

PIKES PEAK REGIONAL BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Basic Occupancy Classification – 2009 IBC

Commercial

The Pikes Peak Regional Building Department is responsible for enforcement of building codes within the City of Colorado Springs, Unincorporated El Paso County, Fountain, Monument, Manitou, Palmer Lake, and Green Mountain Falls. Pikes Peak Regional Building does not have jurisdiction on state or federal owned property.

The jurisdictions listed above have adopted the 2005 Pikes Peak Regional Building Code (soon to be the 2011 PPRBC). This regional code adopts the International family of codes by reference. For purposes of discussion this document will focus only on the 2009 International Building Code but this information is relevant to other model codes. The information provided below is applicable only to the building code and does not apply to zoning codes.

The International Building Code, or IBC as it is commonly referred to requires all building or tenant spaces be assigned an “occupancy classification”. The occupancy classification is based upon the use of the space. The IBC uses this occupancy classification to address requirements specific to the intended use. As an example one would not expect a storage warehouse to meet the same life safety requirements of a hospital. When a new building is constructed or a new tenant space is finished the Certificate of Occupancy is generated. The Certificate of Occupancy (or CO) lists the occupancy classification among other things. This certificate allows the current business to use the space in accordance with the occupancy classification of the building. Provided the use or occupancy classification of the building does not change the building may exist as is; only work done to the building must meet current codes.

Should a building or tenant space become vacant the Certificate of Occupancy should be reviewed prior to a new tenant. Provided the use remains within the same occupancy classification the existing Certificate of Occupancy is still valid. If the new use falls within a different occupancy classification the building or tenant space will require a new Certificate of Occupancy. This process may require the building to be brought into full compliance with building codes. It is highly suggested that a licensed design professional (Architect or Engineer) familiar with building codes be consulted. The process of changing the occupancy classification of an existing building is not always a difficult process but can be very frustrating when it is not anticipated.

Pikes Peak Regional Building maintains records of all building within the jurisdiction but some buildings are older than the building department and in some cases the records do not exist. An excellent source of this information is www.pprbd.org. From the main page click on “Permits” then “Find Permits” and then “By Address”. At the next window enter the address of the space in question. The following page will list all of the permits issued, under the address there may be a “Commercial Certificate of Occupancy” number. This number is a link to the most current Certificate of Occupancy for the space.

Following is excerpt from the 2009 International Building Code. This is the criteria used to assign an occupancy classification. Please keep in mind that the Building Department is responsible for the determination and verification of occupancy classifications.

**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.

Exceptions:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. A room or space used for assembly purposes that is less than 750 square feet (70m²) in area and accessory to another occupancy shall be classified as a Group B occupancy or as part of that occupancy.
4. Assembly areas that are accessory to Group E occupancies are not considered separate occupancies except when applying the assembly occupancy requirements of Chapter 11.
5. Accessory religious educational rooms and religious auditoriums with occupant loads of less than 100 are not considered separate occupancies.

Assembly occupancies shall include the following:

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 theaters
Symphony and concert halls
Television and radio studios admitting an audience
Theaters

A-2 Assembly uses intended for food and/or drink consumption including, but not limited to:

Banquet halls
Night clubs
Restaurants
Taverns and bars

A-3 Assembly uses intended for worship, recreation or amusement and other assembly uses not classified elsewhere in Group A including, but not limited to:

Amusement arcades
Art galleries
Bowling alleys
Community halls
Courtrooms
Dance halls (not including food or drink consumption)
Exhibition halls
Funeral parlors
Gymnasiums (without spectator seating)
Indoor swimming pools (without spectator seating)
Indoor tennis courts (without spectator seating)
Lecture halls
Libraries
Museums
Places of religious worship

Pool and billiard parlors
Waiting areas in transportation terminals

A-4 Assembly uses intended for viewing of indoor sporting events and activities with spectator seating including, but not limited to:

Arenas
Skating rinks
Swimming pools
Tennis courts

A-5 Assembly uses intended for participation in or viewing outdoor activities including, but not limited to:

Amusement park structures
Bleachers
Grandstands
Stadiums

**SECTION 304
BUSINESS GROUP B**

304.1 Business Group B. Business Group B occupancy includes, among others, the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, for office, professional or service-type transactions, including storage of records and accounts. Business occupancies shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

Airport traffic control towers
Ambulatory health care facilities
Animal hospitals, kennels and pounds
Banks
Barber and beauty shops
Car wash
Civic administration
Clinic—outpatient
Dry cleaning and laundries: pick-up and delivery stations and self-service
Educational occupancies for students above the 12th grade
Electronic data processing
Laboratories: testing and research
Motor vehicle showrooms
Post offices
Print shops
Professional services (architects, attorneys, dentists, physicians, engineers, etc.)
Radio and television stations
Telephone exchanges
Training and skill development not within a school or academic program

304.1.1 Definitions. The following words and terms shall, for the purposes of this section and as used elsewhere in this code, have the meanings shown herein.

CLINIC, OUTPATIENT. Buildings or portions thereof used to provide medical care on less than a 24-hour basis to individuals who are not rendered incapable of self-preservation by the services provided.

**SECTION 305
EDUCATIONAL GROUP E**

305.1 Educational Group E. Educational Group E occupancy includes, among others, the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, by six or more persons at any one time for educational purposes through the 12th grade. Religious educational rooms and religious auditoriums, which are accessory to *places of religious worship* in accordance with Section 303.1 and have *occupant loads* of less than 100, shall be classified as A-3 occupancies.

305.2 Day care. The use of a building or structure, or portion thereof, for educational, supervision or *personal care services* for more than five children older than 2¹/₂ years of age, shall be classified as a Group E occupancy.

**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 Factory Industrial F-1 Moderate-hazard Occupancy. 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
- Furniture
- Hemp products
- Jute products
- Laundries
- Leather products
- Machinery
- Metals
- Millwork (sash and door)
- Motion pictures and television filming (without spectators)
- 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 Factory Industrial F-2 Low-hazard Occupancy. 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 *International 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 *International Fire Code*.

Exceptions: The following shall not be classified as Group H, but shall be classified as the occupancy that they most nearly resemble.

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 *International Fire Code*.
2. Wholesale and retail sales and storage of flammable and combustible liquids in mercantile occupancies conforming to the *International Fire Code*.
3. Closed piping system containing flammable or combustible liquids or gases utilized for the operation of machinery or equipment.
4. Cleaning establishments that utilize combustible liquid solvents having a flash point of 140°F (60°C) or higher in closed systems employing equipment *listed* by an *approved* testing agency, provided that this occupancy is separated from all other areas of the building by 1-hour *fire barriers* constructed in accordance with Section 707 or 1-hour *horizontal assemblies* constructed in accordance with Section 712, or both.

5. Cleaning establishments that utilize a liquid solvent having a flash point at or above 200°F (93°C).
6. Liquor stores and distributors without bulk storage.
7. Refrigeration systems.
8. The storage or utilization of materials for agricultural purposes on the premises.
9. Stationary batteries utilized for facility emergency power, uninterrupted power supply or telecommunication facilities, provided that the batteries are provided with safety venting caps and ventilation is provided in accordance with the *International Mechanical Code*.
10. Corrosives shall not include personal or household products in their original packaging used in retail display or commonly used building materials.
11. Buildings and structures occupied for aerosol storage shall be classified as Group S-1, provided that such buildings conform to the requirements of the *International Fire Code*.
12. Display and storage of nonflammable solid and nonflammable or noncombustible liquid hazardous materials in quantities not exceeding the maximum allowable quantity per *control area* in Group M or S occupancies complying with Section 414.2.5.
13. The storage of black powder, smokeless propellant and small arms primers in Groups M and R-3 and special industrial explosive devices in Groups B, F, M and S, provided such storage conforms to the quantity limits and requirements prescribed in the *International Fire Code*.

For further information on H occupancies please consult the 2009 *International Building code* or the appropriate authority.

SECTION 308 INSTITUTIONAL GROUP I

308.1 Institutional Group I. Institutional Group I occupancy includes, among others, the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, in which people are cared for or live in a supervised environment, having physical limitations because of health or age are harbored for medical treatment or other care or treatment, or in which people are detained for penal or correctional purposes or in which the liberty of the occupants is restricted. Institutional occupancies shall be classified as Group I-1, I-2, I-3 or I-4.

308.2 Group I-1. This occupancy shall include buildings, structures or parts thereof housing more than 16 persons, on a 24-hour basis, who because of age, mental disability or other reasons, live in a supervised residential environment that provides *personal care services*. The occupants are capable of responding to an emergency situation without physical assistance from staff. This group shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Alcohol and drug centers
- Assisted living facilities
- Congregate care facilities
- Convalescent facilities
- Group homes
- Halfway houses
- Residential board and care facilities
- Social rehabilitation facilities

A facility such as the above with five or fewer persons shall be classified as a Group R-3 or shall comply with the *International Residential Code* in accordance with Section 101.2. A facility such as above, housing at least six and not more than 16 persons,

shall be classified as Group R-4.

308.3 Group I-2. This occupancy shall include buildings and structures used for medical, surgical, psychiatric, nursing or custodial care for persons who are not capable of self-preservation. This group shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Child care facilities
- Detoxification facilities
- Hospitals
- Mental hospitals
- Nursing homes

308.3.1 Definitions. The following words and terms shall, for the purposes of this section and as used elsewhere in this code, have the meanings shown herein.

CHILD CARE FACILITIES. Facilities that provide care on a 24-hour basis to more than five children, 2¹/₂ years of age or less.

DETOXIFICATION FACILITIES. Facilities that serve patients who are provided treatment for substance abuse on a 24-hour basis and who are incapable of self-preservation or who are harmful to themselves or others.

HOSPITALS AND MENTAL HOSPITALS. Buildings or portions thereof used on a 24-hour basis for the medical, psychiatric, obstetrical or surgical treatment of inpatients who are incapable of self-preservation.

NURSING HOMES. Nursing homes are long-term care facilities on a 24-hour basis, including both intermediate care facilities and skilled nursing facilities, serving more than five persons and any of the persons are incapable of self-preservation.

308.4 Group I-3. This occupancy shall include buildings and structures that are inhabited by more than five persons who are under restraint or security. An I-3 facility is occupied by persons who are generally incapable of self-preservation due to security measures not under the occupants' control. This group shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Correctional centers
- Detention centers
- Jails
- Prerelease centers
- Prisons
- Reformatories

Buildings of Group I-3 shall be classified as one of the occupancy conditions indicated in Sections 308.4.1 through 308.4.5 (see Section 408.1).

308.5 Group I-4, day care facilities. This group shall include buildings and structures occupied by persons of any age who receive custodial care for less than 24 hours by individuals other than parents or guardians, relatives by blood, marriage or adoption, and in a place other than the home of the person cared for. A facility such as the above with five or fewer persons shall be classified as a Group R-3 or shall comply with the *International Residential Code* in accordance with Section 101.2. Places of worship during religious functions are not included.

308.5.1 Adult care facility. A facility that provides accommodations for less than 24 hours for more than five unrelated adults and provides supervision and *personal care services* shall be classified as Group I-4.

Exception: A facility where occupants are capable of responding to an emergency situation without physical assistance from the staff shall be classified as Group R-3.

308.5.2 Child care facility. A facility that provides supervision and personal care on less than a 24-hour basis for more than five children 2¹/₂ years of age or less shall be classified as Group I-4.

Exception: A child day care facility that provides care for more than five but no more than 100 children 2¹/₂ years or less of age, where the rooms in which the children are cared for are located on a *level of exit discharge* serving such rooms and each of these child care rooms has an *exit* door directly to the exterior, shall be classified as Group E.

SECTION 309 MERCANTILE GROUP M

309.1 Mercantile Group M. Mercantile Group M occupancy includes, among others, the use of a building or structure or a portion thereof, for the display and sale of merchandise and involves stocks of goods, wares or merchandise incidental to such purposes and accessible to the public. Mercantile occupancies shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Department stores
- Drug stores
- Markets
- Motor fuel-dispensing facilities
- Retail or wholesale stores
- Sales rooms

309.2 Quantity of hazardous materials. The aggregate quantity of nonflammable solid and nonflammable or noncombustible liquid hazardous materials stored or displayed in a single *control area* of a Group M occupancy shall not exceed the quantities in Table 414.2.5(1).

SECTION 310 RESIDENTIAL GROUP R

310.1 Residential Group R. Residential Group R includes, among others, the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, for sleeping purposes when not classified as an Institutional Group I or when not regulated by the *International Residential Code* in accordance with Section 101.2. Residential occupancies shall include the following:

R-1 Residential occupancies containing *sleeping units* where the occupants are primarily transient in nature, including:

- Boarding houses* (transient)
- Hotels (transient)
- Motels (transient)
- Congregate living facilities* (transient) with 10 or fewer occupants are permitted to comply with the construction requirements for Group R-3.

R-2 Residential occupancies containing *sleeping units* or more than two *dwelling units* where the occupants are primarily permanent in nature, including:

- Apartment houses
- Boarding houses* (nontransient)

- Convents
- Dormitories
- Fraternities and sororities
- Hotels (nontransient)
- Live/work units
- Monasteries
- Motels (nontransient)
- Vacation timeshare properties
- Congregate living facilities* with 16 or fewer occupants are permitted to comply with the construction requirements for Group R-3.

R-3 Residential occupancies where the occupants are primarily permanent in nature and not classified as Group R-1, R-2, R-4 or I, including:

- Buildings that do not contain more than two *dwelling units*.
- Adult care facilities that provide accommodations for five or fewer persons of any age for less than 24 hours.
- Child care facilities that provide accommodations for five or fewer persons of any age for less than 24 hours.
- Congregate living facilities* with 16 or fewer persons.
- Adult care and child care facilities that are within a single-family home are permitted to comply with the *International Residential Code*.

R-4 Residential occupancies shall include buildings arranged for occupancy as residential care/assisted living facilities including more than five but not more than 16 occupants, excluding staff. Group R-4 occupancies shall meet the requirements for construction as defined for Group R-3, except as otherwise provided for in this code or shall comply with the *International Residential Code* provided the building is protected by an *automatic sprinkler system* installed in accordance with Section 903.2.8.

310.2 Definitions. The following words and terms shall, for the purposes of this section and as used elsewhere in this code, have the meanings shown herein.

BOARDING HOUSE. A building arranged or used for lodging for compensation, with or without meals, and not occupied as a single-family unit.

CONGREGATE LIVING FACILITIES. A building or part thereof that contains sleeping units where residents share bathroom and/or kitchen facilities.

DORMITORY. A space in a building where group sleeping accommodations are provided in one room, or in a series of closely associated rooms, for persons not members of the same family group, under joint occupancy and single management, as in college dormitories or fraternity houses.

PERSONAL CARE SERVICE. The care of residents who do not require chronic or convalescent medical or nursing care. Personal care involves responsibility for the safety of the resident while inside the building.

RESIDENTIAL CARE/ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES. A building or part thereof housing persons, on a 24-hour basis, who because of age, mental disability or other reasons, live in a supervised residential environment which provides *personal care services*. The occupants are capable of responding to an emergency situation without physical assistance from staff. This classification shall include, but not be limited to, the following: residential board and care facilities, assisted living facilities, halfway houses, group homes, congregate care facilities, social rehabilitation facilities, alcohol and drug abuse centers and convalescent facilities.

TRANSIENT. Occupancy of a *dwelling unit* or *sleeping unit* for not more than 30 days.

SECTION 311 STORAGE GROUP S

311.1 Storage Group S. Storage Group S occupancy includes, among others, the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, for storage that is not classified as a hazardous occupancy.

311.2 Moderate-hazard storage, Group S-1. Buildings occupied for storage uses that are not classified as Group S-2, including, but not limited to, storage of the following:

- Aerosols, Levels 2 and 3
- Aircraft hangar (storage and repair)
- Bags: cloth, burlap and paper
- Bamboos and rattan
- Baskets
- Belting: canvas and leather
- Books and paper in rolls or packs
- Boots and shoes
- Buttons, including cloth covered, pearl or bone
- Cardboard and cardboard boxes
- Clothing, woolen wearing apparel
- Cordage
- Dry boat storage (indoor)
- Furniture
- Furs
- Glues, mucilage, pastes and size
- Grains
- Horns and combs, other than celluloid
- Leather
- Linoleum
- Lumber
- Motor vehicle repair garages complying with the maximum allowable quantities of hazardous materials listed in Table 307.1(1) (see Section 406.6)
- Photo engravings
- Resilient flooring
- Silks
- Soaps
- Sugar
- Tires, bulk storage of
- Tobacco, cigars, cigarettes and snuff
- Upholstery and mattresses
- Wax candles

311.3 Low-hazard storage, Group S-2. Includes, among others, buildings used for the storage of noncombustible materials such as products on wood pallets or in paper cartons with or without single thickness divisions; or in paper wrappings. Such products are permitted to have a negligible amount of plastic *trim*, such as knobs, handles or film wrapping. Group S-2 storage uses shall include, but not be limited to, storage of the following:

- Asbestos
- Beverages up to and including 16-percent alcohol in metal, glass or ceramic containers
- Cement in bags
- Chalk and crayons
- 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) high
- Grain silos, accessory to a residential occupancy
- Greenhouses
- Livestock shelters
- Private garages
- Retaining walls
- Sheds
- Stables
- Tanks
- Towers