

PORTLAND FIRE & RESCUE

May 29, 2018



FIR 2.13 - STORAGE AND LAUNDRY ROOMS SEPARATION FROM LIVING SPACES IN EXISTING RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

I. SCOPE

- A. This policy is established July 31, 2002.
- B. The purpose of this policy is to establish uniform guidelines for regulating basements, laundry rooms and storage rooms in existing multi-family residential structures.
- C. This policy applies to all multi-family residential occupancies in which Portland Fire & Rescue (PF&R) has authority.

II. SPECIFIC

A. References

- 1. 1907-1965 Building Ordinances of the City of Portland
 - a. Building Ordinances of the City of Portland, Adopted 9-12-57:
Requires usable space under the first floor to be protected on the side of the usable space as required for one-hour fire-resistive occupancy separation.
- 2. 1970 Uniform Portland Building Code
 - a. 1970 Uniform Building Code, Adopted 9-7-72 [3302 (a)2.]:
Requires all basements used for other than service of the building shall have not less than two exits. *Prior to this, occupant loads over 10 in residential buildings required two exits (using Occupant Load factors of 200 for laundry and 300 for residential and storage).*
- 3. 1973 Uniform Building Code to present Oregon Structural Specialty Code
 - a. 1982 Uniform Building Code [1202(b)]:
Requires storage or laundry rooms within Group R, Division 1 Occupancies that are used in common by tenants to be separated from the rest of the building by not less than one-hour fire-resistive occupancy separation.

III. GUIDANCE

A. Laundry and Storage Rooms

1. Existing laundry and storage rooms used in common by tenants and which have been established prior to the adoption of the 1982 Uniform Building Code, may be maintained to existing conditions provided electrical and mechanical installations are in compliance with code.
2. Existing laundry and storage rooms used in common by tenants and which have been established after the adoption of the 1982 Uniform Building Code require building permit approval.
 - a. If 1-hour construction is in place, continued use may be allowed without a permit.
 - b. If 1-hour construction is NOT in place AND a distinct hazard exists, specific requirements shall be established for the site.
3. Occupancy separations may be required if the Fire Marshal determines the existing conditions are unsafe.

B. Basement Exits

1. Usable basements in existing Group R, Division 1 Occupancies, built prior to the 9-7-72 adoption of the 1970 Portland Building Code, require at least two exits when the occupant load exceeds 10.
2. Usable basements in existing Group R, Division 1 Occupancies, built after the adoption of the 1970 Portland Building Code, require at least two exits.

Exception: *Basements used exclusively for the service of the building; or, where two or more dwelling units are located in a basement and the total occupant load served by the exit does not exceed 10 (using Occupant Load factors of 200 for residential and laundry and 300 for storage).*
3. Additional exits may be required if the Fire Marshal determines the exiting is inadequate.

C. Basement Separation

1. Existing basements in Group R, Division 1 Occupancies, constructed after September 1957, require basements to be separated per Uniform Building Code requirements for one-hour occupancy separation, unless the entire basement is protected by an automatic sprinkler system, or deemed to be impractical by the Fire Marshal.

D. Appeals

1. Appeals of these requirements are to be resolved through the Bureau of Development Services as a building appeal.



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