

**NC Department of Insurance  
Office of the State Fire Marshal - Engineering Division  
1202 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1202  
919-647-0001**

**Wall Space v. Wall Countertop Spaces**

**Code:** 2017 Electrical Code  
**Section:** 210.52(A)

**Date:** June 12, 2018

**Question 1:**

A kitchen countertop that is attached to a wall has receptacles mounted above the countertop that comply with section 210.52(C). Are additional receptacles required to be added below the countertop to serve the wall space described in section 210.52(A)?

**Answer 1:**

No. Section 210.52(A)(2) describes the “wall space” within a dwelling including in the kitchens, pantries, breakfast rooms, dining rooms, and similar areas. Section 210.52(C)(1) describes the dwelling’s “wall countertop space” in the kitchens, pantries, breakfast rooms, dining rooms, and similar areas.

In areas designated for food preparation, the “wall space” described in section 210.52(A)(2) and the “wall countertop space” described in section 210.52(C)(1) each possess electrical needs that are distinguishable from each other due to the type of appliances that typically utilize such receptacles.

Thus, the receptacles in the areas along the walls of a kitchen are either regulated by section 210.52(A) or by section 210.52(C) depending on whether a wall countertop exists in such area. In no case will the sections 210.52(A) and 210.52(C) both regulate the same wall area of the kitchen.

**Question 2:**

A kitchen countertop that is attached to a wall has receptacles mounted above the countertop that comply with section 210.52(C). There is at least 2 feet of wall space (area without a kitchen countertop) regulated by section 210.52(A) beside the countertop. Can any of the countertop receptacles be used to satisfy the wall space receptacle requirements of 210.52(A) if the countertop receptacles are not located more than 5 ½ feet above the floor?

**Answer 2:**

No. Section 210.52(A)(4) prohibits the use of the receptacles installed for wall countertop space in the kitchens, pantries, breakfast rooms, dining rooms, and similar areas from simultaneously satisfying the wall space receptacle requirements of 210.52(A).

**Question 3(a):**

A living room countertop that is attached to a wall has receptacles mounted above the countertop that are 4 feet above the finished floor. Does section 210.52(A)(4) require additional receptacles to be added below the countertop to serve the wall space described in section 210.52(A)?

**Question 3(b):**

A living room countertop that is attached to a wall has receptacles mounted below the countertop that are 1 foot above the finished floor. Does section 210.52(A)(4) require additional receptacles to be added above the countertop to serve the wall space described in section 210.52(A)?

**Answer 3(a&b):**

No. Section 210.52(A)(4) only prohibits the receptacles specified in section 210.52(C) from simultaneously satisfying the wall space receptacle requirements of 210.52(A). Receptacles serving the living room countertop are not specified by section 210.52(C). Section 210.52(C) only concerns countertop space in the kitchens, pantries, breakfast rooms, dining rooms, and similar areas.

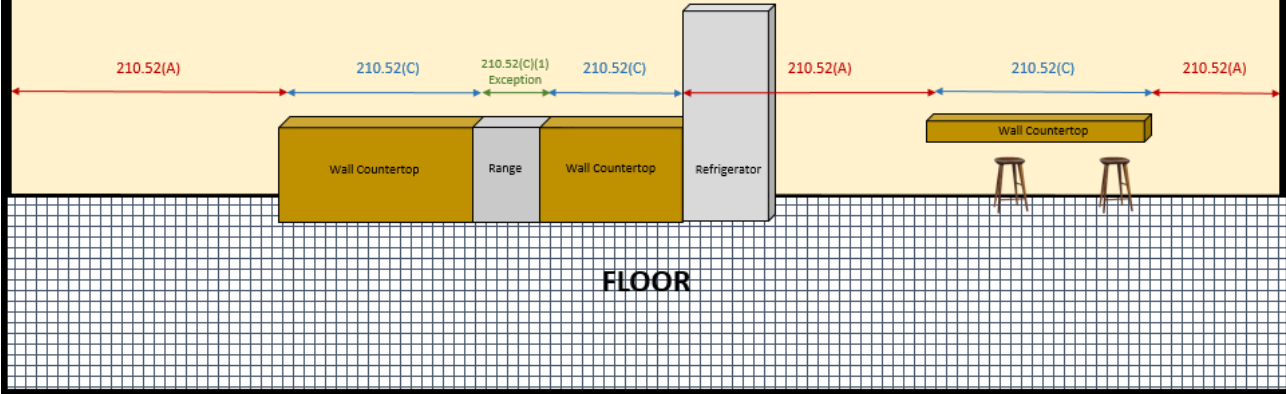
### Question 1 Illustration

Not to Scale

Wall Receptacles not to exceed 5 1/2 feet in height from floor  
 Countertop receptacles not to exceed 20 inches in height from countertop

#### KITCHEN & SIMILAR AREA

Electrical Code sections shown below regulate the corresponding areas of the kitchen walls

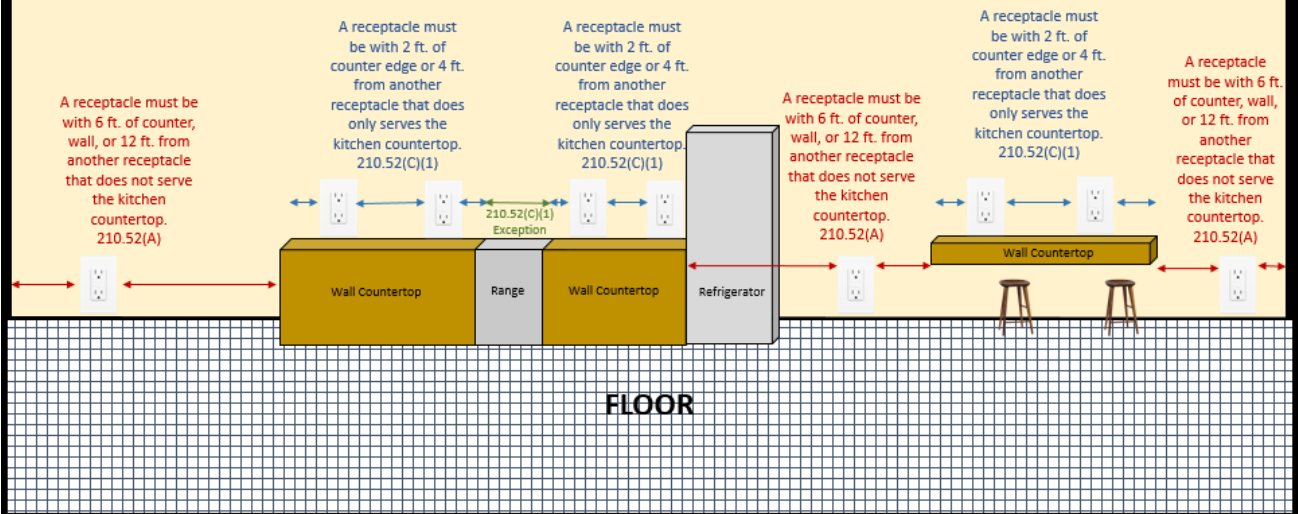


### Question 2 Illustration

Not to Scale

Wall Receptacles not to exceed 5 1/2 feet in height from floor  
 Countertop receptacles not to exceed 20 inches in height from countertop

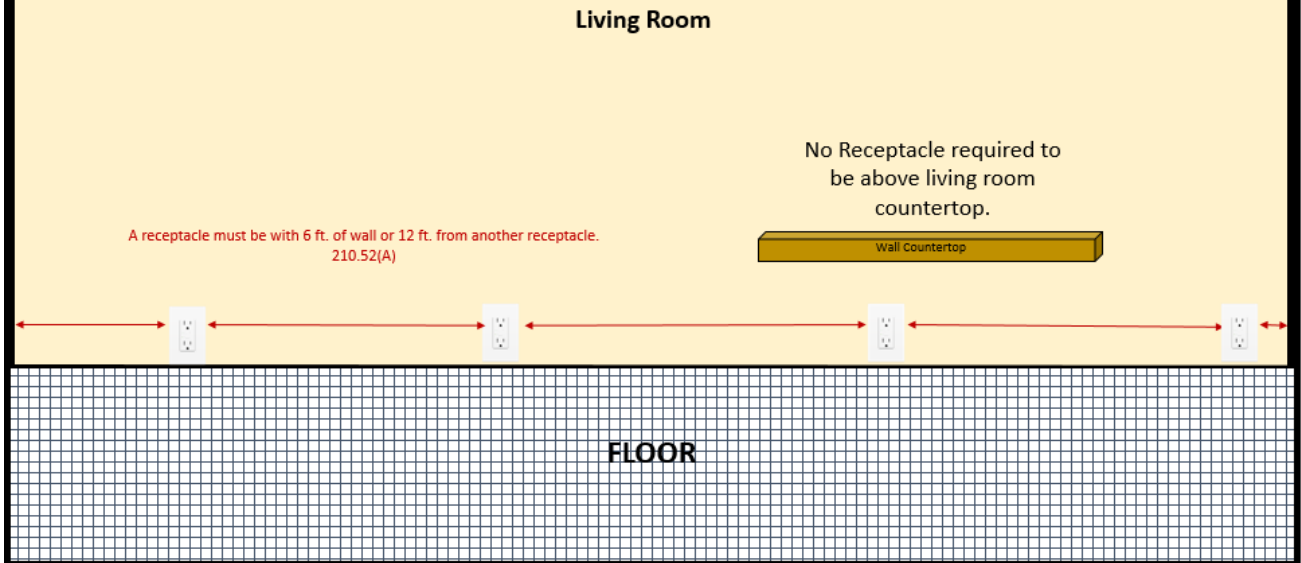
#### KITCHEN & SIMILAR AREA



### Question 3(a) Illustration

Not to Scale

Wall Receptacles not to exceed 5 ½ feet in height from floor  
Countertop receptacles not to exceed 20 inches in height from countertop



### Question 3(b) Illustration

Not to Scale

Wall Receptacles not to exceed 5 ½ feet in height from floor  
Countertop receptacles not to exceed 20 inches in height from countertop

