



Fire Department

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CODE SUMMARY

GROUP A OCCUPANCIES – ASSEMBLY BUILDINGS

A code summary is a compilation of code sections related to a specific occupancy or permit. This code summary lists sections of code pertaining to Assembly Buildings as defined by the **California Fire Code**. Under each heading you will find the correlating code language and the reference cited. These requirements pertain to existing buildings. New construction may be subject to additional requirements. Please feel free to direct any questions to the Fire Prevention Division at (805) 681-5500.

SCOPE

Group A Occupancies defined:

Includes, among others, the use of a building or structure, or portion thereof, for the gathering of persons in amount of 50 or more for purposes such as civic, social or religious functions; recreation, food or drink consumptions.

Group A-1 defined: 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 and concert halls.

Group A-2 defined: Assembly uses intended for food and/or drink consumption including, but not limited to: banquet halls, night clubs, restaurants, taverns and bars.

Group A-3 defined: Assembly uses intended for worship, recreation or amusement and other uses not classified elsewhere in Group A, including, but not limited to: art galleries, bowling alleys, auditoriums, community halls, churches, funeral parlors, courtrooms, indoor swimming, dance halls, exhibition halls, libraries, gymnasiums, lecture halls, museums, and passenger stations.

Group A-4 defined: Assembly uses intended for viewing of indoor sporting events and activities with spectator seating.

Group A-5 defined: Assembly uses intended for participation in or viewing outdoor activities including, but not limited to: amusement park structures, bleachers, grandstands and stadiums.

1. Extinguishers Required:

- A. One Class 2-A rated fire extinguisher shall be provided for each 3000 sq. ft. of ordinary hazard fuel load. Travel distance shall not exceed 75 feet. (CFC 906.3)
- B. If Class B fuel hazards are present, a Class B rated fire extinguisher shall be provided in accordance with Table 906.3(2) of the CFC. (CFC 906.3)

TYPE OF HAZARD	BASIC MINIMUM EXTINGUISHER RATING	MAXIMUM TRAVEL DISTANCE TO EXTINGUISHERS	
		(in feet)	(in meters)
<i>Light (low)</i>	<i>5B</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>9.15</i>
	<i>10B</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>15.25</i>
<i>Ordinary (moderate)</i>	<i>10B</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>9.15</i>
	<i>20B</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>15.25</i>
<i>Extra (high)</i>	<i>40B</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>9.15</i>
	<i>80B</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>15.25</i>

- C. Fire extinguisher shall not be obstructed or obscured from view. (CFC 906.6)

- D. Fire extinguishers not housed in cabinets, shall be installed on the hangers or brackets supplied. Hangers or brackets shall be securely anchored to the mounting surface in accordance with the manufacturer's installation instructions. (CFC 906.7)
- E. Extinguishers shall be inspected monthly by the building owner or occupant, or electronically monitored. (T19 Sec. 574.1)
- F. Extinguishers shall be subject to maintenance annually by licensed technician. (T19 Sec. 575.1)

2. Means of Egress:

- A. Means of egress shall be continuously maintained free from obstructions. (CFC 1030.1)
- B. Occupant loads shall be posted in a conspicuous place, near the main exit. (CFC 1004.3)
- C. Means of egress doors shall travel in direction of egress travel when occupant load is greater than 49. (CFC 1008.1.2)
- D. Egress doors shall be readily openable from the egress side without the use of a key or special knowledge or effort. (CFC 1008.1.9)
- E. Entrance doors in Group A shall not be secured from the egress side during periods that the building is open to the public. (CFC 1008.1.9.3)
- F. Manually operated flush bolts or surface bolts are not permitted. (CFC 1008.1.9.4)
- G. For Group A occupancies, doors shall be equipped with panic hardware or fire exit hardware. (CFC 1008.1.10)
 - a. Exception: In Group A Occupancies with an occupant load of 300 or less, and in places of religious worship, the main exterior door or doors is permitted to be equipped with key operated locking device from the egress side if the locking device is readily distinguishable as being locked and a sign is posted stating "THIS DOOR TO REMAIN UNLOCKED WHEN BUILDING IS OCCUPIED". Sign to be of durable construction and in letters at least one-inch high on contrasting background. (CFC 1008.1.9.3)
- H. The unlatching of any door shall not require more than one operation. (CFC 1008.9.5)
- I. Exit and exit access doors shall be marked by approved exit signs readily visible from any direction of egress travel. (CFC 1011.1)
- J. Exit signs shall be internally or externally illuminated at all times; sign that are supplied by the premises power supply shall be connected to an emergency power system that provides illumination for not less than 60 minutes in case of primary power loss. (CFC 1104.3 & 1104.5.1)

Exception:

 - 1.) Approved signs that are self-luminous and provide evenly illuminated letters having a minimum illumination of 0.06 foot-lamberts that provide luminance independent of external power sources.
- K. Means of egress shall not pass through kitchens, storage rooms, closets or spaces used for similar purposes, or through rooms subject to locking. (CFC 1014.2)
- L. At least two exits shall be provided from Group A Occupancies. (CFC 1015.1)
- M. Three exits shall be provided from any story, basement, or individual space when the occupant load of that area is between 501 and 1000 persons. (CFC 1015.1.1)
- N. Four exits shall be provided from any story, basement, or individual space when the occupant load of that area is exceeds 1000 persons. (CFC 1015.1.1)
- O. Total travel distance to an exit shall not exceed 200 feet in non-sprinklered buildings and 250 feet in sprinklered buildings. (CFC 1016.1)
- P. Required corridors shall not be less than 44 inches in width. (CFC 1018.2)
- Q. There shall be no dead end corridors more than 20 feet. (CFC 1018.4)

3. Housekeeping:

- A. Storage of combustible materials shall be orderly, with storage separated from heating devices by a distance or shielded so that ignition cannot occur. (CFC 315.3)
- B. Combustible waste containers larger than 40 gallons shall be constructed of noncombustible material or approved combustible material and provided with a lid. (CFC 304.3)
- C. Combustible waste containers larger than 1.5 cubic yards shall not be stored in buildings or placed within 5 feet of combustible walls, openings or combustible roof eave lines. (CFC 304.3.3)

- D. Materials subject to spontaneous ignition, such as oily rags, shall be stored in a listed disposal container. (CFC 304.3)
- E. Combustible materials shall not be stored in boiler rooms, mechanical rooms or electrical equipment rooms. (CFC 315.3.3)
- F. Storage shall be maintained 2 feet or more below the ceiling in nonsprinklered areas or a minimum of 18 inches below sprinkler deflectors in sprinklered areas of buildings. (CFC 315.3.1)
- G. Electrical motors shall be maintained free from excessive accumulations of oil, dirt, waste and debris. Means of egress shall not pass through kitchens, storage rooms, closets or spaces used for similar purposes, or through rooms subject to locking. (CFC 605.8)

4. Electrical

- A. A working space of not less than 30 inches in width, 36 inches in depth, and 78 inches in height shall be provided in front of electrical service equipment. Storage is prohibited within the designated working space. (CFC 605.3)
- B. Multiplug adaptors, such as cube adaptors, unfused plug strips or other such devices not complying with the California Electrical Code shall be prohibited. (CFC 605.4)
- C. Extension cords shall not be affixed to structures, extended through walls, ceilings or floors, or under doors or floor covering nor subject to physical damage. (CFC 605.4.3)
- D. Extension cords shall not be used in place of permanent wiring. (CFC 605.5)
- E. Appliance cords and extension cords shall be maintained in good condition without splices, deterioration or damage. (CFC 605.5.3)
- F. Open junction boxes and open wiring splices shall be prohibited. Approved covers shall be provided for all switch and electrical outlet boxes. (CFC 605.6)
- G. Temporary wiring is allowed for a period not to exceed 90 days; such wiring is allowed for longer periods for construction, remodeling, or repair work. (CFC 605.9)
- H. Portable electric heaters shall be plugged directly into a permanent receptacle. (CFC 605.10.2)

5. Flammable Liquids:

- A. Quantities of flammable and combustible liquids in excess of 10 gallons used for maintenance purposes and operation of equipment shall be stored in liquid storage cabinets. (CFC 5704.3.4.4)
- B. An operational permit is required for the storage, handling or use of more than 5 gallons of flammable liquid indoors or 10 gallons of flammable liquid outdoors. (CFC 105.6.16)
- C. An operational permit is required for the storage, handling or use of more than 25 gallons of combustible liquid indoors or 60 gallons of combustible liquid outdoors. (CFC 105.6.16)
- D. Storage of flammable liquids shall not exceed 30 gallons of Class 1A flammable liquid or 120 gallons of Class 1B and 1C flammable liquids per control area. Storage of Combustible liquids shall not exceed 120 gallons of Class 2 combustible liquid or 330 gallons of Class 3A combustible liquid. (CFC 5704.3.4.2)

Exceptions:

1. Maximum allowable quantities shall be increased 100 percent in buildings equipped throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system.
2. Maximum allowable quantities shall be increased 100 percent when stored in approved storage cabinets, day boxes, gas cabinets, exhausted enclosures or listed safety cans.
3. Where exception #1 and #2 both apply, increase for both exceptions shall be applied accumulatively.

6. Miscellaneous:

- A. An operational permit is required to operate a place of assembly. (CFC 105.6.34)
- B. An approved fire safety and evacuation plan shall be prepared and maintained for Group A occupancies other than Group A occupancies used exclusively for the purposes of religious worship with less than 2000. (CFC 404.2)
- C. An approved fire apparatus access road not less than 20 wide shall be provided for access to within 150 feet of all portions of the building. (CFC 503.1.1)

- D. Fire access roads shall be marked with approved signs or markings that state "NO PARKING FIRE LANE". Marking shall be maintained in clean, legible condition and repaired when necessary. (CFC 503.3)
- E. Fire access roads shall not be obstructed in any manner, including the parking of vehicles. (CFC 503.4)
- F. Exterior doors and their function cannot be eliminated without approval. If approved, and door retains the appearance as a functional, door shall be posted on the exterior "THIS DOOR BLOCKED". (CFC 504.2)
- G. All buildings shall have approved address numbers or building numbers placed in a position to be plainly legible from the street or road fronting the property. (CFC 505.1)
- H. Portable unvented fuel-fired heating equipment shall be prohibited in A occupancies. (CFC 604.4)
- I. Natural cut trees shall not be displayed except in areas protected by an approved sprinkler system. (CFC 806.1.1)
- J. Natural cut trees shall be removed from the building whenever the needles or leaves become dry and a fire hazard. (CFC 806.1.3)
- K. Exposed foam plastic materials and unprotected materials containing foam plastic used for decorative purposes, or stage scenery or exhibit booth shall have a maximum heat release rate of 100 kilowatts. (CFC 807.4.2)
 Exception: Trees located in areas protected by an approved automatic sprinkler system shall not be prohibited.
- L. Commercial cooking equipment that produces grease laden vapors shall be provided with an automatic fire extinguishing system listed and labeled for its intended use. (CFC 904.11)
- M. When required by the code official because of the number of persons or the nature of the performance or activity in a tent, the owner's agent or lessee shall employ one or more qualified persons to remain on duty when the place of assembly is open to the public, or when such activity is being conducted. (CFC 3104.20)
- N. All drapes, hangings, curtains and other decorative material, including Christmas trees that increase the fire and panic hazard shall be made from a nonflammable material or shall be treated and maintained in a flame retardant condition with a flame-retardant solution approved by the State Fire Marshal. (T19 Sec. 3.08)
- O. Open flame devices are prohibited in A occupancies with the exceptions for ceremonial or theatrical purposes, or approved candle holders in dining establishments. (T19 Sec. 3.25)
- P. Hand held open flame devices shall not be permitted in an A occupancy. (T19 Sec. 3.25)

NOTE: Blue indicates those requirements that pertain to new construction. No reference to these requirements in the existing construction section (Chapter 11)