

Bulletin 26-26-6

Receptacles for unfinished basements, utility rooms, laundry rooms, laundry closets and bath tub or shower stall areas in residential occupancies

Rules 26-720 e) & g) and 26-654 b) & c)

Issued May 2025

Supersedes Bulletin 26-26-5

Scope

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Receptacles for unfinished basement areas
- 3) Receptacles for laundry rooms
- 4) Receptacles for utility rooms
- 5) Receptacles for laundry closets
- 6) Receptacles located near a bath tub or a shower stall area

1) Introduction

In addition to this Bulletin, several other Bulletins provide clarification for protection requirements for receptacles in residential installations. These Bulletins should be considered:

- Bulletin 26-18-* Arc fault circuit interrupter (AFCI) in a dwelling unit;
- Bulletin 26-25-* Tamper-resistant receptacles; and
- Bulletin 26-29-* Electrical replacement and/or alterations in dwelling units

2) Receptacles for unfinished basement areas

Rule 26-720 e) iv) requires at least one duplex receptacle to be provided for any unfinished basement area. Receptacles required by Rule 26-720 must be mounted not more than 1.7 m above the floor (Rule 26-720 j)).

Typically, in residential occupancies, unfinished basements contain equipment such as water heaters, furnaces, sump pumps etc.

- The Ontario Electrical Safety Code (OESC) does not require a designated receptacle or a dedicated branch circuit for a sump pump.
- The OESC does not require a designated receptacle or a dedicated branch circuit for a gas water heater, as also discussed in Bulletin 26-24-*, topic (5).
- The required receptacle for either an unfinished basement or a utility room is permitted to be used as a receptacle required for a sump pump or a gas water heater.

Question 1

If wood studding is installed to divide an open basement into areas for future rooms, are receptacles required in each unfinished area, as per Rule 26-720 e) iv) and Diagram B1?

Answer 1

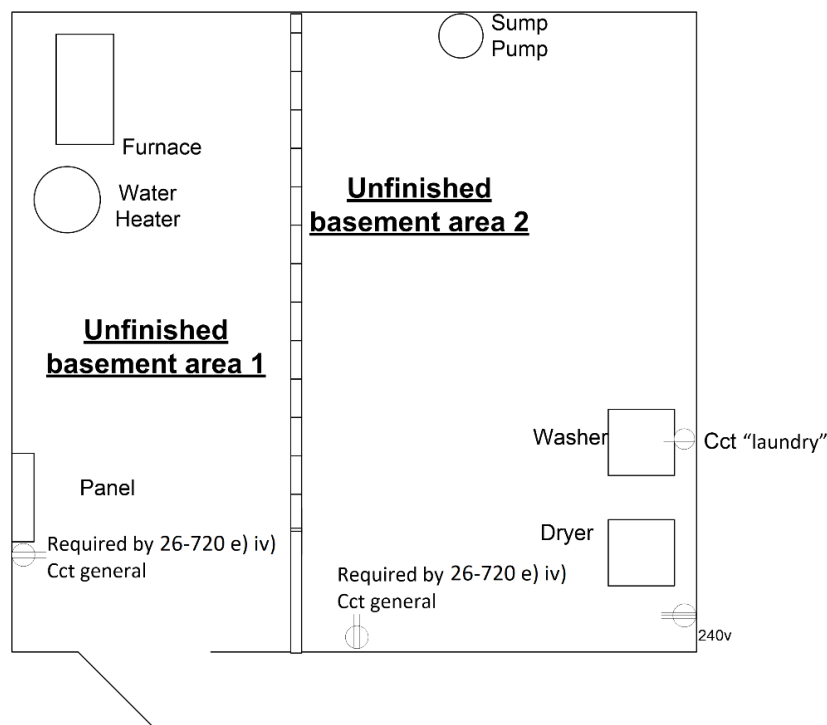
Yes. If wood studding is installed (even though no drywall is installed) to divide an open unfinished basement into more than one area for future rooms, a receptacle is required in each unfinished area, as per the Rule 26-720 e) iv) requirement.

Additionally, if one of the unfinished basement areas contains complete plumbing to accommodate a washing machine, then the additional requirements for a laundry receptacle apply, as per Rule 26-720 e) i), in addition to requirements for unfinished basement area receptacle(s), as per Diagram B1. However, if one of the areas is designated as a laundry room or a utility room, then the requirements for laundry or utility room receptacles apply, as per Rule 26-720 e) i) and ii) or iii).

Rationale 1

Rule 26-720 e) iv) requires at least one duplex receptacle in any unfinished basement area. The Rule refers to an “area” not to a room, therefore, if studs are installed to divide the whole basement into separate areas, each area is required to have at least one duplex receptacle, see Diagram B1. Moreover, receptacles required by items i) through iv) in Rule 26-720 e) are separate receptacles (the items are prefixed by the word “and”). A washing machine receptacle (where complete plumbing work is done for a washing machine) is still required, in addition to any receptacle(s) required for an “unfinished basement”.

Diagram B1 – Divided unfinished basement areas

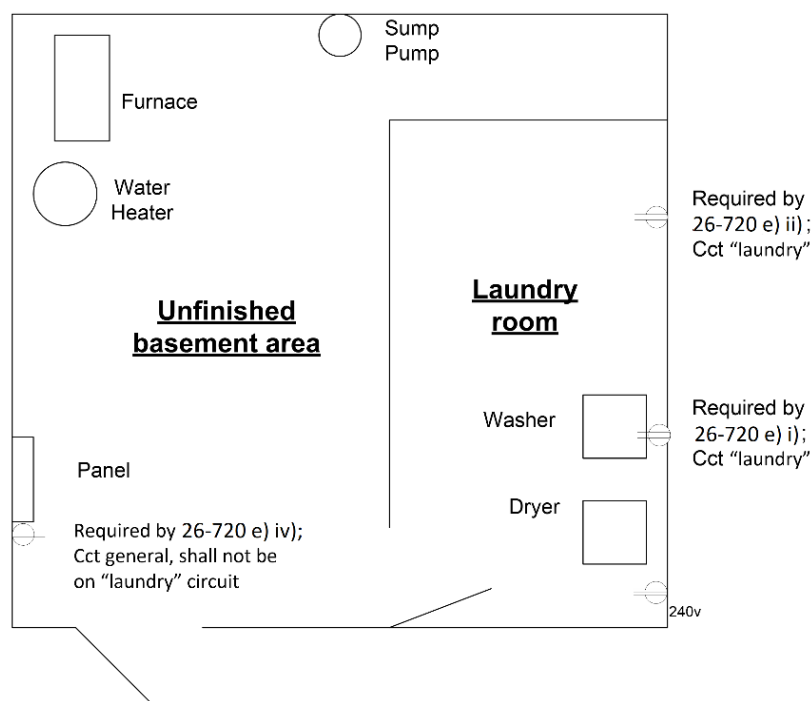


3) Receptacles and branch circuit for laundry rooms

A receptacle is required in each space where the complete plumbing is installed to accommodate a washing machine, as per Rule 26-720 e) i). Also, at least one additional receptacle is required in the laundry room as per Rule 26-720 e) ii) and Diagram B2.

Rule 26-654 b) requires at least one branch circuit to be provided solely for receptacles installed in the laundry rooms, as per Diagram B2.

Diagram B2 – Receptacles and branch circuit for laundry room



Rule 26-720 e) iii) requires at least one duplex receptacle to be provided for each utility room, as per Diagram B3.

Rule 26-654 c) requires at least one branch circuit to be provided solely for receptacles installed in the utility room, as per Diagram B3.

In an open unfinished basement in dwelling units, where no dedicated utility room exists, and typical utility equipment is installed in the area, there is no Code requirement for the utility room receptacle and the branch circuit, as per Diagram B2 (utility room is not defined).

For the utility area within the laundry room (as shown on Diagram B4), no additional utility room receptacle is required by the OESC. If additional receptacles are provided, as needed for cord connected equipment (i.e.: gas water heater), they shall be within reach of the equipment to ensure that extension cords are not used as a substitute for fixed wiring.

Diagram B3 – Receptacles and branch circuit for the utility room

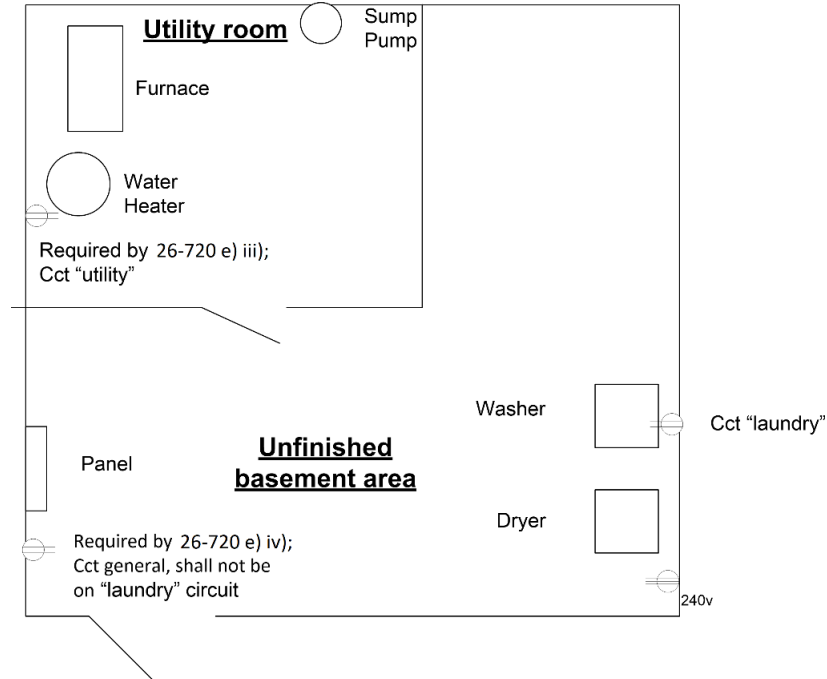
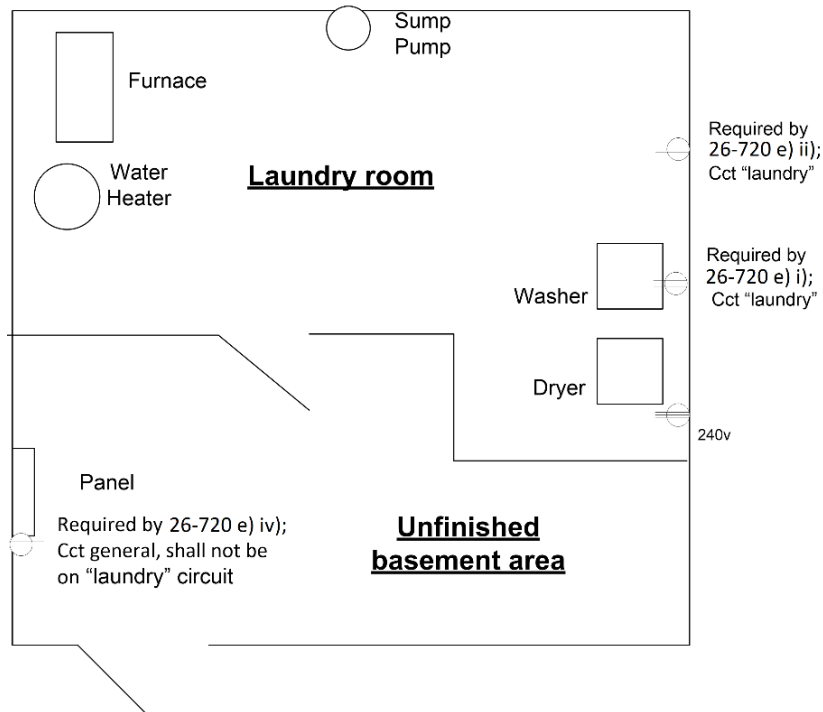


Diagram B4 – Receptacles and branch circuit for a laundry room that includes utility room equipment



5) Receptacles for laundry closets

In laundry closets, where the complete plumbing is installed to accommodate a washing machine, at least one duplex receptacle shall be provided, as per Rule 26-720 e) i). A laundry closet is not a laundry room and a receptacle specified by Rule 26-720 e) ii) is not required.

Question 2

Where the stacking washer/dryer is installed (as shown on Photo B1) and fed with only a 240 V receptacle feed, is the 120 V washing machine receptacle (Rule 26-720 e) i)) required to be installed?

Answer 2

No. Where the stacking washer/dryer is installed and fed with only a 240 V receptacle feed, the 120 V washing machine receptacle (Rule 26-720 e) i)) is permitted to be omitted. The 240 V receptacle shall be considered as satisfying the washing machine receptacle required by Rule 26-720 e) i).

Photo B1 – Laundry closet



6) Receptacles located near a bathtub or shower stall area

Question 3

Does the OESC contain rules permitting the installation of an entertainment device, such as a television, to be located near a bath tub or shower stall?

Answer 3

No. Rule 26-720 g) contains rules for the receptacle only, which is to be located at least 1 m from the bath tub or shower stall. The distance is measured horizontally between

the receptacle and bath tub or shower without piercing a wall, partition or similar obstacle.

Note

The Rule states that receptacles installed in bathrooms shall, **where practicable**, be located at least 1 m but in no case less than 500 mm from the bathtub or shower stall.

Question 4

If the installation of a television renders the receptacle inaccessible, can a deviation be permitted to allow the receptacle to be installed within the distance limitations in Rule 26-720 g)?

Answer 4

No.

Rationale 4

There is no guarantee a television will be present for the life of the installation. Removing the television for any future reason (moving, change tenant, etc) will expose the installed receptacle to water, which could present a significant electrocution hazard. Prohibiting such an installation helps minimize the use of shavers, radios, hair dryers, and so on, in these areas.

