

Commercial Projects

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Does the Town of Merrimack follow the NH State Adopted Codes: IBC, IMC, IPC, IEEC 2009, ANSI 117.1 & State Fire Code SAF-C 6000

Yes. All buildings, building components, and structures constructed in Merrimack New Hampshire shall comply with the state building code and state fire code. As of January 1, 2022 the New Hampshire State Building Codes, with amendments, are;

- 2018 International Building Code
- 2018 International Residential Code
- 2018 International Plumbing Code
- 2018 International Mechanical Code
- 2018 International Energy Conservation Code
- 2018 NFPA 101 Life Safety
- 2018 NFPA Fire Prevention Code Ref: (RSA 155-A-1. & 155-A:2)
- 2020 NFPA 70 Notational Electric Code

2. How long does it take to get a Building Permit?

It usually takes about 10 - 15 days for a typical commercial plan review, but it could take up to 3 weeks depending on the department work load, the number of applications received, the extent of the scope of work, detail of plans and construction documents.

3. How many sets of plans/ drawings are required?

Two Complete sets – One (1) set for the Building Division file and One (1) to be date stamped, this plan along with the building permit will be the approved construction plan, and is to be readily available on site. We prefer and accept flash drive, pdf. electronic copy.

4. When are stamped engineered plans required?

New commercial, industrial and public building construction projects require engineered stamped plans, prepared by a New Hampshire registered design professional. The design professional shall act as the “engineer of record” and shall be responsible for submitting all construction documents and building design plans for code compliance. Ref: (IBC 107.3.4.)

5. Do I need to file a separate fire sprinkler system application?

Yes, separate automatic fire sprinkler design plans are to be submitted for commercial, industrial and some residential homes as part of a subdivision, do required fire protection, as conditions of approval. Sprinkler Design Plans are to be submitted to the Merrimack Fire Marshall’s office.

6. Do you require the owner/ landlord approval prior to submitting a permit?

Yes, the owner’s signature or owner authorization is required on the permit application form.

7. A typical multi-unit commercial retail space has 2,000 +/- sqft, and there already is (1) toilet room per the original tenant bay space, does that (1) toilet room suffice?

Based on IPC - Table 403.1, and 403.3.3 required restroom facilities shall be based on 1 per 500 and located within a maximum travel distance of 300 ft.
Section 402.2 Exception (3): Separate facilities are not required in mercantile uses with an occupant load less than 50.

8. Is ceramic floor tile & cove base required in the public toilet room?

According to IBC Section 1210.1 all flooring materials within restrooms/ toilet facilities are to have a smooth, hard, nonabsorbent surface.

9. Is a janitor mop sink & water fountain required in a commercial building? Will a water bubbler suffice?

Yes, According to IPC Section 410.1 and Table 403.1 there shall be at least 1 drinking fountain per 1,000 persons, as an alternative to a drinking fountain an approved water dispenser can be substituted for a drinking fountain and as long as the number of water dispensers provided are not more than 50% of the occupant load. The IPC Table 403.1 requires a minimum of 1 service sink per store.

10. In a retail/ mercantile occupancy does the dividing wall between the sales/stock wall need to be (1) hour rated?

Based on non-combustible construction the IBC - Table 601 & 602 Section 602.2 and 603.10 allow interior partitions to be non-rated when not part of an exit corridor or tenant separation.

11. Does the building code allow a second means of exit egress through a stock area of a mercantile/ tenant use without a corridor or hallway?

According to IBC Section 1014.2.4.2 – Means of Egress are not prohibited through stockrooms on Group M occupancies – *provided all the following are met*

- (1) Stock is of the *same hazard* classification found in main retail area
- (2) Not more than *50% of the exit access is through the stockroom*
- (3) The stockroom is *not subject to locking from the egress side*, and
- (4) There is a demarcation, *minimum 44 inch wide aisle defined by a full or partial walls or similar construction*, to be maintained leading directly from the retail area to the *exit* without obstructions

12. Are ceilings required in the sales and/or stock rooms? If so do they have to be rated?

Ceilings are not required in any space, provided adequate coverage for fire protection and building materials meet the limits for the type of construction.
Materials for ceiling shall be in accordance to IBC Section 402.8 and 808.

13. Do you require fire alarm and fire protection plans for a tenant fit-up of an unoccupied space, even if the plans were already submitted with the original building permit?

Yes. You need to submit a separate automatic fire sprinkler and fire alarm design plans for each proposed tenant space. The plans are to be submitted to the Merrimack Fire Marshall's office.

14. What is the permit process for applying for tenant signs?

The sign applications for the individual retail stores are to be submitted to the Building Division of the Merrimack Fire Department. The application shall include the construction materials, UL listing of the lighting fixtures and means of securing the signs to the building structure. It will be individual tenant's responsibility to obtain the owners' approval and verify the location of all signs on the property.

- 15) In an existing building is an Envelope Compliance required? (Energy Code Compliance)

The existing building(s) have been approved, per plans and specifications and code compliance. Each new retail tenant will be applying for a permit to "Fit-up" an existing unoccupied space within the unfinished building. Unless you plan to alter the existing building exterior envelope and the insulation values, the answer is No.

- 16) Per Code, are we required to have a fire alarm system in our space?

- a. If so, is this a fire alarm that is individual to our space or would it be tied into the malls fire alarm?
- b. If we are required to have a fire alarm, are horns, strobes & pulls stations required in our space?
- c. Are we required by code to have duct detectors that tie into the malls alarm system?

Yes to all. All Fire Alarm systems shall be installed in accordance to NFPA 1 and NFPA 101.

- 17) Is a separate permit required for low voltage wiring (such as speaker and data/phone lines)? Can low voltage wiring (plenum rated) be routed in free air or is conduit required?

Separate electrical permits are required for each retail space fit-up and will include all wiring methods. All electrical wiring shall be installed per the NFPA NEC 70.

- 18) Are structural calculations/drawings required to be submitted by a licensed Structural Engineer for any of the following?

- a. Exterior signage (about 250 lbs)
- b. Steel posts for signage and rolling grille
- c. HVAC equipment if in a new location
- d. Seismic details
- e. Storefront support details

Any design alteration or change to the building structure shall be submitted by a licensed Structural engineer. The items listed above shall be noted on the construction plans and or described in detail in the proposed project specifications and submittal documents, all will be reviewed for code compliance.

- 19) Do any of the installers, fabricators, and/or welders need local or state certification? Are any special inspectors required?

Electricians, Plumbers & Gas Fitter's are required to hold valid NH licenses, however you should refer to the project's specifications and conditions.

- 20) We want to do 12' high stock shelving, is there a separate permit required for stock room shelving of this height?
- Would we need any additional requirements to get this approved, such as perforated shelving, in rack sprinklers, or upgraded sprinkler pressure and heads?
 - Is 12' high stock shelving considered high pile storage?
 - Would 12' high stock shelving require a separate submittal or approval from fire? If so, how do we get this approval?

The types of storage units/ racks are limited to the type of material being stored, such as a mercantile; the fire rating for this use would typically be non-combustible, Type II construction. The storage racks would be required to be constructed, using non-combustible materials.

All listed manufactured storage shelving should come with installation instructions per the manufactures specifications. All shelving that exceeds 12'-0" AFF will require addition sprinkler protection in accordance with NFPA 1 and NFPA 101.

- 21) Our plans are normally designated with a stamp saying "permit set". Is this wording acceptable?

The construction documents and plans submitted with the building permit application will be reviewed for code compliance. Only the plans that have been submitted and approved by this department will be accepted for construction.

- 22) Reviewing Open Mall Base Building Plan "Restroom Travel" we find that an adjoining building has public facilities which include drinking fountains and janitors' closets with mop sinks with-in 300ft of our tenant space. Will these drinking fountains and mop sinks count for the tenant space requirements as indicated in the IPC Table 403.1?

The original plans submitted, met the minimum fixture requirements, and listed on Table 403.1 of the IPC. The WC minimum fixture totals is (164) and are based on the total occupied square foot area per person. The total fixtures counts included the general public restrooms WC (46) and each individual tenant space restrooms WC (126) for the combined total of (172). Men and women gender distribution is 50-50.

The Mall is a Mercantile use – were the minimum code requirement is 1 drinking fountain per 100 persons and 1 service sink per unit. The total occupancy for the mall buildings is (8,196), therefore the minimum number of drinking fountains is 9 high and low, ADA standard water coolers, a ratio of 1/1,000. The drinking fountain ratio indicated for an occupancy use description does not necessarily imply that every tenant must have a drinking fountain within that occupied space. As long as the ratio of people to drinking fountains is available when the

occupancy is in use, the drinking fountains and water coolers could be located in adjacent open common areas.

The “service sink” required by Table 403.1 are intended to be of a type suitable for janitorial and building maintenance purposes. Service sinks include mop, laundry trays, utility and janitor sinks, etc. In all occupancies, except I-2, R-2 and R-3, only one service sink is required for the entire building. The service sink must be available to all portions of the building. The intent of the code is that employees and tenants of the building are able to access the required sink. The sink must be located on the same floor and can be in a locked janitor’s closet, provided that all tenants have access by key or door code to gain entry. The required building sink can not be located in a tenant controlled space that is locked out (excluded) from entry to other tenants.

- 23) We may be working on an upcoming store renovation at the Merrimack Premium Outlets. While we’ve found Merrimack’s website to be very useful, we’d like to confirm if the Building & Code Enforcement Division accepts electronically signed & sealed construction drawings for review when submitting for permit.

As outlined in our "frequently asked questions" we accept (1) full set and (1) reduced copy (11" x17") copy of the stamped plan set.

We prefer to review the full size set of plans, with your application, however we will not print full size plans. Please keep in mind the approved full size plan set will be returned to you, with the building permit. These plans are required to be kept and remain on the job site during the construction, for reference.

If you provide us an electronically signed set of plans (pdf.) on a flash drive, we will keep them on record with the building permit file, we do require the paper copy be submitted in order to conduct a plan review prior to permit being issued.

- 24) As reference to the (1) full-size hard copy and (1) 11x17 hard copy. However, does the signature need to be “wet signed” and “wet sealed/crimped” or can it be electronically signed/sealed then printed.

It can be electronically signed/sealed then printed.