



STATE OF WASHINGTON

STATE BUILDING CODE COUNCIL

Department of General Administration

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STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. 11-05

CODE: 2009 IBC

SECTION: 903.2.3 Group E Automatic sprinkler systems

QUESTION: The 2009 IBC section 903.2.3 states: "An automatic fire sprinkler shall be provided for Group E occupancies as follows: 1. Throughout all Group E fire areas greater than 12,000 square feet in area."

The state amends this section to read: "An automatic sprinkler system shall be provided for Group E occupancies." Exception 2 reads: "Group E occupancies with an occupant load of 50 or less, calculated in accordance with Table 1004.1.1."

Was the removal of the term "fire areas" intentional? Is it the intent of the amendment to allow a church (occupant load of 100) and a day care center (occupant load of 25) to co-exist in the same fire area of a building (occupant load of 125) without a sprinkler system or fire barrier between them?

ANSWER: **No. The intent of the amendment is to require fire sprinklers in all Group E occupancies, with the exception of those with an occupant load of 50 or less. Where a fire barrier is not provided to separate occupancies, the total occupant load of the building should be considered.**

SUPERSEDES: None

REQUESTED BY: City of Tacoma