



TECHNICAL BULLETIN

PERMIT AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

B-8X

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Classification of Private Garages

INTRODUCTION

The California Building Code classifies a *private garage* as a Group U Div 1 occupancy. Buildings or parts of buildings classed as Group U Div 1 occupancies because of the use or character of the occupancy shall not exceed 1000 square feet in area or one story in height. Any building or portion of the building that exceeds the limitations specified must be classed in the occupancy group other than U-1 that it most nearly resembles.

The restrictions placed on private garages allow the modification of the occupancy separation between the U-1 and R-3 *dwelling unit*. In mixed occupancy buildings or buildings over one story in height the use of each portion must be clearly defined to properly apply the specific provisions of the code.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Agricultural buildings are occupancies whose use include the following; storage, livestock, poultry, milking barns, shade structures and horticultural structures (greenhouse and crop protection). Agricultural buildings exceeding the allowable area or height limitations for Group U Div 1 occupancy shall be classified as Group U Div 3.

Carports having no enclosed uses above and entirely open on two or more sides do not require an occupancy separation when attached to a Group R Div 3 occupancy.

Private garages are not more than 1000 square feet in area in which only motor vehicles are stored or kept. A parking garage for private or pleasure type motor vehicles where no repair work is done or fuel dispensed may be 3000 square feet. Group U Div 1 occupancies are restricted to one story in height but may have a complying mezzanine.

In buildings of two stories in height with a U-1 occupancy first floor, the second floor may be classified by its use. In this case a workshop, hobby shop, crafts room for residential storage should be classified as Group R Div 3. Appropriate floor loads, occupancy separations, means of egress and other requirements are necessary. The building may qualify as a Group S, Division 3 occupancy dependent on its use.

GLOSSARY

Garage: is a building or portion thereof, in which a motor vehicle containing flammable or combustible liquids or gas in its tank or an electric vehicle with a rechargeable storage battery, fuel cell, photovoltaic array or other source of electric current is stored, repaired, charged (electric vehicle only) or kept.

Garage, Private: is a building or a portion of a building, not more than 1,000 square feet (93 m²) in area, in which only motor vehicles used by the tenants of the building or buildings on the premises are stored or kept.

Garage, Public: is a garage other than a private garage.

REFERENCES

1998 California Building Code, Section 312

Sonoma County Ordinance No 5167

Sonoma County Residential Construction Handbook Section 18
