



Commercial Buildings Frequently Asked Questions

SPS 366.0704 - This Wisconsin amendment to the International Existing Building Code allows omission of the installation of sprinklers in inaccessible, combustibles concealed spaces. Was the intent of this exception to apply to only Level 2 alterations as indicated by its placement, or to any alteration or change of use?

Answer: The intent was to allow this exception for any alterations, including those triggered by a change of use. (September 1, 2011)

SPS 366.0912, IBC 2902.2 - Exception 2, and IEBC 910 If in a commercial building that predates SPS 360 to 366 there is an alteration or use change to a space having a single toilet room, can the single toilet room still be permitted if the total occupant load it is serving exceeds the 15-person limit as specified in the second exception of IBC section 2902.2?

Answer: Yes, some existing toilet rooms are allowed to use the 25-person limit previously assigned the single toilet room.

Since July 2002 the Wisconsin Commercial Building Code (WCBC) permits a single toilet room to serve spaces with a maximum employee load of 15 where the maximum total load (employees and customers) does not exceed 15 persons. In some ways this is more restrictive than in the past, but in other ways it is less restrictive. The current requirement is not retroactive, and the Division recognizes the validity of previous approvals.

When within a facility built under the pre-July 2002 edition of the WCBC, the division will continue to recognize the capacity for which the single toilet room was originally designed, provided the use of the space served by the toilet room does not change, or changes only to another use that was permitted to utilize that exception. In previous commercial building codes, a single fixture toilet room was permitted in lieu of separate a toilet room for each sex, when serving a limited number of people within a limited number of uses.

The following is a list of those limited uses:

- Adult Day Care
- Factory
- Repair Garage
- Business
- Mercantile
- Small Assembly Spaces like Ice Cream Parlors or Coffee Shops
- Service Garage
- Child Day Care
- Occupied Storage Garage
- Warehousing/Storage

The people limitation referenced in the earlier versions of the WCBC was a 25-person total capacity.

In summary, when uses change between those listed above, or when people loads change slightly due to alterations or subtle use changes, the listed uses are not required to add a second toilet room, provided the total number of occupants does not exceed 25 persons and the building was constructed prior to July 1, 2002. An alteration to the single toilet room likewise does not trigger a requirement to add a second toilet room. (September 1, 2011)

IBC 1104, IEBC 1005, and IEBC 605 Are there any situations where a platform lift complying with Chapter Comm 18 may be used as a portion of the accessible route for an addition to an existing building, so as to comply with the requirement that an accessible route be provided to areas that affect accessibility to or include an area of primary function?

Answer: Vertical transportation can be provided by means of a platform lift, when the main reason for the addition and the platform lift is to provide an accessible route to existing portions of the building that would otherwise remain inaccessible to people with disabilities. The platform lift may be included in the new construction provided the cost of including the installation of a minimally compliant elevator as a part of the accessible route exceeds 20 percent of the cost of the remodeling, including both the alteration work and the addition. A platform lift is also permitted as a part of the accessible route in all of the limited conditions outlined in IBC 1109.7. (July 30,2008)