STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. 06-01

CODE: 2003 Ventilation and Indoor Air Quality Code
       2003 International Building Code
       2003 International Residential Code

SECTION: VIAQ Section 502.1.2
         IBC Section 1203.3.2
         IRC Section 408.2

QUESTION: The Ventilation and Air Quality Code requires that a radon vent be installed when crawlspace ventilation is provided at less than 1 square foot per 300 square feet of crawlspace area, or if the vents are equipped with operable louvers. Both the IRC and the IBC allow the use of continuous mechanical ventilation in lieu of crawlspace vents. Would a mechanical ventilation system satisfy the requirements of the VIAQ?

ANSWER: Yes, as long as the fan does operate continuously and the vent exhausts independently of any other mechanical systems. The intent is that the crawlspace be ventilated to prevent the buildup of radon gas, and to prevent the radon gas from entering into the living space. If the mechanical ventilation system communicates with the whole house ventilation system, there could be contamination issues. There could also be a potential problem if the crawlspace ventilation system is capable of being shut off, allowing the gas to accumulate and penetrate into the living space.

SUPERSEDES: None

REQUESTED BY: Mason County