



**City of Atascadero
Community Development Department**

PUBLIC INFORMATION - BUILDING SERVICES

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BUSINESS LICENSE APPLICATION PROCESS AND CHANGE OF OCCUPANCY

All buildings are categorized by occupancy classification in the California Building Codes. Occupancies are listed as:

- A – assembly
- B – office
- E – educational
- F – fabricating
- H – hazardous
- I – institutional
- L – laboratory
- M – Mercantile
- R – residential
- S – storage

There are also subcategories and specific uses allowed for each occupancy, as well as specific requirements for each occupancy.

The building codes consider a *change in occupancy* an alteration and require Building Official review for compliance with the new use. To comply with the building codes, a *change of occupancy* is reviewed for compliance when a new tenant comes into a space that was used for a different type of business. Sometimes modifications are required, such as additional exits or installation of a fire sprinkler system. However, a *change of occupancy* does not always require physical modifications.

When a *change of occupancy* is determined not to have an increased hazard (see Table 903.2.1), a permit application with a simple floor plan is required. The floor plan will be reviewed for compliance with the new occupancy requirements. If no additional work is required, an *over the counter* permit is issued to reflect the change. If additional work is required resulting from an increased hazard, additional plans and specifications will be required, and a permit will be issued to reflect the *change of occupancy* and the new work.

Table 903.2.1 (Fire Code)

Fire Sprinkler System Relative Hazard Categories	
Relative Hazard	Occupancy Classifications
1 (Highest Hazard)	H
2	A, F-1, R-1, R-2, R-3.1, R-4, I
3	F-2, R-3, E
4	B, M, S-2, U

Property Tax Information:

The County Assessor is notified of all permits issued by the City. The Assessor gathers information when new construction is suspected, and will distribute questionnaires to individuals that have received building permits. Receiving a building permit for a change of occupancy does not necessarily mean a physical alteration to the tenant space will occur. If no new construction has taken place, that should be communicated on the Assessor’s questionnaire.