

	Marijuana/Hemp Industry – Occupancy Classification		510-910
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	APPROVED BY: Fire Chief Ron Bateman		REVISION DATE: Scheduled 01/01/2019

Owners and operators, along with their employees, agents, and assigns, assume all risks arising from or related to the operation or maintenance of a marijuana and/or hemp facility. Front Range Fire Rescue assumes no liability for any such operation or maintenance through the adoption and enforcement of this policy.

Scope:

The International Building Code (IBC), Section 302.1, states that when a structure is proposed for a purpose that is not specifically provided for in the IBC, such structure shall be classified in the group that the occupancy most nearly resembles, according to the fire safety and relative hazard involved.

The provisions of this policy outline the occupancy classification for commercial marijuana uses (such as grow facilities, infused products manufacturers, stores, centers, and testing facilities) that engage in the growing, manufacturing and selling of marijuana and/or hemp, whether for medical or recreational purposes. This policy has been developed to mirror the Denver Building and Fire Code requirements, as a recognized leader in the regulation of the marijuana/hemp industry.

Marijuana and hemp facilities must comply with all Front Range Fire Rescue fire code requirements as well as the applicable building code requirements of the municipality, including hazardous occupancy classification requirements when hazardous material use or storage exceeds Maximum Allowable Quantity (MAQ) regarding marijuana and/or hemp operations; any other FRFR or municipal requirements; and any zoning code requirements. If a specific FRFR or municipal policy does not exist, then the most applicable Denver Fire Department policy shall apply.

1. Marijuana/Hemp Stores and Centers

All new (projects that have not yet submitted for building permits by the date of this policy) marijuana and/or hemp stores and centers that will be engaged in marijuana and/or hemp sales, medical or recreational, will be defined as a Group M occupancy in accordance with the IBC for any facility that requires the issuance of a certificate of occupancy to be issued as part of the permitting and inspection process. Occupant load, means of egress, plumbing fixtures, and other code compliance elements shall be designed and built based on Occupancy Group M requirements.

2. Marijuana and/or Hemp Cultivation and/or Grow Facilities

Facilities engaged in the growing of marijuana or hemp shall be classified as an F-1 (Factory Industrial Moderate-Hazard) occupancy, which includes facilities that may typically be referred to as a “greenhouse.”

3. Marijuana/Hemp Manufacturing Facilities

Facilities engaged in the manufacturing of marijuana or hemp products including, but not limited to, edibles, extraction of marijuana/hemp oil, and lotions shall be classified as an F-1 occupancy.

4. Marijuana/Hemp Testing Facilities

Facilities engaged in testing and laboratory research related to marijuana and/or hemp shall be classified as a B (business) occupancy.

5. Multiple Occupancies

A medical or recreational marijuana or hemp store may be classified as having multiple occupancies. For example, if the facility was selling various products, offering counseling services, and providing other traditional or non-traditional healthcare treatment(s), then a multiple-occupancy classification may be appropriate. This determination will be made during the plan review phase through cooperative discussions between the Chief Building Official and the Fire Code Official. If deemed necessary, these individuals may also consult with a licensed design professional who has documented expertise in the marijuana/hemp industry to ensure an appropriate occupancy classification is established. The applicant shall be responsible for all costs associated with third party involvement.

Revision History:

08/03/2017 Original documented developed

References:

International Building Code – Sections 302, 303, 304, 309

Denver Fire Department Policy – Occupancy Classification for Marijuana Uses