



# Oregon

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## *Building Codes Division Statewide Interpretation*

**PROGRAM:** Electrical Program  
**SUBJECT:** 334.12(A)(2), 2005 National Electrical Code  
**SOURCE:** 2005 Oregon Electrical Specialty Code  
**REFERENCE:** Section 334.12(A)(2), 334.15(A) through (C), 334.30(B)(2) and 300.21, 300.22  
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**QUESTION:** Does Section 334.12(A)(2) of the 2005 National Electrical Code prevent the use of NM cable above a drop or suspended ceiling?

### **ANALYSIS:**

The 2005 National Electrical Code, Section 334.12(A)(2) states: NM, NMC, and NMS cables shall not be exposed in dropped or suspended ceilings in other than one and two family and multi-family dwellings. The 2005 National Electrical Code Handbook provides that cables that are “exposed” are those that remain accessible after construction. Cables that are “exposed” are subject to the requirements of 334.15(A) through (C). Additionally, 300.21 requires that electrical installations shall not substantially increase the spread of fire.

### **DETERMINATION:**

**NM, NMC and NMS cable used in a non-rated, dropped or suspended ceiling is allowed in one and two-family and multi-family dwellings only. Additionally, in one and two-family and multi-family dwellings the requirements of 334.15(A) through (C) must be met. NM cables will not be allowed to be run across ceiling wires but must follow the structure of the building and according to Section 334.30(B)(2) are limited to an unsupported length of 4.5 feet where used to feed luminaire(s). Additionally, a structure that changes the use of a dropped or suspended ceiling to a duct, plenum or other air handling space requires the provisions of 300.22 to be met. Structures that fall under the provisions of the 2005 Oregon**

**Electrical Specialty Code, National Electrical Code, Section 334.12(A)(2), must use approved wiring methods such as MC or AC Cable or other approved methods.**

**In remodel situations where the existing wiring method is NM Cable, the use of NM Cable for extensions or alterations to the existing wiring shall be allowed. New circuits added to an existing structure that utilizes NM Cable shall be of other approved methods.**