

# CHANGE OF OCCUPANCY IE. CHANGE OF USE

PUBLIC SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT



CITY OF  
**POSTFALLS**

## FAQ's

### **When is a change of occupancy required?**

A change of occupancy is the result of a change of purpose or level of activity within a building that involves a change in application of the requirements of the building code.

### **Why do I have to do a change of occupancy when the building/site is commercial?**

Although the Planning Division looks at the use of a building in regards to the zoning ordinance which lumps commercial uses under one common name, the Building Division is required by City ordinance and the building code to determine if there is a life safety factor.

### **How do I determine what the occupancy of a building is?**

Contact the Building Division, and provide the specific address of the building in question. If the City records are not available due to how old the property is, the occupancy could be established from assumed prior uses.

### **When does an architect determine the building is ok or needs to be changed and not the Building Division?**

The Building Division verifies that documents submitted meet the intent of the codes, not perform design work. State law requires the use of a State of Idaho licensed Architect to be used when a project is of a commercial nature and impacts life safety or accessibility requirements.

### **How long will it take to get approval for a change of occupancy permit?**

The length of time will vary, from the same day for a simple change of occupancy to typically 2 weeks depending on the complexity and the potential for re-submittal due to errors.

## FAQ's (cont.)

### **How much will a permit for a change of occupancy cost?**

The minimum permit cost for a change of use that requires no work to be performed is \$23.50 based on administrative costs. If the architect decides that work needs to be performed to bring the structure up to the code requirements, the permit fee will be based on a percentage cost of the valuation or cost of the work. If you know the approximate cost that the work is going to be, we can give you a ball park number of the permit and plan review cost prior to submittal.

### **Why do I have to pay impact fees if it has always been a commercial business?**

Impact fees are based upon the type of a particular use. If the building was formerly used with a low use type structure and now goes to a high use type structure, then fees often times need to be reassessed based on that. For a full understanding of impact fees it is best to talk with the planning staff.

### **Why do I have to pay for additional sewer fees if it has always been a commercial business?**

Sewer fees are based on the type of business and the number of projected occupants of the business, which may increase the use of water/sewer system. Often times a commercial business, say an office, only had 1 sewer unit and it changes to a restaurant, the water/sewer use increases due to cooking, cleaning and a larger number of occupants working and being served.

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# CHANGE OF OCCUPANCY (per Building Code)

PUBLIC SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT  
Building Division

Black = Major Task

Red = Approx Time Line

