# RESCINDED See TA# 11-14

# OREGON FIRE CODE
## Interpretations and Technical Advisories

A collaborative service by local and state fire professionals, along with our stakeholders, and customers, to provide consistent and concise application of Oregon's fire prevention and life safety regulations.

**Date:** November 25 2009

**Ruling:** Technical Advisory No. 09-03

**Subject:** Temporary Shelters.

**Code Reference:**

**Content:** This technical advisory contains minimal guidelines to allow a building not normally designated as an R Occupancy (use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, for sleeping purposes) to be used as a temporary shelter with **the approval of the local fire code official.** Also check with your local building and zoning official.

> **Note: Local fire jurisdictions may have more stringent requirements than are provided here or they may not allow temporary shelters.**

**Time limits:** To meet the allowances of this advisory, a building may be used as a temporary shelter for a maximum of ninety days (90) within any twelve (12) month period of time beginning on the first (1st) day of occupancy or as approved by the local authority having jurisdiction.

**Maximum Number of Occupants Allowed:** The maximum number of allowable temporary shelter occupants shall be calculated using an occupant load factor of one (1) individual for every thirty-five (35) square feet of room area. For example, a room with 980 square feet would be allowed to provide temporary shelter for up to 28 occupants. 980 divided by 35 = 28.

**Life-Safety Requirements:** The following life-safety requirements apply to buildings being used as a temporary shelter:

> **1. Fire sprinklers.** It is not necessary for a building to have fire sprinklers installed to allow it to be used as a temporary shelter. However, buildings with approved fire sprinklers installed may be granted more flexibility as follows.

- When a building has approved fire sprinklers installed throughout, temporary shelter sleeping areas may be located on any building floor level.
- When a building is not fully fire sprinklered, temporary shelter sleeping areas may only be located on the first (ground) or second floor. Sleeping areas are not permitted in basement areas of a non fire sprinklered building.

**2. Smoke alarms and detection.**

- All temporary shelter sleeping areas shall be provided with approved smoke alarms or a complete approved smoke detection system.
- All other areas of the building used for temporary shelter operations shall be equipped with smoke alarms or a smoke detection system as required by the local fire code official.
- Smoke alarms may be battery operated.

**3. Means of Egress (Exits).** All floor levels with temporary shelter areas shall have a minimum of two means of egress (exits) from each floor level. All means of egress (exit) paths shall be maintained free of obstructions at all times. Exits from sleeping areas shall be as follows;

- Sleeping areas located on the ground floor of a temporary shelter with an occupant load of 49 or less shall have a least one (1) exit and at least one (1) window qualifying as an escape or rescue window as defined by the building code.
- All other floor levels used as temporary shelter sleeping areas that have an occupant load of 10 or more shall have two (2) exits from the area. The exits serving the areas shall be separated by a distance equal to at least 1/3 of the longest diagonal distance of the area.

**4. Emergency Evacuation Plan.** All temporary shelters shall create and maintain an approved emergency evacuation plan addressing the evacuation of all occupants in an emergency event. At a minimum, the emergency evacuation plan shall contain the following:

- Building floor plans. Building floor plans for each floor of the temporary shelter with sleeping areas clearly identified.
- Room size. The square footage of all rooms of the temporary shelter.
- Egress (exit) path. Building floor plans shall clearing show the egress (exit) paths from all areas of the temporary shelter. Egress (exit) path floor plans shall be posted throughout the temporary shelter.
- Life-safety systems. The emergency evacuation plan shall also include information about the fire sprinkler system, fire alarm system or the smoke alarms.
- Occupant list. A list of all occupants each night must be made maintained and made available to the emergency personnel in the event of a fire or incident.

**5. Fire Watch.** During sleeping hours a fire watch shall be maintained continuously. This means at least one responsible person shall be awake and assigned this responsibility. This duty may be rotated among a number of responsible adults during the sleeping hours. The fire watch person shall be equipped with a working flashlight and have access to a phone or carry a cell phone on their person.

**6. Documentation.** Documentation of all fire safety requirements including copies of the temporary shelter evacuation plan shall be maintained on site and shall be available for review at the request of the local fire code official.

**7. Notification.** The local fire code official shall be notified prior to the temporary shelter being used. Notification shall include the number of occupants being temporarily sheltered and the expected days and times that the temporary shelter will be used. The local fire code official may require an inspection prior to the shelter being occupied.

**Other References:**