

Occupancy Classifications

OCCUPANCY CLASSIFICATION. For the purposes of this code, certain occupancies are defined as follows:

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 *or Motion Picture and Television Production Studio Sound Stages, Approved Production Facilities and production locations.*
[B]

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 (70 m²) 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 of the *California Building Code*.
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 performing arts or motion pictures including, but not limited to:

Motion picture and television production studio sound stages, approved production facilities and production locations. (With live audiences).

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

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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

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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

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: [B]

Airport traffic control towers

Ambulatory health-care facilities *servicing five or fewer patients (see Group I-2.1 or [Section 308.3.2 California Building Code for facilities servicing more than five patients](#))*

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, research *and instruction*

Motor vehicle showrooms

Post offices

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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

Group C (Camps, organized). *An organized camp is a site with programs and facilities established for the primary purpose of providing an outdoor group living experience with social, spiritual, educational or recreational objectives, for five days or more during one or more seasons of the year.*

Educational Group E. Educational Group E occupancy includes, among others, the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, by more *than six 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 508.3.1 of the *California Building Code* and have *occupant loads* of less than 100, shall be classified as Group A-3 occupancies. [B]

Exception: *A residence used as a home school for the children who normally reside at the residence. Such residences shall remain classified as Group R-2, or Group R-3 Occupancies.*

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

Exception: *A day-care facility not otherwise classified as an R-3 Occupancy, where occupants are not capable of responding to an emergency situation without physical assistance from the staff shall be classified as Group I-4.*

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 high-hazard or Group S storage occupancy. [B]

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

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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

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Machinery

Metals

Millwork (sash and door)

Motion picture and television production studio sound stages, approved production facilities and production locations (without live audiences)

Musical instruments

Optical goods

Paper mills or products

Photographic film

Plastic products

Printing or publishing

Refuse incineration

Shoes

Soaps and detergents

Textiles

Tobacco

Trailers

Upholstering

Wood; distillation

Woodworking (cabinet)

Factory Industrial F-2 Low-hazard Occupancy. Factory industrial uses involving the fabrication or manufacturing of noncombustible materials which, during finishing, packaging or processing do not involve a significant fire hazard, shall be classified as Group F-2 occupancies and shall include, but not be limited to, the following: [B]

Beverages; up to and including 16-percent alcohol content

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Brick and masonry

Ceramic products

Foundries

Glass products

Gypsum

Ice

Metal products (fabrication and assembly)

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 2703.8.3](#), based on the maximum allowable quantity limits for *control areas* set forth in Tables 2703.1.1(1) and 2703.1.1(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 code and the requirements of Section 415 of the *California Building Code*. Hazardous materials stored or used on top of roofs or canopies shall be classified as outdoor storage or use and shall comply with this 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 [Chapter 15 of this code](#) and Section 416 of the *California Building Code*.
2. Wholesale and retail sales and storage of flammable and *combustible liquids* in mercantile occupancies conforming to [Chapter 34](#).
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* in accordance with Section 707 of the *California Building Code* or 1-hour *horizontal assemblies* in accordance with Section 712 of the *California Building Code*, 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 equipped with safety venting caps and ventilation is provided in accordance with the *California Mechanical Code*.

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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 [Chapter 28](#).

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 2703.8.3.5](#).

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 of this code.

14. *Group L occupancies as defined in Section 443.1.*

High-hazard Group H-1. Buildings and structures containing materials that pose a *detonation* hazard shall be classified as Group H-1. Such materials shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

Detonable pyrophoric materials

Explosives:

Division 1.1

Division 1.2

Division 1.3

Exception: Materials that are used and maintained in a form where either confinement or configuration will not elevate the hazard from a mass fire to mass explosion hazard shall be allowed in Group H-2 occupancies.

Division 1.4

Exception: Articles, including articles packaged for shipment, that are not regulated as an *explosive* under Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms regulations, or unpackaged articles

used in process operations that do not propagate a *detonation* or *deflagration* between articles shall be allowed in Group H-3 occupancies.

Division 1.5

Division 1.6

Organic peroxides, unclassified detonable

Oxidizers, Class 4 Unstable (reactive) materials, Class 3 detonable, and Class 4

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High-hazard Group H-2. Buildings and structures containing materials that pose a *deflagration* hazard or a hazard from accelerated burning shall be classified as Group H-2. Such materials shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

Class I, II or IIIA flammable or *combustible liquids* which are used or stored in normally open containers or systems, or in closed containers or systems pressurized at more than 15 pounds per square inch (103.4 kPa) gauge

Combustible dusts

Cryogenic fluids, flammable

Flammable gases

Organic peroxides, Class I

Oxidizers, Class 3, that are used or stored in normally open containers or systems, or in closed containers or systems pressurized at more than 15 pounds per square inch (103.4 kPa) gauge

Pyrophoric liquids, solids and gases, nondetonable

Unstable (reactive) materials, Class 3, nondetonable

Water-reactive materials, Class 3

High-hazard Group H-3. Buildings and structures containing materials that readily support combustion or that pose a *physical hazard* shall be classified as Group H-3. Such materials shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

Class I, II or IIIA flammable or *combustible liquids* that are used or stored in normally closed containers or systems pressurized at 15 pounds per square inch gauge (103.4 kPa) or less

Combustible fibers, other than densely packed baled cotton

Consumer fireworks, 1.4G (Class C, Common)

Cryogenic fluids, oxidizing

Flammable solids

Organic peroxides, Class II and III

Oxidizers, Class 2

Oxidizers, Class 3, that are used or stored in normally closed containers or systems pressurized at 15

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pounds per square inch gauge (103 kPa) or less

Oxidizing gases

Unstable (reactive) materials, Class 2

Water-reactive materials, Class 2

High-hazard Group H-4. Buildings and structures which contain materials that are *health hazards* shall be classified as Group H-4. Such materials shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

Corrosives

Highly toxic materials

Toxic materials

High-hazard Group H-5. Semiconductor fabrication facilities and comparable research and development areas in which hazardous production materials (HPM) are used and the aggregate quantity of materials is in excess of those listed in Tables 2703.1.1(1) and 2703.1.1(2) shall be classified as Group H-5. Such facilities and areas shall be designed and constructed in accordance with Section 415.8 of the *California Building Code*.

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. *Restraint shall not be permitted in any building except in Group I-3 occupancies constructed for such use. See California Building Code Section 408.1.1. [B]*

Where occupancies house both ambulatory and non-ambulatory persons, the more restrictive requirements shall apply.

Group I-1. *Not used. (See Group R-2.1 or [Section 310.1](#), California Building Code.)*

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 *or classified as nonambulatory or bedridden*. This group shall include, but not be limited to, the following: [B]

Child care facilities

Detoxification facilities

Hospitals

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Mental hospitals

Nursing homes

Group I-2.1 Ambulatory healthcare facility. *A healthcare facility that receives persons for outpatient medical care that may render the patient incapable of unassisted self-preservation and where each tenant space accommodates more than five such patients.*

Group I-3. This occupancy shall include buildings *or portions of buildings* and structures which are inhabited by *one or more persons* who are under restraint. An I-3 facility is occupied by *persons* who are *restrained*. This group shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

Correctional centers

Detention centers

Jails

Juvenile halls

Prisons

Reformatories

Buildings of Group I-3 shall be classified as one of the occupancy conditions indicated below:

Condition 1. This occupancy condition shall include buildings in which free movement is allowed from sleeping areas and other spaces where access or occupancy is permitted, to the exterior via *means of egress* without restraint. A Condition 1 facility is permitted to be constructed as Group R.

Condition 2. This occupancy condition shall include buildings in which free movement is allowed from sleeping areas and any other occupied smoke compartment to one or more other smoke compartments. Egress to the exterior is impeded by locked *exits*.

Condition 3. This occupancy condition shall include buildings in which free movement is allowed within individual smoke compartments, such as within a residential unit comprised of individual sleeping units and group activity spaces, where egress is impeded by remote-controlled release of *means of egress* from such smoke compartment to another smoke compartment.

Condition 4. This occupancy condition shall include buildings in which free movement is restricted from an occupied space. Remote-controlled release is provided to permit movement from sleeping units, activity spaces and other occupied areas within the smoke compartment to other smoke compartments.

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Condition 5. This occupancy condition shall include buildings in which free movement is restricted from an occupied space. Staff-controlled manual release is provided to permit movement from sleeping units, activity spaces and other occupied areas within the smoke compartment to other smoke compartments.

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 *six* or fewer *clients* shall be classified as Group R-3 or shall comply with the *California Residential Code*. Places of worship during religious functions are not included. [B]

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

Child day-care facility. Child care facilities that provide supervision and personal care on less than a 24-hour basis for more than *six* children *under 2 years of age* shall be classified as Group I-4.

Exception: A child day care facility that provides care for more than *six* but no more than 100 children under *2 years 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.

Group L Laboratories. [SFM] *Group L occupancy includes the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof containing one or more laboratory suites as defined in Section 443 of the California Building Code.*

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. [B]

Department stores

Drug stores

Markets

Motor fuel-dispensing facilities

Retail or wholesale stores

Sales rooms

Residential Group R. Residential Group R includes, among others, the use of a building or structure, or

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a portion thereof, for sleeping purposes when not classified as an Institutional Group I or when not regulated by the *California Residential Code*. 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) *or congregate residences (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 *or congregate residences* with 16 or fewer occupants are permitted to comply with the construction requirements for Group R-3.

R-2.1 *This occupancy shall include buildings, structures or parts thereof housing clients, 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.*

This occupancy may contain more than six nonambulatory and/or bedridden clients. (See Appendix [Chapter 4](#),

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Section 425 Special Provisions For Licensed 24-Hour Care Facilities in a Group R-2.1, R-3.1 or R-4 Occupancy). This group shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

Assisted living facilities such as:

Residential care facilities

Residential care facilities for the elderly (RCFEs)

Adult residential facilities

Congregate living health facilities

Group homes

Residential care facilities for the chronically ill

Congregate living health facilities for the terminally ill

Social rehabilitation facilities such as:

Halfway houses

Community correctional centers

Community correction reentry centers

Community treatment programs

Work furlough programs

Alcoholism or drug abuse recovery or treatment facilities

R-3 Residential occupancies where the occupants are primarily permanent in nature and not classified as Group R-1, R-2, R-2.1, R-4 or I, including:

Buildings that do not contain more than two *dwelling units*.

Adult care facilities that provide accommodations for *six or fewer clients* of any age for less than 24 hours. *Licensing categories that may use this classification include, but are not limited to:*

Adult day programs.

Child care facilities that provide accommodations for *six or fewer clients* of any age for less than 24 hours. *Licensing categories that may use this classification include, but are not limited to:*

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Day-care center for mildly ill children

Infant care center

School age child day-care center.

Family day-care homes that provide accommodations for 14 or fewer children, in the provider's own home for less than 24 hours.

Congregate living facilities *or congregate residences* with 16 or fewer persons.

Adult care and child care facilities that are within a single-family home are permitted to comply with the *California Residential Code*.

R-3.1 *This occupancy group may include facilities licensed by a governmental agency for a residentially based 24-hour care facility providing accommodations for six or fewer clients of any age. Clients may be classified as ambulatory, nonambulatory or bedridden. A Group R-3.1 occupancy shall meet the requirements for construction as defined for Group R-3, except as otherwise provided for in Appendix [Chapter 4](#) Special Provisions For Licensed 24-Hour Care Facilities in a Group R-2.1, R-3.1 or R-4 Occupancy. This group may include:*

Adult residential facilities

Congregate living health facilities

Foster family homes

Group homes

Intermediate care facilities for the developmentally disabled habilitative

Intermediate care facilities for the developmentally disabled nursing

Nurseries for the full-time care of children under the age of six, but not including "infants" as defined in [Section 202](#)

Residential care facilities for the elderly

Small family homes and residential care facilities for the chronically ill

Exception: *Foster Family Homes or Group Homes licensed by the Department of Social Services which provide nonmedical board, room and care for six or fewer ambulatory children or children two years of age or younger, and which do not have any nonambulatory clients shall not be subject to regulations found in Section Appendix [Chapter 4](#), Section 425.*

Pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 13143 with respect to these exempted facilities, no city, county, or

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public district shall adopt or enforce any requirement for the prevention of fire or for the protection of life and property against fire and panic unless the requirement would be applicable to a structure regardless of the special occupancy. Nothing shall restrict the application of state or local housing standards to such facilities if the standards are applicable to residential occupancies and are not based on the use of the structure as a facility for ambulatory children. For the purpose of this exception, ambulatory children does not include relatives of the licensee or the licensee's spouse.

R-4 Residential occupancies shall include buildings arranged for occupancy as residential care/assisted living facilities including more than *six ambulatory clients*, 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 *California Residential Code*, provided the building is protected by an *automatic sprinkler system* installed in accordance with [Section 903.2.8](#).

This occupancy classification may include a maximum six nonambulatory or bedridden clients (see Appendix Chapter 4, Section 425 Special Provisions For Licensed 24-Hour Care Facilities in a Group R-2.1, R-3.1, or R-4 Occupancy). Group R-4 occupancies shall include the following:

Assisted living facilities such as:

Residential care facilities

Residential care facilities for the elderly (RCFEs)

Adult residential facilities

Congregate living health facilities

Group homes.

Social rehabilitation facilities such as:

Halfway houses

Community correctional centers

Community correction reentry centers

Community treatment programs

Work furlough programs

Alcoholism or drug abuse recovery or treatment facilities

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. [B]

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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

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Motor vehicle repair garages complying with the maximum allowable quantities of hazardous materials listed in Table 2703.1.1(1) (see Section 406.6 of the *California Building Code*)

Photo engravings

Resilient flooring

Silks

Soaps

Sugar

Tires, bulk storage of

Tobacco, cigars, cigarettes and snuff

Upholstery and mattresses

Wax candles

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. 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

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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

Miscellaneous Group U. 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

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occupancy. Group U shall include, but not be limited to, the following: [B]

Agricultural buildings

Aircraft hangar, accessory to a one- or two-family residence (see Section 412.3 of the *California Building Code*)

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