC.

It is therefore the determination and recommendation of the Building Code Advisory Board of Palm Beach County to approve the use and placement of low-voltage gas-fired luminaires, decorative fire-places, fire pits, and similar equipment as listed in 680.22(B)(7) of the 2017 NEC because of the clarification it affords to the intent of 680.22(B)(6) of the 2014 NEC.

For Building Code Advisory Board,



Greg Miller, Chair

The Building Code Advisory Board of Palm Beach County was created by a Special Act of the Florida Legislature, at the request of the building code enforcement and construction industries. The purpose of the Board is to advise the Board of County Commissioners and local governments concerning the adoption of building codes and their enforcement throughout the County. The Act also granted Palm Beach County special powers concerning building codes, in the interest of the public's health, safety and general welfare.

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