

MILL VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT



Prepared by *JDamb*
Jeff Davidson, Battalion Chief/Fire Marshal
Approved by *Greg Moore*
Gregory R. Moore, Fire Chief

Fire Protection Standard 517

PUBLIC ASSEMBLY OCCUPANCIES

Date: 1-11-11

Revision: 2

Page: 1 of 1

This standard has been developed pursuant to Article 25, Uniform Fire Code and Title 19, California Administrative Code. The purpose of this standard is to outline and make specific applicable codes relative to places of public assembly wherein the Mill Valley Fire Department is charged with enforcing such codes and regulations.

I. Definition

- A. Place of Assembly – any building, structure, or portion thereof, tent or area where 50 or more people may gather or assemble. Places of assembly shall include but are not limited to: classroom, restaurant, drinking establishment, auditorium, playhouse, theater, and other similar uses.

II. General

A. Permits

1. A Fire Department permit is required to operate, have or to hold a place of assembly
2. Permit applications may be obtained from the Mill Valley Fire Department at 415-389-4130
3. Applications shall be completed with all applicable information and returned to the Mill Valley Fire Department with the permit fee for processing.
4. A permit shall be issued upon compliance with all conditions and requirements of the permit.

III. Fire Appliances

- A. All fire appliances shall be maintained in proper working condition and replaced or repaired where damaged or defective.
- B. Portable fire extinguishers shall be serviced by a licensed fire extinguisher company annually, after use and when the gauge indicates recharge.
- C. Pre-engineered and fixed fire extinguishing systems installed in hoods, ducts and over cooking equipment shall be serviced semi-annually and after activation.
- D. Portable fire extinguishers shall be provided as follows:

Kitchens – one 40BC minimum rating

Public Areas – one 2A 10BC minimum rating for every 6,000 sq. ft. floor area

MILL VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT



Prepared by *JD*
Jeff Davidson, Battalion Chief/Fire Marshal
Approved by *Greg Moore*
Gregory R. Moore, Fire Chief

Fire Protection Standard 517

PUBLIC ASSEMBLY OCCUPANCIES

Date: 1-11-11

Revision: 2

Page: 2 of 2

Note: ABC multipurpose extinguishers shall not be installed in kitchens where pre-engineered or fixed fire extinguishing systems are installed.

- E. Portable fire extinguishers shall be mounted at a height not over five feet to the top of extinguisher and at least four inches above the floor.
- F. Kitchen goods and ducts which serve commercial cooking equipment such as barbecue grills, deep fat fryers and/or where grease laden vapors are produced, such hoods, ducts and equipment shall be protected by an approved automatic fire extinguishing system.

IV. Exit Illumination and Signs

- A. Exits shall be illuminated at any time the building is occupied.
- B. Exit signs are required at all exit doors and whenever otherwise required to clearly indicate the direction of egress, except the main exit door which obviously and is clearly identifiable as an exit.
- C. Exit signs shall have letters at least six inches high, green on a white background.
- D. Exit signs shall be illuminated with two electric lamps of not less than 15 watts:
 - 1. When the occupant load exceeds 300 persons the lighting shall be served by two separate circuits, one of which shall be separated from all other circuits in the building and independently controlled.
 - 2. When the occupant load of the building exceeds 500 persons, exit signs shall be controlled by two separate sources of power supply.
 - 3. When the occupant load exceeds 300 persons, emergency lighting shall be provided in accordance with the National Electrical Code.

V. Open Flame

- A. No person shall cause or permit any open flame to be used in any place of public assembly or drinking or dining establishments. Except when used in conjunction with approved heating or cooking appliances, or by written permit issued by the Fire Loss Management Division.
- B. The preparation of flaming foods and drinks requires a permit issued by the Fire Department.

MILL VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT



Prepared by *JD*
Jeff Davidson, Battalion Chief/Fire Marshal
Approved by *Greg Moore*
Gregory R. Moore, Fire Chief

Fire Protection Standard 517

PUBLIC ASSEMBLY OCCUPANCIES

Date: 1-11-11

Revision: 2

Page: 3 of 3

- C. The use of candles shall be by permit only and conform to Fire Prevention Standard No. 517A.

VI. Determining Maximum Occupant Load

- A. Assembly areas with a concentrated use and without fixed seats shall be calculated at 7 sq. ft. per person.
- B. Assembly areas with less concentrated use shall be calculated at 15 sq. ft. per person.
- C. The occupant load for an assembly area may be increased when an approved aisle, seating, or fixed equipment diagram to substantiate such increase is submitted to the Fire Department. The approved diagram shall be posted with the public assembly permit and available for review by the inspecting official. The spacing of rows of seats shall provide a space of not less than 12 inches from the back of one seat to the front of the most forward projection of the seat immediately behind it as measure horizontally between vertical planes.

VII. Aisles

- A. The minimum clear aisle width shall be 36 inches where tables, counters, furnishings and merchandise or other similar obstructions are placed on one side of the aisle only and 44 inches when placed on both sides.
- B. With standard seating, the aisle width dimension shall be increased by 1 ½ inches for each 5 feet of length toward the exit, cross aisle or foyer.
- C. With standard seating, aisles shall be located so that there is not more than 6 intervening seats between any seat and the nearest aisle.
- D. Assembly areas with more than 300 loose chairs shall be fastened together in groups of not less than 3. Bonding may be accomplished by clamps, hooks or other methods approved by the Fire Marshal.
- E. Continental seating shall comply with the requirements of the Uniform Building Code as adopted by the State Building Standards Commission

VIII. Posting of Room Capacity

- A. Any assembly room or area not having fixed seats with an occupant load of 50 or

MILL VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT



Prepared by *JDamb*
Jeff Davidson, Battalion Chief/Fire Marshal
Approved by *Greg Moore*
Gregory R. Moore, Fire Chief

Fire Protection Standard 517

PUBLIC ASSEMBLY OCCUPANCIES

Date: 1-11-11

Revision: 2

Page: 4 of 4

more persons shall have posted and maintained a room capacity sign.

- B. The sign shall state "Maximum Occupant Capacity _____ Persons". The sign shall have letters at least one inch high, black on a white background.

IX. Use of Exit Ways

- A. No part of a stairway, whether interior or exterior nor of a fire tower, hallway, corridor, vestibule, balcony, or bridge leading to a stairway or exit of any kind, shall be used in any way that will obstruct its use as an exit or that will present a hazardous condition.

X. Smoking

- A. No smoking signs shall be posted on all stages and enclosed platforms. Smoking shall not be permitted except when approved for theatrical productions. Signs shall have letters at least 3 inches high, red on a white background.

XI. Decorative Materials

- A. In every Group A Occupancy all drapes, hangings, curtains, drops, and all other decorative material, including Christmas trees, that would tend to increase the fire and panic hazard shall be made from a nonflammable material, or shall be treated and maintained in a flame retardant condition by means of a flame retardant solution or process approved by the State Fire Marshal.
- B. Exits, exit lights, fire alarm sending stations, wet standpipe hose cabinets, and fire extinguisher locations shall not be concealed, in whole or in part, by any decorative material.