

# National Electrical Safety Code Committee, Accredited Standards Committee C2

## National Electrical Safety Code®

### Interpretation

#### Section 23. Clearances

##### **Rule 232 Vertical Clearances of Wires, Conductors, Cables, and Equipment Above Ground, Roadway, Rail, or Water Surfaces**

##### **Table 232-1 Vertical Clearance of Wires, Conductors, and Cables Above Ground, Roadway, Rail, or Water Surfaces (1997 Edition, page 77)**

**(31 January 2007) IR545**

Is it the intention of the NESC authors that Table 232-1, Row 3 (Driveways, parking lots, and alleys) be applied solely to vehicles whose primary motivation is rubber-tired wheels on graded surfaces or is the intention of the NESC authors that this line item be applied to any and all moveable items regardless of primary motivation method?

**Discussion:** The use of the term “parking lots” is ambiguous. Of particular concern is the intended use of the term “parking lots” in the context of this rule. There is no reference in the rules to the specific kind of vehicle or item that is being parked. The term “parking lot” is not addressed in Section 2, Definitions of Special Terms. Since a “parking lot” can apply to anything that can be moved (flown, dragged, rolled, hovered, skidded, slid, etc.) but the two bracketing concepts, notably “driveway” and “alley” both imply common rubber-tired surface-traveling wheeled vehicles, it would be a reasonable interpretation that the term “parking lot” was intended to only refer to areas used to park vehicles whose primary motivation means is through friction applied by rubber-tires to surfaces and that move under self-contained power sources. This would then exclude this specific line of this rule from applying to airplane parking areas, since their primary motivation is through flying.

Does the ambiguous term “parking lots” apply to airplane parking areas?

#### **Interpretation**

The Interpretations Subcommittee has considered the subject Interpretation Request for Rule 232 and has developed a consensus report as follows:

“The question above involves application of the 1997 Edition of the NESC. Table 232-1 clearances shown for parking lots, both in the 1997 and subsequent editions, are intended to apply to all types of vehicles not exceeding 14 ft in height. Consequently, these clearances cover normal vehicles and other items that use or can be transported on public highways without special permits.

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The basis for the 14 ft vehicle height is shown in Table 232-3; see item b.) for parking lots. See also the tables for reference components in Appendix A. See Rule 012C and Table 232-1, footnote 26 (in the 2007 Edition) for oversized vehicles. Note that there are errata to the 2007 Edition; see metric Table 232-1 for application of footnote 26.

The term “parking lots,” as used in the NESC, is not intended to apply to airplane parking areas. Assuming that the parking area is in a no-fly zone, clearances should be determined on a site-specific basis (but should not be less than otherwise required by the NESC). Note that the FAA may have jurisdiction over such parking areas even in a no-fly zone; if so, FAA regulations apply.