

BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 18-0148

INTERPRETATION

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Interpretation Date: November 16, 2021

Building Code Edition: BC Building Code 2018

Subject: Convenience Store and Quick-service Restaurant,
Occupancy Classification and Washroom Count

Keywords: Mercantile, Retail, Restaurant, Occupancy, Washrooms

Building Code Reference(s): 3.1.2.1, 3.1.2.6, 3.7.2.2.(15) & (16)

Question:

A convenience store not more than 500m² has an integral quick-service restaurant (QSR). The QRS takes up about 1/4 of the gross floor area with 4 seats.

1. What is the occupancy classification for the use of the premises?
2. Can Sentence 3.7.2.2.(16) be used for the calculation of number of washrooms required to serve the occupancy?

Interpretation:

1. Mercantile, Group E.

In this case the mercantile use is the primary use and the QSR is an integral subsidiary use. In some instances, there may be no commercial kitchen or significant seating or food preparation area. It is noted that Article 3.1.2.6. permits Group A Division 2 assembly uses (other than daycare) to be considered Group D use if the suite occupant load does not exceed 30 persons. Based on very limited seating and proportionate area used for assembly functions, it is reasonable to include the restaurant use as an integral and incidental part of the mercantile occupancy.

2. Yes.

In this case the mercantile use is the primary use and the QSR is an integral subsidiary use. Except for the staff, the other occupants are not expected to be on the premises for a long period of time. The intent statements for Sentence 3.7.2.2.(16) indicates: "To expand the application of Table 3.7.2.2.B. regarding the number of water closets required to suites of mercantile occupancy whose area is not more than 500 m², on the basis that customers are not in the occupancy for any appreciable length of time."

Note that Sentence 3.7.2.2.(15) requires that if this building has a floor area over 600m², the water closets must be located so that they are accessible to the public when the building is occupied.

See also BC Building Code Appeal #1831.



Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair

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