

**NC Department of Insurance  
Office of the State Fire Marshal - Engineering Division  
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**Lay-In Ceiling for Smoke Partition Continuity**

**Code:** 2012 Building Code  
**Section:** 711.4

**Date:** September 1, 2011

**Question:**

Is a lay-in ceiling system considered a ceiling membrane to “limit the transfer of smoke” as required by NC Building Code, Section 711.4?

**Answer:**

The ceiling is expected to be sealed as though it were a horizontal wall.

A lay-in ceiling that does not have the joint of each tile sealed with a material capable of remaining in place at 400<sup>o</sup> Fahrenheit is not considered a continuous membrane and is not acceptable as complying with 2012 NCBC, Section 711.4 for ceiling membrane constructed to limit the transfer of smoke.

A lay-in ceiling that does have the joint of each tile sealed with a material capable of remaining in place at 400<sup>o</sup> Fahrenheit is considered a continuous membrane and is acceptable as complying with 2012 NCBC, Section 711.4 for ceiling membrane constructed to limit the transfer of smoke. The joint where the ceiling system meets the wall as well as ceiling penetrations such as light fixtures and sprinkler heads must also be sealed as described above.

A fire-resistant-rated ceiling system is also acceptable as complying with 2012 NCBC, Section 711.4 for ceiling membrane constructed to limit the transfer of smoke

**Keywords:**

acoustical, tile, ACT