



TECHNICAL BULLETIN

PERMIT AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

A-2

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Accessibility for New Wineries, Winery Conversions, Additions, Wine Caves, and Additional Structures

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this technical bulletin is to clarify the accessibility requirements for several types of projects involving wineries. These include new wineries, conversions of buildings into wineries, additions to existing winery buildings, and the construction of new buildings and wine caves at existing wineries. Buildings which are issued an agricultural exemption are required to meet these code requirements, but there is no review or inspection of such buildings.

GENERAL

Section 1103B of the CBC reads as follows:

“1103B.1 Scope. Accessibility to buildings or portions of buildings shall be provided for all occupancy classifications except as modified or enhanced by this chapter. Occupancy requirements in this chapter may modify general requirements, but never to the exclusion of them. ... An accessible route of travel complying with Section 1114B1.2 shall connect all elements and spaces within a building or facility...”

There is an exception for:

“Floors or portions of floors not customarily occupied, including but not limited to nonoccupiable or employee spaces accessed only by ladders, catwalks, crawl spaces, very narrow spaces or freight elevators, and frequented only by service personnel for repair and maintenance purposes, such spaces as elevator pits and elevator penthouses, piping and equipment catwalks, and machinery rooms.”

The application of this section to wineries, especially additions and conversions at existing wineries, raises several complex issues. These are addressed below. The intent of this technical bulletin is not to summarize all the requirements for wineries, which are distributed throughout the 122 pages of Chapter 11B, but to clarify several issues specific to wineries which arise repeatedly, and to achieve consistency in the plan check and inspection of new wineries and remodels or additions to existing wineries.

DEFINITIONS

Central facility- The areas used by the public for tasting, sales, tours, dining, events, picnic areas, walks, gardens, sculpture viewing areas or other similar uses. The central facility also includes production and storage areas within 100 feet of the areas used by the public as described above, and offices and sanitary facilities serving any of the above areas.

Remote facility- Any area of the winery not used by the public for tasting, sales, tours, dining, events or other uses, and more than 100 feet from any portion of the central facility, measured in a straight line between nearest points of the buildings or structures.

Small winery- A winery which is accessory to a Group R, Division 3 occupancy (single family dwelling), has no tasting room, no on site sales, no events, no permanent employees, and which has a maximum area for production and/or storage of 3000 sq. ft.

Winery- Any winery which is not a small winery.

Major or principal floor areas- As used in Section 1107B, this refers to the main path of travel between exits and to the areas where each major function of the building is performed.

Production and storage areas- Includes areas where wine is processed and/or stored, including wine caves, barrel storage areas, bottling areas, crush pads.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Accessibility requirements for new wineries and new buildings at existing wineries- A winery often consists of several types of buildings distributed over a large site. It is best viewed as consisting of several facilities, as defined above, for the purpose of accessible route of travel. For new wineries, and for new buildings at existing wineries, accessible features shall be required as follows:

1. Tool sheds, pump stations, machinery platforms and rooms, tanks and tank pads, and other similar buildings or portions of buildings are considered machinery rooms. The exception to CBC Section 1103B referenced above for machinery rooms applies, and such rooms are not required to be accessible. This exception does not apply to buildings or portions of buildings used for vehicle storage and/or repair.
2. An accessible route of travel shall connect all elements and spaces within any building, subject to the exceptions in item 1 above and the work station requirements in item 6 below.
3. Except for those buildings specified in item 1 above, an accessible route of travel shall connect all buildings in the area of the central facility.
4. Except for those buildings specified in item 1 above, an accessible route of travel shall connect all buildings in the area of the central facility with the public way and with public transportation facilities adjacent to the central facility. When there are no public transportation facilities or public way sidewalks adjacent to the

- central facility, this requirement does not apply.
5. The exception above for machinery rooms and similar areas does not apply to production and storage areas. The accessible path of travel within the building or cave must include a path to these areas.
 6. Within production and storage Section 1107B applies. Major or principal floor areas, office areas and sanitary facilities shall be accessible. The plans should show a defined, complying path of travel through major or principal floor areas. Work stations shall comply with section 1123B for aisles, floor levels and entryways.
 7. Ladders, catwalks, and tanks are not required to be accessible unless the catwalks form part of the egress system for other parts of the facility (such as an office or break room) or are used by the public for any purpose.
 8. Except for those buildings specified in item 1 above, an accessible route of travel shall connect all buildings or structures in the remote facility with the buildings or structures in the central facility, OR it shall be possible to drive to a designated accessible parking space with an accessible path of travel to the accessible entrance to such buildings in the remote facility. Other entrances shall be accessible as required by the code.
 9. All new bathrooms shall be accessible. Buildings specified in item number 1 above may be constructed without a bathroom, and bathrooms in existing buildings are not required to be modified when buildings specified in item number 1 above are constructed. However, the plumbing code requires that all other buildings shall be provided with sanitary facilities, and that separate facilities for each sex must be provided when the number of occupants exceeds 10. The occupant load for this purpose shall be calculated using the tables in Chapter 29 of the Plumbing Code.

Accessible routes of travel for existing wineries- For additions or remodels at existing wineries, CBC Section 1134B applies.

1. The above requirements apply to the area of alteration, the parking for and path of travel to the new construction, and sanitary facilities, pay phones, signs, and drinking fountains serving the area of alteration.
2. Hardship exception- Hardship exceptions allowed by CBC Section 1134B.2.1 are based on the ..."total cost of alterations, structural repairs. or additions..." The question often arises as to what work is included in this cost. "Alteration" is defined for this purpose by the California Division of the State Architect (DSA) in Section 202 of the CBC. It is a very inclusive definition which includes the cost of any work to the building or structure, or change in primary function or use of the structure, but does not include the cost of equipment, furniture, or movable partitions, or accessible features.

Small winery conversions- PRMD receives numerous building permit applications to convert a garage, barn or other structure to a small winery, as defined above.

1. Such conversions are not considered a change of occupancy for the purpose of determining accessibility requirements, and accessible parking, path of travel,

and sanitary facilities are not required. However, any work done where accessibility requirements apply must comply with present code. The structure shall continue to be classified as the occupancy before conversion. Conversions of such structures to wineries which are NOT a small winery are considered a change to a more hazardous occupancy and must meet the accessibility requirements for a new winery. Note that if a small winery makes changes so that it no longer meets the definition of a small winery, it is considered a change to a more hazardous occupancy and must comply with all accessibility provisions of the present code.

2. Such conversions are not considered a change of occupancy for the purpose of determining whether they must meet the structural and life safety provisions of the current code. However, any work done must comply with the present code. Conversions of such structures to wineries which are NOT a small winery are considered a change to a more hazardous occupancy and must meet all the requirements of the presently adopted code for a new winery. Note that if a small winery makes changes so that it no longer meets the definition of a small winery, it is considered a change to a more hazardous occupancy and must comply with all structural and life safety provisions of the present code. (See Section 3406.4 of the CBC for details regarding the seismic provisions.)

Other requirements

1. **Tasting rooms-** Occupancy Classification- The typical wine tasting room is classified as a Group M Occupancy.
2. The requirements of CBC Section 1122B for fixed or built in seating, tables, and counters and sales counters apply to tasting room counters. The area provided for accessible seating must not separate or “highlight” persons with disabilities. Temporary or “drop-down” sections of counter for the disabled, or sections of counter for the disabled not in line with the rest of the counter will not be approved.
3. **Employee areas-** The requirements of 1122B for fixed or built in seating, tables, and counters apply to employee common rooms and break rooms.

REFERENCES

CBC Chapter 11B

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