



Commercial Permits



Overview

It is important for any perspective building owner or tenant to understand that buildings are built in such a manner as to satisfy the building code requirements for its intended use. If for any reason, the use of that building or any portion thereof changes from its initial design use, the space must be evaluated by a registered architect to ensure that the building complies with the applicable codes. The building systems (water, electrical, mechanical, fire protection, etc.) should also be evaluated to determine if any changes are required to those systems for the proposed use.

Change of Occupancy vs. Change of Use

When a space changes tenants but otherwise remains used in the same manner, the “**Change of Occupancy**” often requires little or no upgrades or building renovations. When a the use of a space changes, the “**Change of Use**” triggers, under most circumstances, a need for the space to comply with current building codes. Business offices, retail (mercantile) sales, assembly (churches, schools, movie theaters, meeting rooms, etc.) and storage are just some examples of different **Use** categories. **Change of Use** can be a more complicated process and will require an assessment of the building and its proposed new use by a registered architect. Different **Use** types have a relative hazard level associated with them. It typically is allowable to change a building’s use with few updates as long as the hazard level does not increase. Other Use types can trigger requirements for fire alarms, fire sprinkler systems or other changes that can quickly add up. ***It also must be noted that some fire sprinkler and alarm systems are designed specific to a type of use and may require extensive and expensive modifications for a different use.*** It may not always be feasible to update a building so perspective real estate buyers and/or perspective tenants should always have a professional evaluate the space for the desired use prior to purchasing or signing a lease.



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Commercial buildings and developments may require one or more of the following permits:

- **Commercial Building/Remodel/Interior Fit-Out**
- **Commercial Site Development Plan**
- **Underground Fire Main**
- **Fire Alarm System**
- **Fire Sprinkler System**
- **Commercial Hood System (Kitchen Fire Suppression)**
- **Temporary Fuel Tank**

Commercial Plans

All commercial plan submittals (except Temporary Fuel Tanks and Commercial (Kitchen) Hood Fire Suppression Systems) to the West County EMS & Fire Protection District must include the following items in the plan submittal for review:

1. Seal of the Professional Engineer or Architect currently licensed in Missouri who both directly supervised and holds responsibility for the plans as drawn and submitted
2. Current licensure must be valid and on-file with the *Missouri Board for Architects, Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors* for engineering or architecture **for both the registered design professional and the engineering or architectural firm (if a corporation or LLC)** on the plans. (Ref. RSMo 327.401.2)
3. Building Address (including Suite Number if applicable)
4. Building Owner (Property Management Firm Acceptable)
5. Other Title Block information as required by the Missouri Board for APELSLA under RSMo 327 and MO CSR 2030-2.050
6. Occupant/Proposed Occupant Name
7. Occupancy Class (Including Previous and Proposed if Change of Use)
8. Building Construction Type
9. Total Building S.F.
10. Project S.F.
11. Code Block that correctly identifies the applicable building and fire codes including NFPA documents and editions as may be required for alarm, life safety and sprinkler design.
12. Proposed Number of Occupants for Project Limits/Area
13. Number of Floors Above Ground Level
14. Number of Floors Below Ground Level
15. Map of Project Limits/Area in Relation to Building Floor Footprint

Building permit submittals shall include the architect's assessment of Life Safety data including egress distance, travel paths and other associated information. The egress paths shall be shown in scaled drawings.

All plans submitted shall be computer-drawn. Sealed plans with handwritten changes or addendum of any kind will be assumed to have been made after the professional seal and will be automatically rejected.



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All fire resistance rated construction, including existing construction, shall be shown on plans within the project limits/area where the fire rating is required to satisfy code requirements. Any existing fire-rated construction must be maintained during remodel work.

Fire alarm plans must include the location of the Fire Alarm Control Panel (list Floor Number and Room Number or show on plans)

For more information about Underground Fire Mains, Fire Sprinkler Systems and Temporary Fuel Tanks, please see the respective reference sheets on our website at www.westcounty-fire.org under the Fire Marshal tab.

Current West County EMS & Fire Protection District Codes

(IBC) International Building Code – Ver. 2018 w/Amendments

(IEBC) International Existing Building Code – Ver. 2018 w/Amendments

(IFC) International Fire Code - Ver. 2018 w/Amendments

(WC) West County Overarching Building and Fire Code

NFPA Codes versions are the versions as referenced under ICC 2018 except as provided for in the West County Overarching Building and Fire Code

If a separate permitting jurisdiction (with authority to issue permits for a project within the West County EMS & Fire service area) has adopted a different code where a provision of the codes are in actual or perceived conflict, the most conservative conditions, requirements or interpretations of the two codes will control in the interest of public safety.