

CHAPTER 3



USE AND OCCUPANCY CLASSIFICATION

User note: Code change proposals to sections preceded by the designation [F] will be considered by the International Fire Code Development Committee during the 2016 (Group B) Code Development Cycle. See explanation on page ix.

SECTION 301 GENERAL

301.1 Scope. The provisions of this chapter shall control the classification of all buildings and structures as to use and occupancy.

SECTION 302 CLASSIFICATION

302.1 General. Structures or portions of structures shall be classified with respect to occupancy in one or more of the groups listed in this section. A room or space that is intended to be occupied at different times for different purposes shall comply with all of the requirements that are applicable to each of the purposes for which the room or space will be occupied. Structures with multiple occupancies or uses shall comply with Section 508. **Where a structure is proposed for a purpose that is not specifically provided for in this code, such structure shall be classified in the group that the occupancy most nearly resembles, according to the fire safety and relative hazard involved.**

1. Assembly (see Section 303): Groups A-1, A-2, A-3, A-4 and A-5
2. Business (see Section 304): Group B
3. Educational (see Section 305): Group E
4. Factory and Industrial (see Section 306): Groups F-1 and F-2
5. High Hazard (see Section 307): Groups H-1, H-2, H-3, H-4 and H-5
6. Institutional (see Section 308): Groups I-1, I-2, I-2.1, I-3 and I-4
7. *[SFM] Laboratory (see Section 202): Group B, unless classified as Group L (see Section 453) or Group H (see Section 307).*
8. Mercantile (see Section 309): Group M
9. *[SFM] Organized Camps (see Section 450): Group C.*
10. *[SFM] Research Laboratories (see Section 453): Group L*
11. Residential (see Section 310): Groups R-1, R-2, R-2.1, R-3, R-3.1 and R-4.
12. Storage (see Section 311): Groups S-1 and S-2
13. Utility and Miscellaneous (see Section 312): Group U

[SFM] Existing buildings housing existing protective social care homes or facilities established prior to 1972 (see California Fire Code Chapter 11 and California Existing Building Code).

302.1.1 Reserved

302.1.2 Reserved

302.1.3 Pharmacies; veterinary facilities; barbering, cosmetology or electrolysis establishments; and acupuncture offices. See Chapter 12.

SECTION 303 ASSEMBLY GROUP A

303.1 Assembly Group A. Assembly Group A occupancy includes, among others, the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, for the gathering of persons for purposes such as civic, social or religious functions; recreation, food or drink consumption or awaiting transportation; *motion picture and television production studio sound stages, approved production facilities and production locations; or for the showing of motion pictures when an admission fee is charged and when such building or structure is open to the public and has a capacity of 10 or more persons.*

303.1.1 Small buildings and tenant spaces. A building or tenant space used for assembly purposes with an occupant load of less than 50 persons shall be classified as a Group B occupancy.

303.1.2 Small assembly spaces. The following rooms and spaces shall not be classified as Assembly occupancies:

1. A room or space used for assembly purposes with an occupant load of less than 50 persons and accessory to another occupancy shall be classified as a Group B occupancy or as part of that occupancy.
2. A room or space used for assembly purposes that is less than 750 square feet (70 m²) in area and accessory to another occupancy shall be classified as a Group B occupancy or as part of that occupancy.

303.1.3 Associated with Group E occupancies. A room or space used for assembly purposes that is associated with a Group E occupancy is not considered a separate occupancy.

303.1.4 Accessory to places of religious worship. Accessory religious educational rooms and religious auditoriums with occupant loads of less than 100 per room or space are not considered separate occupancies.

303.2 Assembly Group A-1: Assembly uses, usually with fixed seating, intended for the production and viewing of the performing arts or motion pictures including, but not limited to:

Motion picture and television production studio sound stages, approved production facilities and production locations. (with live audiences).

Motion picture theaters

Symphony and concert halls

Television and radio studios admitting an audience

Theaters

than six children 2 years of age and older who receive educational, supervision or personal care services for fewer than 24 hours per day.

Exception: [SFM] A Day-care facility not otherwise classified as an R-3 occupancy, where occupants are not capable of responding to an emergency situation without physical assistance from the staff shall be classified as Group I-4.

305.2.1 Within places of religious worship. Rooms and spaces within places of religious worship providing such day care during religious functions shall be classified as part of the primary occupancy where not licensed for day-care purposes by the Department of Social Services.

**SECTION 306
FACTORY GROUP F**

306.1 Factory Industrial Group F. Factory Industrial Group F occupancy includes, among others, the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, for assembling, disassembling, fabricating, finishing, manufacturing, packaging, repair or processing operations that are not classified as a Group H hazardous or Group S storage occupancy.

306.2 Moderate-hazard factory industrial, Group F-1. Factory industrial uses which are not classified as Factory Industrial F-2 Low Hazard shall be classified as F-1 Moderate Hazard and shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Aircraft (manufacturing, not to include repair)
- Appliances
- Athletic equipment
- Automobiles and other motor vehicles
- Bakeries
- Beverages: over 16-percent alcohol content
- Bicycles
- Boats
- Brooms or brushes
- Business machines
- Cameras and photo equipment
- Canvas or similar fabric
- Carpets and rugs (includes cleaning)
- Clothing
- Construction and agricultural machinery
- Disinfectants
- Dry cleaning and dyeing
- Electric generation plants
- Electronics
- Engines (including rebuilding)
- Food processing establishments and commercial kitchens not associated with restaurants, cafeterias and similar dining facilities not more than 2,500 square feet (232 m²) in area.
- Furniture
- Hemp products
- Jute products
- Laundries
- Leather products
- Machinery
- Metals
- Millwork (sash and door)
- [SFM] Motion picture and television production studio

- Sound Stages, Approved Production Facilities and production locations (without live audiences)
- Musical instruments
- Optical goods
- Paper mills or products
- Photographic film
- Plastic products
- Printing or publishing
- Recreational vehicles
- Refuse incineration
- Shoes
- Soaps and detergents
- Textiles
- Tobacco
- Trailers
- Upholstering
- Wood; distillation
- Woodworking (cabinet)

306.3 Low-hazard factory industrial, Group F-2. Factory industrial uses that involve the fabrication or manufacturing of noncombustible materials which during finishing, packing or processing do not involve a significant fire hazard shall be classified as F-2 occupancies and shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Beverages: up to and including 16-percent alcohol content
- Brick and masonry
- Ceramic products
- Foundries
- Glass products
- Gypsum
- Ice
- Metal products (fabrication and assembly)

**SECTION 307
HIGH-HAZARD GROUP H**

[F] **307.1 High-hazard Group H.** High-hazard Group H occupancy includes, among others, the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, that involves the manufacturing, processing, generation or storage of materials that constitute a physical or health hazard in quantities in excess of those allowed in control areas complying with Section 414, based on the maximum allowable quantity limits for control areas set forth in Tables 307.1(1) and 307.1(2). Hazardous occupancies are classified in Groups H-1, H-2, H-3, H-4 and H-5 and shall be in accordance with this section, the requirements of Section 415 and the *California Fire Code*. Hazardous materials stored, or used on top of roofs or canopies shall be classified as outdoor storage or use and shall comply with the *California Fire Code*.

[F] **307.1.1 Uses other than Group H.** An occupancy that stores, uses or handles hazardous materials as described in one or more of the following items shall not be classified as Group H, but shall be classified as the occupancy that it most nearly resembles.

1. Buildings and structures occupied for the application of flammable finishes, provided that such buildings or areas conform to the requirements of Section 416 and the *California Fire Code*.

USE AND OCCUPANCY CLASSIFICATION

Dairy products in nonwaxed coated paper containers
Dry cell batteries
Electrical coils
Electrical motors
Empty cans
Food products
Foods in noncombustible containers
Fresh fruits and vegetables in nonplastic trays or containers
Frozen foods
Glass
Glass bottles, empty or filled with noncombustible liquids
Gypsum board
Inert pigments
Ivory
Meats
Metal cabinets
Metal desks with plastic tops and trim
Metal parts
Metals
Mirrors
Oil-filled and other types of distribution transformers
Parking garages, open or enclosed
Porcelain and pottery
Stoves
Talc and soapstones
Washers and dryers

SECTION 312 UTILITY AND MISCELLANEOUS GROUP U

312.1 General. Buildings and structures of an accessory character and miscellaneous structures not classified in any specific occupancy shall be constructed, equipped and maintained to conform to the requirements of this code commensurate with the fire and life hazard incidental to their occupancy. Group U shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

Agricultural buildings
Aircraft hangars, accessory to a one- or two-family residence (see Section 412.5)
Barns
Carports
Fences more than 6 feet (1829 mm) in height
Grain silos, accessory to a residential occupancy
Greenhouses
Livestock shelters
Private garages
Retaining walls
Sheds
Stables
Tanks
Towers

SECTION 313 LABORATORIES GROUP L [SFM]

313.1 Laboratories Group L. [SFM] Group L occupancy includes the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, containing one or more laboratory suites as defined in Section 453.

SECTION 314 ORGANIZED CAMPS GROUP C [SFM]

314.1 Organized Camps Group C. [SFM] An organized camp is a site with programs and facilities established for the primary purpose of providing an outdoor group living experience with social, spiritual, educational or recreational objectives, for five days or more during one or more seasons of the year.