(2) Materials not complying with 43.10.5.5(1) shall be permitted to be surfaced with an approved fire-retardant paint or finish.
(3) Materials not complying with 43.10.5.5(1) shall be permitted to be continued in use, provided that the building is protected throughout by an approved automatic sprinkler system, and the nonconforming materials are substantiated as being historic in character.

43.10.5.6 One-Hour Fire-Rated Assemblies. Existing walls and ceilings shall be exempt from the minimum 1-hour fire-resistance-rated construction requirements of other sections of this *Code* where the existing wall and ceiling are of wood lath and plaster construction in good condition.

43.10.5.7 Stairs and Handrails.

43.10.5.7.1 Existing stairs and handrails shall comply with the requirements of this *Code*, unless otherwise specified in 43.10.5.7.2.

43.10.5.7.2 The authority having jurisdiction shall be permitted to accept alternatives for grand stairways and associated handrails where the alternatives are approved as meeting the intent of this *Code*.

43.10.5.8 Exit Signs. The authority having jurisdiction shall be permitted to accept alternative exit sign or directional exit sign location, provided that signs installed in compliance with other sections of this *Code* would have an adverse effect on the historic character and such alternative signs identify the exits and egress path.

43.10.5.9 Exit Stair Live Load. Existing historic stairways in buildings changed to hotel and dormitory occupancies and apartment occupancies shall be permitted to be continued in use, provided that the stairway can support a 75 lb/ft^2 (3600 N/m^2) live load.

Annex A Explanatory Material

Annex A is not a part of the requirements of this NFPA document but is included for informational purposes only. This annex contains explanatory material, numbered to correspond with the applicable text paragraphs.

A.1.1 The following is a suggested procedure for determining the *Code* requirements for a building or structure:

(1) Determine the occupancy classification by referring to the occupancy definitions in Chapter 6 and the occupancy Chapters 12 through 42. *(See 6.1.14 for buildings with more than one use.)*
(2) Determine if the building or structure is new or existing. *(See the definitions in Chapter 3.)*
(3) Determine the occupant load. *(See 7.3.1.)*
(4) Determine the hazard of contents. *(See Section 6.2.)*
(5) Refer to the applicable occupancy chapter of the *Code*, Chapters 12 through 42. *[See Chapters 1 through 4 and Chapters 6 through 11, as needed, for general information (such as definitions) or as directed by the occupancy chapter.]*
(6) Determine the occupancy subclassification or special use condition, if any, by referring to Chapters 16 and 17, day care occupancies; Chapters 18 and 19, health care occupancies; Chapters 22 and 23, detention and correctional occupancies; Chapters 28 and 29, hotels and dormitories; Chapters 32 and 33, residential board and care occupancies; Chapters 36 and 37, mercantile occupancies; and Chapter 40, industrial occupancies, which contain subclassifications or special use definitions.
(7) Proceed through the applicable occupancy chapter to verify compliance with each referenced section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, and referenced codes, standards, and other documents.
(8) Where two or more requirements apply, refer to the occupancy chapter, which generally takes precedence over the base Chapters 1 through 4 and Chapters 6 through 11.
(9) Where two or more occupancy chapters apply, such as in a mixed occupancy *(see 6.1.14)*, apply the most restrictive requirements.

A.1.1.5 Incidents involving hazardous materials are capable of posing significant life safety challenges in buildings. The *Code* recognizes this potential and includes technical requirements to address concerns related to hazardous material inventories and associated emergencies.

A.1.1.8 Life safety in buildings includes more than safety from fire. Although fire safety has been the long-standing focus of NFPA *101*, its widely known title, *Life Safety Code*, and its technical requirements respond to a wider range of concerns, including, for example, crowd safety and providing life safety where security features are provided. *Code* requirements that contribute to the safe movement of people during fire emergencies might also assist in responding to many other hazards that require decisions about where people can be safely located.

A.1.1.9(1) This *Code* is intended to be adopted and used as part of a comprehensive program of building regulations that include building, mechanical, plumbing, electrical, fuel gas, fire prevention, and land use regulations.

A.1.2 The *Code* endeavors to avoid requirements that might involve unreasonable hardships or unnecessary inconvenience or interference with the normal use and occupancy of a building but provides for fire safety consistent with the public interest.

Protection of occupants is achieved by the combination of prevention, protection, egress, and other features, with due regard to the capabilities and reliability of the features involved. The level of life safety from fire is defined through requirements directed at the following:

(1) Prevention of ignition
(2) Detection of fire
(3) Control of fire development
(4) Confinement of the effects of fire
(5) Extinguishment of fire
(6) Provision of refuge or evacuation facilities, or both
(7) Staff reaction
(8) Provision of fire safety information to occupants

A.1.3.1 Various chapters contain specific provisions for existing buildings and structures that might differ from those for new construction.

A.1.4 Before a particular mathematical fire model or evaluation system is used, its purpose and limitations need to be known. The technical documentation should clearly identify any assumptions included in the evaluation. Also, it is the intent of the Committee on Safety to Life to recognize that future editions of this *Code* are a further refinement of this edition and earlier editions. The changes in future editions will reflect the continuing input of the fire protection/life safety

community in its attempt to meet the purpose stated in this *Code*.

A.1.4.3 An equivalent method of protection provides an equal or greater level of safety. It is not a waiver or deletion of a *Code* requirement.

The prescriptive provisions of this *Code* provide specific requirements for broad classifications of buildings and structures. These requirements are stated in terms of fixed values, such as maximum travel distance, minimum fire resistance ratings, and minimum features of required systems, such as detection, alarm, suppression, and ventilation, and not in terms of overall building or system performance.

However, the equivalency clause in 1.4.3 permits the use of alternative systems, methods, or devices to meet the intent of the prescribed code provisions where approved as being equivalent. Through the rigor of a performance-based design, it can be demonstrated whether a building design is satisfactory and complies with the implicit or explicit intent of the applicable code requirement.

When employing the equivalency clause, it is important to clearly identify the prescriptive-based code provision being addressed (scope), to provide an interpretation of the intent of the provision (goals and objectives), to provide an alternative approach (proposed design), and to provide appropriate support for the suggested alternative (evaluation of proposed designs).

Performance resulting from proposed designs can be compared to the performance of the design features required by this *Code*. Using prescribed features as a baseline for comparison, it can then be demonstrated in the evaluation whether a proposed design offers the intended level of performance. A comparison of safety provided can be used as the basis for establishing equivalency.

A.2.1(1) For example, NFPA 10 is referenced in Chapter 2. This does not mean that all buildings must have portable fire extinguishers. Portable fire extinguishers are mandatory only to the extent called for elsewhere in the *Code*.

A.2.1(3) The Committee on Safety to Life recognizes that it is impractical to continually upgrade existing buildings or installations to comply with all the requirements of the referenced publications included in Chapter 2.

A.2.2 It is possible that governing authorities have adopted a code or standard other than one that is listed in Chapter 2. Where such is the case, and where a provision of a code or standard is referenced by this *Code* but the text of the requirement is not extracted into this *Code*, the code or standard adopted by the governing authority is permitted to be utilized where it is deemed by the authority having jurisdiction to adequately address the issue or condition of concern. Where the adopted code or standard does not address the issue, the requirement from the referenced code or standard should be applied by the authority having jurisdiction, unless the governing authority has established other procedures, policies, or guidelines. Where the text of a requirement is extracted from another NFPA code or standard and appears in this *Code*, it is the intent that the requirement be met as if it had originated in this *Code*, regardless of whether the governing authority has adopted the code or standard from which the text is extracted.

A.3.2.1 Approved. The National Fire Protection Association does not approve, inspect, or certify any installations, procedures, equipment, or materials; nor does it approve or evaluate testing laboratories. In determining the acceptability of installations, procedures, equipment, or materials, the authority having jurisdiction may base acceptance on compliance with NFPA or other appropriate standards. In the absence of such standards, said authority may require evidence of proper installation, procedure, or use. The authority having jurisdiction may also refer to the listings or labeling practices of an organization that is concerned with product evaluations and is thus in a position to determine compliance with appropriate standards for the current production of listed items.

A.3.2.2 Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). The phrase "authority having jurisdiction," or its acronym AHJ, is used in NFPA documents in a broad manner, since jurisdictions and approval agencies vary, as do their responsibilities. Where public safety is primary, the authority having jurisdiction may be a federal, state, local, or other regional department or individual such as a fire chief; fire marshal; chief of a fire prevention bureau, labor department, or health department; building official; electrical inspector; or others having statutory authority. For insurance purposes, an insurance inspection department, rating bureau, or other insurance company representative may be the authority having jurisdiction. In many circumstances, the property owner or his or her designated agent assumes the role of the authority having jurisdiction; at government installations, the commanding officer or departmental official may be the authority having jurisdiction.

A.3.2.3 Code. The decision to designate a standard as a "code" is based on such factors as the size and scope of the document, its intended use and form of adoption, and whether it contains substantial enforcement and administrative provisions.

A.3.2.5 Listed. The means for identifying listed equipment may vary for each organization concerned with product evaluation; some organizations do not recognize equipment as listed unless it is also labeled. The authority having jurisdiction should utilize the system employed by the listing organization to identify a listed product.

A.3.3.4 Actuating Member or Bar. The active surface of the actuating bar needs to be visually and physically distinct from the rest of the device. The actuating bar is also called a cross bar or push pad.

A.3.3.11 Aisle Accessway. *Aisle accessway* is the term used for the previously unnamed means of egress component leading to an aisle or other means of egress. For example, circulation space between parallel rows of seats having a width of 12 in. to 24 in. (305 mm to 610 mm) and a length not exceeding 100 ft (30 m) is an aisle accessway. Some of the circulation space between tables or seats in restaurants might be considered aisle accessway.

Depending on the width of aisle accessway, which is influenced by its length and expected utilization, the movement of a person through the aisle accessway might require others to change their individual speed of movement, alter their postures, move their chairs out of the way, or proceed ahead of the person.

A.3.3.19 Animal Housing Facility. Animal housing facilities, as used in this *Code*, are subject to local, state, or federal licensing

or permitting requirements, and include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Barns and stables
(2) Kennels
(3) Racetrack stable/kennel areas including, those stable/kennel areas, barns, and associated buildings at state, county, and local fairgrounds
(4) Animal shelters
(5) Animal hospitals and veterinary facilities
(6) Zoos and special amusement parks
(7) Laboratories
(8) Agricultural facilities
(9) Mercantile or business occupancies with animals

N **A.3.3.22.2.1 Clear Floor Area.** Clear floor area is intended to provide open floor space that is accessible to all building occupants for the purpose of providing protected spaces, portions of means of egress paths, or waiting spaces that might be occupied as needed.

A.3.3.22.2.2 Gross Floor Area. Where the term *floor area* is used, it should be understood to be gross floor area, unless otherwise specified.

N **A.3.3.22.2.3 Gross Floor Area (Health Care and Ambulatory Health Care Occupancies).** Stairs and elevator and building services shafts are not included in determining gross floor areas of health care and ambulatory health care smoke compartments and health care suites.

A.3.3.22.4 Hazardous Area. Hazardous areas include areas for the storage or use of combustibles or flammables; toxic, noxious, or corrosive materials; or heat-producing appliances.

A.3.3.22.6 Normally Unoccupied Building Service Equipment Support Area. Normally unoccupied building service support areas are often found in attics, crawl spaces, chases, and interstitial areas where the space is vacant or intended exclusively for routing ductwork, cables, conduits, piping, and similar services and is rarely accessed. In such spaces, it is often difficult or impossible to fully comply with the egress requirements of Chapter 7. Where portions of such spaces are routinely visited for storage, maintenance, testing, or inspection, that portion is excluded from this definition, but the remainder of the space might be considered a normally unoccupied building service equipment support area. Storage and fuel-fired equipment would not be expected to be permitted in these locations. Roofs are not considered to be normally unoccupied building service equipment support areas.

Δ **A.3.3.23 Area of Refuge.** An area of refuge has a temporary use during egress. It generally serves as a staging area that provides relative safety to its occupants while potential emergencies are assessed, decisions are made, and mitigating activities are begun. Taking refuge within such an area is, thus, a stage of the total egress process, a stage between egress from the immediately threatened area and egress to a public way.

An area of refuge might be another building connected by a bridge or balcony, a compartment of a subdivided story, an elevator lobby, or an enlarged story-level exit stair landing. An area of refuge is accessible by means of horizontal travel or, as a minimum, via an accessible route meeting the requirements of ICC A117.1, *Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities.*

This *Code* recognizes any floor in a building protected throughout by an approved, supervised automatic sprinkler system as an area of refuge. This recognition acknowledges the ability of a properly designed and functioning automatic sprinkler system to control a fire at its point of origin and to limit the production of toxic products to a level that is not life threatening.

The requirement for separated rooms or spaces can be met on an otherwise undivided floor by enclosing the elevator lobby with ordinary glass or other simple enclosing partitions that are smoke resisting.

For some occupancies, one accessible room or space is permitted.

A.3.3.28 Atrium. As defined in NFPA 92 a large-volume space is an uncompartmented space, generally two or more stories high, within which smoke from a fire either in the space or in a communicating space can move and accumulate without restriction. Atria and covered mall concourses are examples of large-volume spaces.

A.3.3.29 Attic. The attic space might be used for storage. The concealed rafter space between the ceiling membrane and the roof sheathing that are attached to the rafters is not considered an attic.

A.3.3.32.1 Fire Barrier. A fire barrier, such as a wall or floor assembly, might be aligned vertically or horizontally. Although the continuity of a fire barrier will often limit the transfer of smoke, it should not be confused with either a smoke barrier or a smoke partition.

A.3.3.32.2 Smoke Barrier. A smoke barrier might be vertically or horizontally aligned, such as a wall, floor, or ceiling assembly. A smoke barrier might or might not have a fire resistance rating. Application of smoke barrier criteria where required elsewhere in the *Code* should be in accordance with Section 8.3.

Δ **A.3.3.32.3 Thermal Barrier.** Finish ratings, as published in the UL *Fire Resistance Directory,* are one way of determining thermal barrier. A test method was developed in order to assess whether a material, product, or assembly constitutes a thermal barrier (see NFPA 275). It requires thermal barriers to meet both a test for fire resistance (temperature transmission test), which limits temperature rise on the unexposed side, and a test for reaction-to-fire (integrity fire test), intended to demonstrate that the material can prevent or delay ignition of the material on the unexposed side. The reaction to fire test is one of the following: NFPA 286, ANSI/FM 4880, UL 1040, or UL 1715.

A.3.3.34 Birth Center. A birth center is a low-volume service for healthy, childbearing women, and their families, who are capable of ambulation in the event of fire or fire-threatening events. Birth center mothers and babies have minimal analgesia, receive no general or regional anesthesia, and are capable of ambulation, even in second-stage labor.

A.3.3.37 Building. The term *building* is to be understood as if followed by the words *or portions thereof. (See also Structure, A.3.3.284.)*

A.3.3.37.3 Apartment Building. The *Code* specifies that, wherever there are three or more living units in a building, the building is considered an apartment building and is required to comply with either Chapter 30 or Chapter 31, as appropriate. Townhouse units are considered to be apartment buildings if there are three or more units in the building. The type of wall required between units in order to consider them to be separate buildings is normally established by the authority

having jurisdiction. If the units are separated by a wall of sufficient fire resistance and structural integrity to be considered as separate buildings, then the provisions of Chapter 24 apply to each townhouse. Condominium status is a form of ownership, not occupancy; for example, there are condominium warehouses, condominium apartments, and condominium offices.

A.3.3.37.5 Existing Building. With respect to judging whether a building should be considered existing, the deciding factor is not when the building was designed or when construction started but, rather, the date plans were approved for construction by the appropriate authority having jurisdiction.

A.3.3.37.6 Flexible Plan and Open Plan Educational or Day Care Building. Flexible plan buildings have movable corridor walls and movable partitions of full-height construction with doors leading from rooms to corridors. Open plan buildings have rooms and corridors delineated by tables, chairs, desks, bookcases, counters, low-height partitions, or similar furnishings. It is the intent that low-height partitions not exceed 60 in. (1525 mm).

A.3.3.37.7 High-Rise Building. It is the intent of this definition that, in determining the level from which the highest occupiable floor is to be measured, the enforcing agency should exercise reasonable judgment, including consideration of overall accessibility to the building by fire department personnel and vehicular equipment. Where a building is situated on a sloping terrain and there is building access on more than one level, the enforcing agency might select the level that provides the most logical and adequate fire department access.

A.3.3.37.8 Historic Building. Designation for a historic building might be in an official national, regional, or local historic register, listing, or inventory.

A.3.3.37.9 Special Amusement Building. Special amusement buildings include amusements typically found in theme parks such as a roller coaster–type ride within a building, a multilevel play structure within a building, a submarine ride, and similar amusements where the occupants are not in the open air and might or might not be confined to a ride vehicle and/or unable to self-evacuate. Examples of temporary special amusement buildings include mobile fun houses typically found in carnivals or a gymnasium converted to a haunted house for Halloween.

Three conditions are essential to the definition of a special amusement building:

First, the area might be either an entire building or a portion of a building. A rollercoaster within a theme park would not be a special amusement building if it is open to the air along its entire length. On the other hand, if portions of the rollercoaster were partially enclosed within buildings that house the show elements, it would then be a special amusement building.

Second, a special amusement building contains either an amusement ride or device, or a walkway over a course intended to provide amusement or entertainment. A theater with fixed seats and a performance platform or stage would typically not be a special amusement building because there is no amusement ride or device, and there is no walkway that is used to provide amusement or entertainment.

Third, a special amusement building is intended to either divert the patron's attention away from the egress path, either through audio or visual distractions or by intentionally confounding the patron, or it contains or restrains the patron such that the patron is unable to self-evacuate when the amusement ride has ceased motion. A carousel or small train inside a shopping mall might not be considered to be a special amusement building if, once ride motion has ceased, the patron can step out of the vehicle without assistance and is aware of the egress path.

Other occupancies might also fall into the classification of special amusement building if the conditions described in the definition apply. Escape rooms are an example of where such conditions might exist. It is incumbent on the authority having jurisdiction to inquire if the conditions in the escape room meet the definition of a special amusement building. Where such conditions exist, escape rooms should be classified as special amusement buildings. Where such conditions do not exist, escape rooms might be classified as another occupancy type, such as business.

It is important for the authority having jurisdiction to recognize that the *Code* requires an occupancy to be classified as a special amusement building if the conditions in the space meet the definition of *special amusement building*, regardless of the occupant load of the space. No minimum occupant load threshold must be met for a space to be classified as a special amusement building. A space could be classified as a special amusement building even where the occupant load is significantly fewer than the 50 occupants required for classification of other assembly occupancies.

The requirements for special amusement buildings are not intended to apply to the design of the actual amusement ride or device, but rather that of the facility that houses the ride or device. The design of an amusement ride or device, including all platforms and stairs that are attached to the ride structure, is governed by other standards, such as ASTM F2291, *Standard Practice for Design of Amusement Rides or Devices*. The design of facilities elements around the ride, including stairs and platforms that are not part of the ride structure, should be in accordance with the applicable requirements of this *Code*.

A.3.3.38 Building Code. Where no building code has been adopted, *NFPA 5000* should be used where the building code is referenced in this *Code*.

A.3.3.42 Cellular or Foamed Plastic. Cellular or foamed plastic might contain foamed and unfoamed polymeric or monomeric precursors (prepolymer, if used), plasticizers, fillers, extenders, catalysts, blowing agents, colorants, stabilizers, lubricants, surfactants, pigments, reaction control agents, processing aids, and flame retardants.

A.3.3.48 Common Path of Travel. Common path of travel is measured in the same manner as travel distance but terminates at that point where two separate and distinct routes become available. Paths that merge are common paths of travel.

A.3.3.49.1 Fire Compartment. Additional fire compartment information is contained in 8.2.2.

In the provisions for fire compartments utilizing the outside walls of a building, it is not intended that the outside wall be specifically fire resistance rated, unless required by other standards. Likewise, it is not intended that outside windows or doors be protected, unless specifically required for exposure protection by another section of this *Code* or by other standards.

A.3.3.49.2 Smoke Compartment. Where smoke compartments using the outside walls or the roof of a building are provided, it is not intended that outside walls or roofs, or any openings therein, be capable of resisting the passage of smoke. Application of smoke compartment criteria where required elsewhere in the *Code* should be in accordance with Section 8.5.

A.3.3.52 Critical Radiant Flux. Critical radiant flux is the property determined by the test procedure of NFPA 253 or by ASTM E648, *Standard Test Method for Critical Radiant Flux of Floor-Covering Systems Using a Radiant Heat Energy Source*. The unit of measurement of critical radiant flux is watts per square centimeter (W/cm^2).

A.3.3.63.1 Emergency Stair Travel Device. An emergency stair travel device should be designed, constructed, and operated in accordance with ANSI/RESNA ED-1, *Emergency Stair Travel Devices Used by Individuals with Disabilities*. The device typically requires the assistance of a trained operator.

A.3.3.66 Dormitory. Rooms within dormitories intended for the use of individuals for combined living and sleeping purposes are guest rooms or guest suites. Examples of dormitories are college dormitories, fraternity and sorority houses, and military barracks.

A.3.3.68 Dwelling Unit. It is not the intent of the *Code* that the list of spaces in the definition of the term *dwelling unit* in 3.3.68 is to be all inclusive. It is the intent of the *Code* that the list of spaces is a minimal set of criteria that must be provided to be considered a dwelling unit, and, therefore, the dwelling unit can contain other spaces that are typical to a single-family dwelling.

A.3.3.68.1 One- and Two-Family Dwelling Unit. The application statement of 24.1.1.1 limits each dwelling unit to being "occupied by members of a single family with not more than three outsiders." The *Code* does not define the term *family*. The definition of *family* might be subject to federal, state, and local regulations and might not be restricted to a person or a couple (two people) and their children. The following examples aid in differentiating between a single-family dwelling and a lodging or rooming house:

(1) An individual or a couple (two people) who rent a house from a landlord and then sublease space for up to three individuals should be considered a family renting to a maximum of three outsiders, and the house should be regulated as a single-family dwelling in accordance with Chapter 24.
(2) A house rented from a landlord by an individual or a couple (two people) in which space is subleased to four or more individuals, but not more than 16, should be considered and regulated as a lodging or rooming house in accordance with Chapter 26.
(3) A residential building that is occupied by four or more individuals, but not more than 16, each renting from a landlord, without separate cooking facilities, should be considered and regulated as a lodging or rooming house in accordance with Chapter 26.

It is not the intent of the *Code* to restrict occupancy to persons related by blood, marriage, or adoption as in the traditional opinion of a family. Regulations affecting occupant safety under the *Life Safety Code* differ greatly from zoning regulations that attempt to control who may, and who may not, live in a residential area designated a "single family" zone. Community zoning regulations address problems of noise, pollution, littering, overcrowding, and traffic. Restricting occupancy of single-family housing based on the biological or legal relationships between its inhabitants bears no reasonable relationship to the goals of life safety.

A group of nonrelatives living together in a nontraditional group can be the "functional equivalent" of a more traditional family unit. The factors that must be considered by the authority having jurisdiction are whether the group shares the entire house other than individual bedrooms, lives, cooks, and functions together as a single housekeeping unit and is primarily nontransient.

A.3.3.70 Electroluminescent. This light source is typically contained inside the device.

A.3.3.81 Evacuation Capability. The evacuation capability of the residents and staff is a function of both the ability of the residents to evacuate and the assistance provided by the staff. It is intended that the evacuation capability be determined by the procedure acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction. It is also intended that the timing of drills, the rating of residents, and similar actions related to determining the evacuation capability be performed by persons approved by or acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction. The evacuation capability can be determined by the use of the definitions in 3.3.81, the application of NFPA 101A Chapter 6, or a program of drills (timed).

Evacuation does not include the relocation of occupants within a building.

Where drills are used in determining evacuation capability, it is suggested that the facility conduct and record fire drills six times per year on a bimonthly basis, with a minimum of two drills conducted during the night when residents are sleeping, and that the facility conduct the drills in consultation with the authority having jurisdiction. Records should indicate the time taken to reach a point of safety, date and time of day, location of simulated fire origin, escape paths used, and comments relating to residents who resisted or failed to participate in the drills.

Translation of drill times to evacuation capability is determined as follows:

(1) 3 minutes or less — prompt
(2) Over 3 minutes, but not in excess of 13 minutes — slow
(3) More than 13 minutes — impractical

Evacuation capability, in all cases, is based on the time of day or night when evacuation of the facility would be most difficult, such as when residents are sleeping or fewer staff are present.

Evacuation capability determination is considered slow if the following conditions are met:

(1) All residents are able to travel to centralized dining facilities without continuous staff assistance.
(2) There is continuous staffing whenever there are residents in the facility.

A.3.3.84 Existing. See *Existing Building*, A.3.3.37.5.

A.3.3.86 Exit. Exits include exterior exit doors, exit passageways, horizontal exits, exit stairs, and exit ramps. In the case of a stairway, the exit includes the stair enclosure, the door to the stair enclosure, the stairs and landings inside the enclosure, the door from the stair enclosure to the outside or to the level of exit discharge, and any exit passageway and its associated doors, if such are provided, so as to discharge the stair directly

to the outside. In the case of a door leading directly from the street floor to the street or open air, the exit comprises only the door. *(See also 7.2.2.6.3.1 and A.7.2.2.6.3.1.)*

Doors of small individual rooms, as in hotels, while constituting exit access from the room, are not referred to as exits, except where they lead directly to the outside of the building from the street floor.

A.3.3.86.1 Horizontal Exit. Horizontal exits should not be confused with egress through doors in smoke barriers. Doors in smoke barriers are designed only for temporary protection against smoke, whereas horizontal exits provide protection against serious fire for a relatively long period of time in addition to providing immediate protection from smoke. *(See 7.2.4.)*

A.3.3.88.1 Level of Exit Discharge. Low occupancy, ancillary spaces with exit doors discharging directly to the outside, such as mechanical equipment rooms or storage areas, that are located on levels other than main occupiable floors should not be considered in the determination of level of exit discharge.

A.3.3.91 Exposure Fire. An exposure fire usually refers to a fire that starts outside a building, such as a wildlands fire or vehicle fire, and that, consequently, exposes the building to a fire.

A.3.3.93.2 Limited Care Facility. Limited care facilities and residential board and care occupancies both provide care to people with physical and mental limitations. However, the goals and programs of the two types of occupancies differ greatly. The requirements in this *Code* for limited care facilities are based on the assumption that these are medical facilities, that they provide medical care and treatment, and that the patients are not trained to respond to the fire alarm; that is, the patients do not participate in fire drills but, rather, await rescue. *(See Section 18.7.)*

The requirements for residential board and care occupancies are based on the assumption that the residents are provided with personal care and activities that foster continued independence, that the residents are encouraged and taught to overcome their limitations, and that most residents, including all residents in prompt and slow homes, are trained to respond to fire drills to the extent they are able. Residents are required to participate in fire drills. *(See Section 32.7.)*

Persons with Alzheimer's and related illnesses might be located in a nursing home, limited care facility, or board and care facility. For such persons, it is the level of care provided, not the medical diagnosis, that matters for the purposes of determining whether the facility should meet the requirements for limited care. Where personal care is provided but medical or custodial care is not, the limited care definition does not typically apply. It is the intent of this definition that it not apply to persons not receiving medical or custodial care, provided they are able to assist in their own evacuation, regardless of their medical diagnosis.

A.3.3.95.2 Interior Finish. Interior finish is not intended to apply to surfaces within spaces such as those that are concealed or inaccessible. Furnishings that, in some cases, might be secured in place for functional reasons should not be considered as interior finish.

A.3.3.95.3 Interior Floor Finish. Interior floor finish includes coverings applied over a normal finished floor or stair treads and risers.

A.3.3.95.4 Interior Wall Finish. Such partitions are intended to include washroom water closet partitions.

A.3.3.99 Fire Code. Where no fire code has been adopted, NFPA 1 should be used where the fire code is referenced in this *Code*.

A.3.3.104 Fire Model. Due to the complex nature of the principles involved, models are often packaged as computer software. Any relevant input data, assumptions, and limitations needed to properly implement the model will be attached to the fire models.

A.3.3.107 Fire Scenario. A fire scenario defines the conditions under which a proposed design is expected to meet the fire safety goals. Factors typically include fuel characteristics, ignition sources, ventilation, building characteristics, and occupant locations and characteristics. The term *fire scenario* includes more than the characteristics of the fire itself but excludes design specifications and any characteristics that do not vary from one fire to another; the latter are called assumptions. The term *fire scenario* is used here to mean only those specifications required to calculate the fire's development and effects, but, in other contexts, the term might be used to mean both the initial specifications and the subsequent development and effects (i.e., a complete description of fire from conditions prior to ignition to conditions following extinguishment).

A.3.3.115 Flame Spread. See Section 10.2.

A.3.3.130 Grade Plane. See 4.6.17 for provisions for establishing the grade plane. Vertical measurements might be used in determining the number of stories or building height.

A.3.3.131 Grandstand. Where the term *grandstand* is preceded by an adjective denoting a material, it means a grandstand the essential members of which, exclusive of seating, are of the material designated.

A.3.3.145 Heat Release Rate (HRR). The heat release rate of a fuel is related to its chemistry, physical form, and availability of oxidant and is ordinarily expressed as British thermal units per second (Btu/s) or kilowatts (kW).

Chapters 40 and 42 include detailed provisions on high hazard industrial and storage occupancies.

A.3.3.150.1 Day Care Home. A day care home is generally located within a dwelling unit.

A.3.3.153 Hotel. So-called apartment hotels should be classified as hotels, because they are potentially subject to the same transient occupancy as hotels. Transients are those who occupy accommodations for less than 30 days.

A.3.3.154.1 Externally Illuminated. The light source is typically a dedicated incandescent or fluorescent source.

A.3.3.154.2 Internally Illuminated. The light source is typically incandescent, fluorescent, electroluminescent, photoluminescent, or self-luminous or is a light-emitting diode(s).

A.3.3.172.1 Fuel Load. Fuel load includes interior finish and trim.

A.3.3.177.1 Open Mall Concourse. An open mall concourse is permitted to serve as the public way provided the open mall concourse meets the definition of public way in accordance with this *Code*.

It is intended that the open mall concourse be designed, constructed, and arranged to permit the natural venting of smoke and other products of combustion to the outside air through openings in the walls, roof, or combination thereof of the mall concourse.

The solid area of the mall concourse walls and the horizontal projection of the solid area of any roof structures, including shade structures, awnings, and canopies, that cover the mall concourse should be summed to determine the aggregate area of solid construction associated with the mall concourse. A mall concourse can be considered an open mall concourse where at least 50 percent of the aggregate area of solid construction is open to the atmosphere. Open areas can include entrances to the mall concourse (e.g., barred gates that allow air to pass through versus an entrance storefront), clearstory spaces between the mall building (structure that houses tenants) and the roof above, and openings in the roof assembly. For the openings to be effective, they must also be distributed uniformly over the length of the mall concourse. Caution must be exercised in the design and construction so as to not create areas of possible congestion for smoke and hot gases to accumulate, such as a pitched (steep slope) roof assembly within the mall concourse.

Roof assemblies are permitted to have holes or open areas that represent openings to the outside. The roof assembly is also permitted to consist of a structure or assembly that allows the venting of the mall concourse. Examples of these vented roof structures include a roof trellis or an exposed roof structural frame only with no roofing materials. Structures that would permit the omission of automatic sprinkler protection, in accordance with NFPA 13, could be included to serve as open space for the purposes of the calculation of areas open to the outside air. Caution should be taken not to allow vegetation to grow into and around these structures that could reduce or impede the venting capabilities.

A.3.3.180 Means of Egress. A means of egress comprises the vertical and horizontal travel and includes intervening room spaces, doorways, hallways, corridors, passageways, balconies, ramps, stairs, elevators, enclosures, lobbies, escalators, horizontal exits, courts, and yards.

A.3.3.182 Membrane. For the purpose of fire protection features, a membrane can consist of materials such as gypsum board, plywood, glass, or fabric. For the purpose of membrane structures, a membrane consists of thin, flexible, water-impervious material capable of being supported by an air pressure of 1½ in. (38 mm) water column.

A.3.3.188 Modification. Modification does not include repair or replacement of interior finishes.

A.3.3.197 Objective. Objectives define a series of actions necessary to make the achievement of a goal more likely. Objectives are stated in more specific terms than goals and are measured on a more quantitative, rather than qualitative, basis.

A.3.3.198.1 Ambulatory Health Care Occupancy. It is not the intent that occupants be considered to be incapable of self-preservation just because they are in a wheelchair or use assistive walking devices, such as a cane, a walker, or crutches. Rather, it is the intent to address treatment centers that receive patients who have been rendered incapable of self-preservation, such as being rendered unconscious as a result of an accident or being unable to move due to sudden illness.

It is not the intent that the term *anesthesia* be limited to general anesthesia.

A.3.3.198.2 Assembly Occupancy. Assembly occupancies might include the following:

(1) Armories
(2) Assembly halls
(3) Auditoriums
(4) Bowling lanes
(5) Club rooms
(6) College and university classrooms, 50 persons and over
(7) Conference rooms
(8) Courtrooms
(9) Dance halls
(10) Drinking establishments
(11) Exhibition halls
(12) Gymnasiums
(13) Libraries
(14) Mortuary chapels
(15) Motion picture theaters
(16) Museums
(17) Passenger stations and terminals of air, surface, underground, and marine public transportation facilities
(18) Places of religious worship
(19) Pool rooms
(20) Recreation piers
(21) Restaurants
(22) Skating rinks
(23) Special amusement buildings, regardless of occupant load
(24) Theaters

Assembly occupancies are characterized by the presence or potential presence of crowds with attendant panic hazard in case of fire or other emergency. They are generally open or occasionally open to the public, and the occupants, who are present voluntarily, are not ordinarily subject to discipline or control. Such buildings are ordinarily occupied by able-bodied persons and are not used for sleeping purposes. Special conference rooms, snack areas, and other areas incidental to, and under the control of, the management of other occupancies, such as offices, fall under the 50-person limitation.

Restaurants and drinking establishments with an occupant load of fewer than 50 persons should be classified as mercantile occupancies.

For special amusement buildings, see 12.4.9 and 13.4.9.

A.3.3.198.3 Business Occupancy. Business occupancies include the following:

(1) Airport traffic control towers (ATCTs)
(2) City halls
(3) College and university instructional buildings, classrooms under 50 persons, and instructional laboratories
(4) Courthouses
(5) Dentists' offices
(6) Doctors' offices
(7) General offices
(8) Outpatient clinics (ambulatory)
(9) Town halls

Doctors' and dentists' offices are included, unless of such character as to be classified as ambulatory health care occupancies. *(See 3.3.198.1.)*

Birth centers should be classified as business occupancies if they are occupied by fewer than four patients, not including infants, at any one time; do not provide sleeping facilities for four or more occupants; and do not provide treatment procedures that render four or more patients, not including infants, incapable of self-preservation at any one time. For birth centers occupied by patients not meeting these parameters, see Chapter 18 or Chapter 19, as appropriate.

Service facilities common to city office buildings, such as newsstands, lunch counters serving fewer than 50 persons, barber shops, and beauty parlors are included in the business occupancy group.

City halls, town halls, and courthouses are included in this occupancy group, insofar as their principal function is the transaction of public business and the keeping of books and records. Insofar as they are used for assembly purposes, they are classified as assembly occupancies.

A.3.3.198.4 Day Care Occupancy. Day care occupancies include the following:

(1) Adult day care occupancies, except where part of a health care occupancy
(2) Child day care occupancies
(3) Day care homes
(4) Kindergarten classes that are incidental to a child day care occupancy
(5) Nursery schools

In areas where public schools offer only half-day kindergarten programs, many child day care occupancies offer state-approved kindergarten classes for children who need full-day care. Because these classes are normally incidental to the day care occupancy, the requirements of the day care occupancy should be followed.

A.3.3.198.5 Detention and Correctional Occupancy. Detention and correctional occupancies include the following:

(1) Adult and juvenile substance abuse centers
(2) Adult and juvenile work camps
(3) Adult community residential centers
(4) Adult correctional institutions
(5) Adult local detention facilities
(6) Juvenile community residential centers
(7) Juvenile detention facilities
(8) Juvenile training schools

Detention and correctional occupancies do not include psychiatric and dementia units in hospitals, emergency rooms in hospitals, ambulatory health care occupancies, nursing homes, and residential board and care occupancies where persons can be lawfully detained.

See A.22.1.1.1.6 and A.23.1.1.1.6.

A.3.3.198.6 Educational Occupancy. Educational occupancies include the following:

(1) Academies
(2) Kindergartens
(3) Schools

An educational occupancy is distinguished from an assembly occupancy in that the same occupants are regularly present.

A.3.3.198.7 Health Care Occupancy. Health care occupancies include the following:

(1) Hospitals
(2) Limited care facilities
(3) Nursing homes

Occupants of health care occupancies typically have physical or mental illness, disease, or infirmity. They also include infants, convalescents, or infirm aged persons. It is not the intent to consider occupants incapable of self-preservation because they are in a wheelchair or use assistive walking devices, such as a cane, a walker, or crutches.

A.3.3.198.8 Industrial Occupancy. Industrial occupancies include the following:

(1) Drycleaning plants
(2) Factories of all kinds
(3) Food processing plants
(4) Gas plants
(5) Hangars (for servicing/maintenance)
(6) Laundries
(7) Power plants
(8) Pumping stations
(9) Refineries
(10) Sawmills
(11) Telephone exchanges

In evaluating the appropriate classification of laboratories, the authority having jurisdiction should treat each case individually, based on the extent and nature of the associated hazards. Some laboratories are classified as occupancies other than industrial; for example, a physical therapy laboratory or a computer laboratory.

A.3.3.198.8.1 General Industrial Occupancy. General industrial occupancies include multistory buildings where floors are occupied by different tenants or buildings suitable for such occupancy and, therefore, are subject to possible use for types of industrial processes with a high density of employee population.

A.3.3.198.8.2 High Hazard Industrial Occupancy. A high hazard industrial occupancy includes occupancies where gasoline and other flammable liquids are handled, used, or stored under such conditions that involve possible release of flammable vapors; where grain dust, wood flour or plastic dust, aluminum or magnesium dust, or other explosive dusts are produced; where hazardous chemicals or explosives are manufactured, stored, or handled; where materials are processed or handled under conditions that might produce flammable flyings; and where other situations of similar hazard exist. Chapters 40 and 42 include detailed provisions on high hazard industrial and storage occupancies.

A.3.3.198.9 Mercantile Occupancy. Mercantile occupancies include the following:

(1) Auction rooms
(2) Department stores
(3) Drugstores
(4) Restaurants with fewer than 50 persons
(5) Shopping centers
(6) Supermarkets

Office, storage, and service facilities incidental to the sale of merchandise and located in the same building should be considered part of the mercantile occupancy classification.

A.3.3.198.12 Residential Board and Care Occupancy. The following are examples of facilities that are classified as residential board and care occupancies:

(1) Group housing arrangement for physically or mentally handicapped persons who normally attend school in the community, attend worship in the community, or otherwise use community facilities
(2) Group housing arrangement for physically or mentally handicapped persons who are undergoing training in preparation for independent living, for paid employment, or for other normal community activities
(3) Group housing arrangement for the elderly that provides personal care services but that does not provide nursing care
(4) Facilities for social rehabilitation, alcoholism, drug abuse, or mental health problems that contain a group housing arrangement and that provide personal care services but do not provide acute care
(5) Assisted living facilities
(6) Other group housing arrangements that provide personal care services but not nursing care

A.3.3.198.13 Residential Occupancy. Residential occupancies are treated as separate occupancies in this *Code* as follows:

(1) One- and two-family dwellings (Chapter 24)
(2) Lodging or rooming houses (Chapter 26)
(3) Hotels, motels, and dormitories (Chapters 28 and 29)
(4) Apartment buildings (Chapters 30 and 31)

A.3.3.198.15 Storage Occupancy. Storage occupancies include the following:

(1) Barns
(2) Bulk oil storage
(3) Cold storage
(4) Freight terminals
(5) Grain elevators
(6) Hangars (for storage only)
(7) Parking structures
(8) Truck and marine terminals
(9) Warehouses

Storage occupancies are characterized by the presence of relatively small numbers of persons in proportion to the area.

A.3.3.214 Performance Criteria. Performance criteria are stated in engineering terms. Engineering terms include temperatures, radiant heat flux, and levels of exposure to fire products. Performance criteria provide threshold values used to evaluate a proposed design.

A.3.3.216 Personal Care. Personal care involves responsibility for the safety of the resident while inside the building. Personal care might include daily awareness by management of the resident's functioning and whereabouts, making and reminding a resident of appointments, the ability and readiness for intervention in the event of a resident experiencing a crisis, supervision in the areas of nutrition and medication, and actual provision of transient medical care, including limited periodic skilled nursing care.

A.3.3.217 Photoluminescent. The released light is normally visible for a limited time if the ambient light sources are removed or partially obscured. [**301,** 2018]

A.3.3.220 Platform. Platforms also include the head tables for special guests; the raised area for lecturers and speakers; boxing and wrestling rings; theater-in-the-round; and for similar purposes wherein there are no overhead drops, pieces of scenery, or stage effects other than lighting and a screening valance.

A platform is not intended to be prohibited from using a curtain as a valance to screen or hide the electric conduit, lighting track, or similar fixtures, nor is a platform prohibited from using curtains that are used to obscure the back wall of the stage; from using a curtain between the auditorium and the stage (grand or house curtain); from using a maximum of four leg drops; or from using a valance to screen light panels, plumbing, and similar equipment from view.

A.3.3.224.1 Low-Energy Power-Operated Door. A pedestrian action might include pressing a push plate or waving a hand in front of a sensor.

A.3.3.224.2 Power-Operated Door. A provision used to prevent entrapment might include sensors.

A.3.3.228 Proposed Design. The design team might develop a number of trial designs that will be evaluated to determine whether they meet the performance criteria. One of the trial designs will be selected from those that meet the performance criteria for submission to the authority having jurisdiction as the proposed design.

The proposed design is not necessarily limited to fire protection systems and building features. It also includes any component of the proposed design that is installed, established, or maintained for the purpose of life safety, without which the proposed design could fail to achieve specified performance criteria. Therefore, the proposed design often includes emergency procedures and organizational structures that are needed to meet the performance criteria specified for the proposed design.

A.3.3.230 Public Way. The intent of the definition of public way is to establish an end point at which the means of egress terminates, is not under the jurisdiction of the *Code*, and to which the *Code's* requirements do not apply. As such, the *Code* intends a situation where occupants egressing from a building ultimately reach a point where they can move away from the building unimpeded and no longer need the protections of the *Code*.

A.3.3.231 Ramp. See 7.2.5.

A.3.3.233.1 Fire Protection Rating. The acceptance criteria for determining fire protection ratings for fire door assemblies are described in NFPA 252 and those for fire window assemblies are described in NFPA 257.

A.3.3.234 Reconstruction. It is not the intent that a corridor, an aisle, or a circulation space within a suite be considered as a corridor that is shared by more than one occupant space. The suite should be considered as only one occupant space. The following situations should be considered to involve more than one occupant space:

(1) Work affecting a corridor that is common to multiple guest rooms on a floor of a hotel occupancy
(2) Work affecting a corridor that is common to multiple living units on a floor of an apartment building occupancy
(3) Work affecting a corridor that is common to multiple tenants on a floor of a business occupancy

A.3.3.250.1 Festival Seating. Festival seating describes situations in assembly occupancies where live entertainment events are held that are expected to result in overcrowding and high audience density that can compromise public safety. It is not the intent to apply the term *festival seating* to exhibitions; sports events; conventions; and bona fide political, religious, and educational events. Assembly occupancies with 15 ft^2 (1.4 m^2) or more per person should not be considered festival seating.

A.3.3.252 Self-Luminous. An example of a self-contained power source is tritium gas. Batteries do not qualify as a self-contained power source. The light source is typically contained inside the device.

A.3.3.254 Self-Preservation (Day Care Occupancy). Examples of clients who are incapable of self-preservation include infants, clients who are unable to use stairs because of confinement to a wheelchair or other physical disability, and clients who cannot follow directions or a group to the outside of a facility due to mental or behavioral disorders. It is the intent of this *Code* to classify children under the age of 30 months as incapable of self-preservation. Examples of direct intervention by staff members include carrying a client, pushing a client outside in a wheelchair, and guiding a client by direct hand-holding or continued bodily contact. If clients cannot exit the building by themselves with minimal intervention from staff members, such as verbal orders, classification as incapable of self-preservation should be considered.

A.3.3.261 Situation Awareness. Situation awareness (also called situational awareness), described in a simpler fashion, is being aware of what is happening around you and understanding what that information means to you now and in the future. This definition, and the more formal definition, come from the extensive work of human factors (ergonomics) experts in situation awareness, most notably Mica R. Endsley (Endsley, Bolte and Jones, *Designing for Situation Awareness: An approach to user-centered design*, CRC Press, Taylor and Francis, Boca Raton, FL, 2003). Within the *Code*, and the standards it references, are long-standing requirements for systems and facilities that enhance situation awareness. Included are fire/smoke detection, alarm, and communication systems plus the system status panels in emergency command centers; supervisory systems for various especially critical components (e.g., certain valves) of fire protection systems; waterflow indicators; certain signs; and the availability of trained staff, notably in health care occupancies. Serious failures of situation awareness have been identified as central to unfortunate outcomes in various emergencies; for example, typical responses of people to developing fires also exhibit situation awareness problems as incorrect assumptions are made about the rapidity of fire growth or the effect of opening a door. Good situation awareness is critical to decision making, which, in turn, is critical to performance during an emergency.

A.3.3.268 Smoke Partition. A smoke partition is not required to have a fire resistance rating.

A.3.3.269 Smokeproof Enclosure. For further guidance, see the following publications:

(1) ASHRAE *Handbook and Product Directory — Fundamentals*
(2) *Principles of Smoke Management*, by Klote and Milke
(3) NFPA 105, *Standard for Smoke Door Assemblies and Other Opening Protectives*

A.3.3.274.1 Design Specification. Design specifications include both hardware and human factors, such as the conditions produced by maintenance and training. For purposes of performance-based design, the design specifications of interest are those that affect the ability of the building to meet the stated goals and objectives.

A.3.3.277 Stair. See 7.2.2.6.

A.3.3.280 Stories in Height. Stories below the level of exit discharge are not counted as stories for determining the stories in height of a building.

A.3.3.281 Story. Stories used exclusively for mechanical equipment rooms, elevator penthouses, and similar spaces are not occupiable stories.

A.3.3.283 Street Floor. Where, due to differences in street levels, two or more stories are accessible from the street, each is a street floor. Where there is no floor level within the specified limits for a street floor above or below the finished ground level, the building has no street floor.

A.3.3.284 Structure. The term *structure* is to be understood as if followed by the words *or portion thereof. (See also Building, A.3.3.37.)*

A.3.3.284.2 Air-Supported Structure. A cable-restrained air-supported structure is one in which the uplift is resisted by cables or webbing that is anchored by various methods to the membrane or that might be an integral part of the membrane. An air-supported structure is not a tensioned-membrane structure.

A.3.3.284.4 Mall Structure. A mall structure might enclose one or more uses, such as retail and wholesale stores, drinking and dining establishments, entertainment and amusement facilities, transportation facilities, offices, and other similar uses.

A.3.3.284.7 Open Structure. Open structures are often found in oil refining, chemical processing, or power plants. Roofs or canopies without enclosing walls are not considered an enclosure.

A.3.3.284.8 Parking Structure. A parking structure is permitted to be enclosed or open, use ramps, and use mechanical control push-button-type elevators to transfer vehicles from one floor to another. Motor vehicles are permitted to be parked by the driver or an attendant or are permitted to be parked mechanically by automated facilities. Where automated-type parking is provided, the operator of those facilities is permitted either to remain at the entry level or to travel to another level. Motor fuel is permitted to be dispensed, and motor vehicles are permitted to be serviced in a parking structure in accordance with NFPA 30A. [**88A,** 2019]

A.3.3.284.12 Underground Structure. In determining openings in exterior walls, doors or access panels are permitted to be included. Windows are also permitted to be included, provided that they are openable or provide a breakable glazed area.

Floor levels that are located not more than 30 ft (9.1 m) below the lowest level with an exit discharge can be considered a basement. See 3.3.33.

A.3.3.291 Tent. A tent might also include a temporary tensioned-membrane structure.

A.3.3.299 Vertical Opening. Vertical openings might include items such as stairways; hoistways for elevators, dumbwaiters, and inclined and vertical conveyors; shaftways used for light,