

## **SALES OFFICE IN A MODEL HOME**

### **Accessibility**

A sales office or materials selection showroom must be in an accessible location. If these spaces are located within a Model Home, the Model Home must comply with accessibility requirements as per the NC Building Code.

If a Home Builder offers a model home without a sales office, the model home is not required to provide accessibility requirements per the NC Building Code or the NC Residential Code when it is used as a model or example of the Home Builder's product. If the home is not accessible, the Home Builder must refrain from conducting any form of business in the model other than using it as an example of their work. Material selection or showroom and dealing with documents should only be done in an accessible sales office or other accessible location.

#### **NC Building Code Section 1104.1, 1104.2 & 1105.1**

An accessible route is required from the site arrival point to any accessible features, which could include the Sales Center or Materials Selection Showroom. The site arrival point could be the sidewalk or a parking area. The components of an accessible route would be required, including the entrance to the accessible space.

When the Sales Center is located in the model home, an accessible path of travel is required to the area where the sales center is located within the house. If the Sales Center is in the garage, then access between the garage and entrance to the house is required, but an accessible path of travel through the house is not required. The model home itself is considered a display area, requiring access to and from, but not through, the house.

The finish materials may be located in a storage area from which the selections are taken, and then carried over to the sales center so that everyone, both able-bodied customers and customers with disabilities, can make their selection.

#### **NC Building Code Section 1106.1**

Accessible parking with an access aisle is only required when parking is provided. If parking is on the street, accessible parking is not required. If the driveway is used for parking, ensure that the surface and slope meets the accessibility requirements, striping and signage are not required.

#### **The NC Plumbing Code, The NC Accessibility Requirements and the Plumbing Facilities**

When a residential dwelling is used as a model home, there are several different scenarios as to how the situation may occur. The following addresses each of the various options and is based on the following premise:

**BASIC PREMISE:** Once a business office is located within a residential dwelling, that office is considered a permanent business office in accordance with the NC Plumbing Code. As such, the Plumbing Code requires permanent plumbing fixtures as long as the sales office or design center is located either in the model home or the garage.

The NC Building Code Ch.11 works in coordination with the NC Plumbing Code and the referenced ICC A117.1 standard to provide the required accessible fixtures.

If the Sales office is located in the model or the garage:

- provide permanent accessible plumbing fixtures in model or in garage (unisex toilet) with an accessible route
- if local plumbing official permits use of portable toilets, provide accessible portable toilets for everyone to use (see next bulleted item below)
- able-bodied personnel cannot use permanent fixtures in house and persons with disabilities use accessible portable toilet

If a portable toilet is used, the water supply to the fixtures would have to be shut off. Simply posting an "out of order" sign would not be acceptable because in-house staff would be aware that the sign was not accurate and may continue to use the facilities, contrary to the 3rd bulleted item.