



INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

Date: October 22, 2012

To: Technical Service Staff

From: Brad Claussen, Building Official

Subject: Determining Occupant Loads For Outdoor Patios

This memo is intended to guide the determination of an occupant load for an existing patio. All new patios which are constructed or remodeled under a building permit will be addressed as the International Building Code (currently adopted edition) requires. If a patio is existing, the following shall be used to determine the occupant load and the corresponding exiting requirements:

- The occupant load for outdoor patios will be calculated based upon its use in the same manner as for an indoor space. That would typically be 1 person per 7 square feet if open assembly area, 1 per 15 in locations normally having loose tables/chairs and one person per fixed seat or 24" of fixed booth/bench seating.
- If one exit is required it shall be of a size sufficient, as calculated by the IBC, for the occupant load as determined above.
- If the occupant load is high enough that two exits are required, then one of the following gate configurations shall be provided:
 - Two gates, each one of which is a minimum size as per the IBC calculations and separated by $\frac{1}{2}$ the diagonal dimension of the patio
 - One gate of a size which is the greater of either 20% of the length of the fence it is located in or 6 feet. As an example, for a patio having a full 50 feet of width along the alley side, a single opening of 10 feet would be required.
 - Exit gates should be located a minimum of $\frac{1}{2}$ the diagonal of the patio away from any rear exit door from the building in order to minimize the chance of congestion in these locations during exiting.

As always, if a unique situation comes up that doesn't fit within these guidelines, please let me know so we can determine a workable solution.