

**NC Department of Insurance  
Office of the State Fire Marshal - Engineering Division  
1202 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1202  
919-661-5880**

**Lavatory Sidewall Clearance, Residential**

**Code:** 2012 Residential Plumbing Code

**Date:** November 18, 2013

**Sections:** P0405.3.1, R307.1

**Question:**

What is the correct clearance from the center of a lavatory to a side wall in one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses?

**Answer:**

Section 405.3.1 of the residential plumbing code states;

***405.3.1 Water closets, urinals, lavatories and bidets.** A water closet, urinal, lavatory or bidet shall not be set closer than 15 inches (381 mm) from its center to any side wall, partition, vanity or other obstruction, or closer than 30 inches (762 mm) center-to-center between adjacent fixtures.....*

***Exception:** For one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses, see the North Carolina Residential Code.*

Because of the exception the minimum fixture installation clearance figure R307.1 should be used for lavatory installation. Figure R307.1 does not dictate a specific sidewall clearance to the center of the lavatory. This interpretation only applies to one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses.

**Keywords:**