

Bulletin: Occupant Load Calculations

Existing Buildings



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This bulletin is for informational purposes only and can change at any time.

The Building and Permitting Department receives many requests each year for occupant load calculations regarding existing buildings. This Bulletin is intended to clarify the services provided and those that we do not provide.

There are typically 3 different types of occupant load requests for existing buildings:

1. Liquor License Occupant Loads:

We provide these calculations for owners and/or operators of licensed liquor establishments. A General Permit (GP) application is required along with an application fee of \$150, 2 sets of detailed floor plans (no larger than 11"x17") and a large scale floor plan printed to scale. Plans must show all washrooms, exits, seating, fixtures and furniture. An Architect can also provide this service, however this will still need to be reviewed and approved by the authority having jurisdiction.

2. Meeting Room Occupant Loads (in existing buildings):

The Fire Department may require an occupant load calculation for a meeting room, or similar public space, in an existing building under the BC Fire Code. The Building and Permitting Department does **not** provide these calculations. The BC Fire Code, section A-2.7.1.3(1) specifically states that the BC Building Code should *not* be used to determine occupant loads in existing buildings. The Building and Permitting Department is only able to apply BC Building Code requirements. An Architect will be needed to provide this service.

3. Special Event Occupant Loads (in existing buildings or open spaces):

The Fire Department may require an occupant load calculation for a special event under the BC Fire Code. Special Event Occupant Load calculations are **not** provided by the Building and Permitting Department for the same reasons as stated above (item 2). An Architect will be needed to provide this service.

** If a patio or deck has a roof structure, water closets must be adequate for total area of the interior and all decks/patios.

** If a deck/patio is open, water closets must be adequate for 100% of the interior area plus 50% of all decks/patios total area.

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This bulletin is a summary of requirements for convenience only, please refer to current editions of the BC Building Code and BC Fire Code for complete information.