

BC BUILDING CODE 2012 CODE CHANGE GROUP B, DIVISION 3 (CARE) OCCUPANCIES

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The 2012 edition of the BC Building Code has introduced a new occupancy classification to specifically address residential care facilities. The previous Group B, Division 2 *Care and Treatment* occupancy has been separated into Group B, Division 2 (B-2), *Treatment* and Group B, Division 3 (B-3), *Care*. The use of these classifications is based on the following definitions:

Treatment (Group B-2) means the provision of medical or other health-related intervention to persons, where the administration or lack of administration of these interventions may render them incapable of evacuating to a safe location without the assistance of another person.

Care (Group B-3) means the provision of services other than treatment by or through care facility management to residents who require these services because of cognitive, physical or behavioural limitations.

Under the new Group B-3 category, a *care* facility may contain:

- hospital type sleeping rooms in a single suite,
- dwelling units that function as individual suites, or
- a combination of both.

A *care* (Group B-3) occupancy differs from a *residential* (Group C) occupancy in that residents of Group B-3 occupancies receive services *from management of the care facility because of cognitive, physical or behavioural limitations*. Similar services may be provided in a Group C occupancy by outside public or private agencies simply because they are desired.



A table comparing the relevant solutions for *treatment* and *care* occupancies in the 2012 edition of the BC Building Code is attached.

A Note on Daycares

In some jurisdictions, a daycare centre is classified as a Group B occupancy where care is provided for infants or adults who, due to age, cognitive abilities or physical condition must be assisted in evacuation. The Building Code does not specifically address care occupancies where occupants are not residents. The provincial Building and Safety Standards Branch is considering the question of occupancy classification and intends to provide clarification on whether they fall under Group B, Division 3.



BUILDING CODE SOLUTIONS – CARE VS. TREATMENT

Building Code Solution	Treatment Occupancy	Care Occupancy	Code Reference
Combustible construction	2 storey/1600m ²	3 storey/1800m ²	3.2.2.38. to 3.2.2.46
Becomes a high building	Treatment above the third storey	Care above the third storey	3.2.6.1
Sprinklered	NFPA 13	NFPA 13; NFPA 13D permitted in buildings with limited residents/ suites	3.2.5.12
Floor area divided into zones. Min 2 zones; max 1000m ²	10 or more patients	10 or more residents	3.3.3.5
Areas of refuge (with 1h fire separation and air supply)	Where impractical to move patients (e.g. operation, recovery, ICU)	Not required	3.3.3.6
Fire separation	Sleeping rooms - unrated	Sleeping rooms – unrated Care occupancy suites – same as dwelling units in 3.3.3.4.	3.3.3.5
Sound transmission	Not applicable	Subsection 5.9.1. applies	
Number of waterclosets	Based on needs of occupants	One watercloset per each 10 residents of each sex	3.7.2.2
Doors to sleeping rooms	Permitted roller latches Doors at sleeping room (held open) not required to close on fire alarm.	Permitted roller latches Doors at sleeping room (held open) required to close on fire alarm.	3.3.3.5 3.1.8.12
Fire alarm system	2 stage 1000m ² zones annunciated	2 stage Single stage if less than 4storeys 1000m ² zones annunciated	3.2.4.3
Smoke detection	In corridors and sleeping rooms	In corridors and sleeping rooms	3.2.4.12
Smoke alarms	Not applicable	In individual suites (same as dwelling units)	3.2.4.21
Emergency electrical power	1h emergency power conforming to CAN/CSA – Z32 <i>Electrical Safety and Essential Electrical Systems in Health Care Facilities</i>	1h emergency power	3.2.7.3 3.2.7.6
Corridor widths	1650mm 2400mm where it may be necessary to move patients in beds.	1650mm 1100 in buildings with 10 or fewer residents	3.3.3.3
Dead ends	Not permitted	6m permitted in corridors serving individual suites	3.3.3.3
Door widths	850mm 1050mm at exits serving sleeping rooms 1050 where necessary to move patients in beds.	850mm May be less in individual suites	3.3.3.4 3.4.3.2
Ramp width	1100mm 1650mm serving patient sleeping rooms Maximum vertical rise between storeys or landings 2.4m.	1100mm	3.3.3.4 3.4.3.2
Stair width	1650mm - patient sleeping rooms otherwise 900mm or 1100mm	varies 900mm, 1100mm, or 1650mm depending on number of storeys, number of residents, area served	3.4.3.2 Table 3.4.3.2.B
Exit capacity	Based on 18.4mm/person	Based on 18.4mm/person	3.4.3.2
Fire Code	Mattresses conform to CAN/ULC S137 <i>Fire Growth of Mattresses</i> Bed linens, drapes, and cubicle curtains shall conform to CAN/CGSB-4 162-M <i>Hospital Textiles Flammable Performance Requirements</i>	Mattresses conform to CAN/ULC S137 <i>Fire Growth of Mattresses</i> Bed linens and drapes shall conform to CAN/CGSB-4 162-M <i>Hospital Textiles Flammable Performance Requirements</i> where more than 10 residents N/A in individual suites	BC Fire Code 2.3.2.3

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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