

Temporary Occupancy Procedures

BPC-007

Purpose:

This handout explains the procedures for obtaining temporary occupancy of a building or a portion of a building prior to the building being completed and the permit being finalized.

General:

A temporary occupancy permit is required to occupy a building or a portion of a building before the building is completed. Under the California Building Code, temporary occupancy of a residential or commercial building that has not been completed may be approved if the chief building official can make the finding that no substantial life, safety or health hazards exist by allowing occupancy of the building. Prior to approving a temporary occupancy permit, the Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD) will verify that all required approvals, including but not limited to, zoning, well and septic, sewer and water, encroachment and fire are obtained. A PRMD building inspector will inspect the building to verify that it is safe for occupancy. Additional work or corrections to existing work may be required before temporary occupancy is approved. In no case shall the building be occupied until the building inspector has granted approval.

Submittal Requirements:

1. Application for Temporary Occupancy.
2. Temporary occupancy permit fee (See current Building Permit fee schedule).

Procedure:

1. The applicant submits a completed application for Temporary Occupancy.
2. PRMD staff will review the building permit associated with the temporary occupancy permit application and determine which approvals have been issued for temporary occupancy. If necessary, the applicant will be directed to the appropriate PRMD staff to determine if temporary occupancy can be approved. If all required approvals for temporary occupancy are obtained, the applicant pays the required fee (See Building Permit fee schedule) and the temporary occupancy permit is issued.
3. The applicant calls PRMD to schedule an inspection. If the building inspector determines that the building is unsafe for occupancy and/or additional work needs to be completed, a correction notice will be issued to the applicant. All work required in the correction notice must be completed and inspected. The building cannot be occupied until the building inspector has approved and signed the temporary occupancy permit.

Minimum Temporary Occupancy Requirements:

The building inspector will require that specific work be completed. Where applicable, the following list includes, but is not limited to, the work required to be completed or installed prior to approving temporary occupancy.

1. Final gas test
2. All smoke detectors
3. Heating and ventilation
4. Labeled electrical panels
5. One bathroom, minimum
6. All handrails and guardrails
7. All required lighting fixtures
8. Kitchen with hot and cold running water
9. All exiting paths, such as stairs, landings and ramps
10. Covered plates and wire nuts at all incomplete fixture boxes
11. All doors not required for exiting that lead to incomplete decks or platforms shall be mechanically secured or become a code compliant opening other than a door
12. Other items as required

Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department

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