

# CHAPTER 3

## DESIGN PERFORMANCE LEVELS

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**User note:**

**About this chapter:** Chapter 3 is unique to this code. It is intended to provide a framework to establish minimum levels to which buildings or facilities should perform when subjected to events such as fires and natural hazards. The minimums established by this chapter are based on the types of risks associated with the use of the building or facility, the intended function of the building or facility and the importance of the building or facility to a community. This information is then compared with the type and sizes of events that may affect the building or facility. As noted in the Effective Use portion of this document, it is intended that this chapter provide a link between the policy makers and the designers. In many respects, this chapter is the performance code equivalent of the height and area requirements, occupancy classifications and related requirements.

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### SECTION 301 MINIMUM PERFORMANCE

**[BG] 301.1 Purpose.** This chapter provides the basis for developing the acceptable level of design based on building use, risk factors and magnitudes of event. Magnitudes are defined in subsequent chapters of this code but interrelate with this chapter in the development of design methods for the mitigation of hazards.

**[BG] 301.2 Objective.** To establish performance groups for buildings and facilities and to establish minimum acceptable losses based on those performance groups.

#### **[BG] 301.3 Functional statements.**

**[BG] 301.3.1 Performance level.** The performance of a building or facility is based on the ability of the building or facility to tolerate specified magnitudes of event within tolerable limits of damage.

**[BG] 301.3.2 Demonstration of performance.** Performance is acceptable where the design performance levels are demonstrated to be met or exceeded, to the satisfaction of the code official, in accordance with the assigned or designated use groups, performance groups, magnitudes of event and maximum tolerable damage limits; and the objectives, functional statements and performance requirements of this code.

### SECTION 302 USE AND OCCUPANCY CLASSIFICATION

**[BG] 302.1 General.** The objective of the assignment of use and occupancy classification is to identify the primary uses of buildings and facilities, and portions of buildings and facilities, and to identify risk factors associated with these uses, in order to facilitate design and construction in accordance with other provisions of this code.

**[BG] 302.2 Determination of use.** In determining the primary use of a building or facility, or portion of a building or facility, the following shall be considered:

1. **Principal purpose or function.** The principal purpose or function of the building or facility.
2. **Hazards.** The hazard-related risk(s) to the users of the building or facility.

**[BG] 302.3 Guidance.** The use and occupancy classifications found in the *International Building Code* shall be permitted to be used for guidance in determining the principal purposes or functions for buildings or facilities.

**[BG] 302.4 Risk factors.** In determining the hazard-related risk(s) to users of buildings and facilities, the following risk factors shall be considered:

**[BG] 302.4.1 Nature of the hazard.** The nature of the hazard, whether it is likely to originate internal or external to the building or facility, and how it may impact the occupants, the building or facility, and the contents.

**[BG] 302.4.2 Number of occupants.** The number of persons normally occupying, visiting, employed in or otherwise using the building, facility or portion of the building or facility.

**[BG] 302.4.3 Length of occupancy.** The length of time the building or facility is normally occupied by people.

**[BG] 302.4.4 Sleeping characteristics.** Whether people normally sleep in the building.

**[BG] 302.4.5 Familiarity.** Whether the building or facility occupants and other users are expected to be familiar with the building or facility layout and means of egress.

**[BG] 302.4.6 Vulnerability.** Whether a significant percentage of the building or facility occupants are, or are expected to be, members of vulnerable population groups such as infants, young children, elderly persons, persons with physical disabilities, persons with mental disabilities, or persons with other conditions or impairments that could affect their ability to make decisions, egress without the physical assistance of others or tolerate adverse conditions.

**[BG] 302.4.7 Relationships.** Whether a significant percentage of building or facility occupants and other users have family or dependent relationships.

### SECTION 303 PERFORMANCE GROUPS

**[BG] 303.1 Performance group allocation.** Use groups and hazard-related occupancies have been allocated to performance groups using the risk factors identified in Section

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302.4. Specific buildings and facilities have been allocated to performance groups using the risk factors identified in Section 302.4 combined with the relative importance of protecting the building or facility to the community. These performance group allocations are shown in Table 303.1.

**[BG] 303.2 Unique performance group allocation.** Where necessary or desired, allocation of specific buildings or facilities to performance groups differing from Table 303.1 is permitted based on the needs specific to a community or owner or if there are unusual circumstances associated with the building or facility.

**[BG] 303.3 Magnitudes of event and level of damage.** Performance groups identify the minimum required performance of buildings or facilities through a relationship of the magnitude of an event to the maximum level of damage to be tolerated shown in Table 303.3. The use of Table 303.3 shall be an iterative process. It shall be used to determine the acceptable impact of certain events based on their magnitude, and then used iteratively to evaluate various designed

mitigation features. Assignment of performance groups is accomplished through consideration of building or facility uses, building or facility risk factors, and the importance of a building or facility to a community.

**[BG] 303.4 Performance groups.** There are four performance groups (PG), identified as I, II, III and IV.

**[BG] 303.4.1 Performance Group I.** The minimum design performance level with which all buildings or facilities posing a low risk to human life, should the buildings or facilities fail, shall comply.

**[BG] 303.4.2 Performance Group II.** The minimum design performance level with which all buildings or facilities subject to this code, except those classified as PG I, PG III or PG IV, shall comply.

**[BG] 303.4.3 Performance Group III.** The minimum design performance level with which buildings or facilities of an increased level of societal benefit or importance shall comply.

**[BG]TABLE 303.1  
PERFORMANCE GROUP CLASSIFICATIONS FOR BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES**

PERFORMANCE GROUP	USE AND OCCUPANCY CLASSIFICATIONS FOR SPECIFIC BUILDINGS OR FACILITIES
I	Buildings and facilities that represent a low hazard to human life in the event of failure, including, but not limited to: 1. Agricultural facilities. 2. Certain temporary facilities. 3. Minor storage facilities.
II	All buildings and facilities except those listed in Performance Groups I, III and IV.
III	Buildings and facilities that represent a substantial hazard to human life in the event of failure, including, but not limited to: 1. Buildings and facilities where more than 300 people congregate in one area. 2. Buildings and facilities with elementary school, secondary school or day care facilities with a capacity greater than 250. 3. Buildings and facilities with a capacity greater than 500 for colleges or adult education facilities. 4. Health-care facilities with a capacity of 50 or more residents but not having surgery or emergency treatment facilities. 5. Jails and detention facilities. 6. Any other occupancy with an occupant load greater than 5,000. 7. Power-generating facilities, water treatment for potable water, wastewater treatment facilities and other public utilities facilities not included in Performance Group IV. 8. Buildings and facilities not included in Performance Group IV containing sufficient quantities of highly toxic gas or explosive materials capable of causing acutely hazardous conditions that do not extend beyond property boundaries.
IV	Buildings and facilities designated as essential facilities, including, but not limited to: 1. Hospitals and other health-care facilities having surgery or emergency treatment facilities. 2. Fire, rescue and police stations and emergency vehicle garages. 3. Designated earthquake, hurricane or other emergency shelters. 4. Designated emergency preparedness, communication, and operation centers and other facilities required for emergency response. 5. Power-generating stations and other utilities required as emergency backup facilities for Performance Group IV buildings or facilities. 6. Buildings and facilities containing highly toxic gas or explosive materials capable of causing acutely hazardous conditions beyond the property boundaries. 7. Aviation control towers, air traffic control centers and emergency aircraft hangars. 8. Buildings and facilities having critical national defense functions. 9. Water treatment facilities required to maintain water pressure for fire suppression. 10. Ancillary structures (including, but not limited to, communication towers, fuel storage tanks or other structures housing or supporting water or other fire suppression material or equipment) required for operation of Performance Group IV structures during an emergency.



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ate in numbers and in nature. There is a low likelihood of single life loss with a very low likelihood of multiple life loss. The nature of the applied load, such as fire hazards, may result in higher levels of expected injuries and damage in localized areas, whereas the balance of the areas may sustain fewer injuries and less damage.

**[BG] 304.2.2.4 Overall extent of damage.** Damage to building or facility contents from hazard-related applied loads may be locally significant, but is generally moderate in extent and cost. The nature of the applied load, such as fire hazards, may result in higher levels of expected injuries and damage in localized areas, whereas the balance of the areas may sustain fewer injuries and less damage.

**[BG] 304.2.2.5 Hazardous materials.** Some hazardous materials are released to the environment, but the risk to the community is minimal. Emergency relocation is not necessary.

**[BG] 304.2.3 High impact.** The tolerable impacts of the design loads are assumed as follows:

**[BG] 304.2.3.1 Structural damage.** There is significant damage to structural elements but there is not large falling debris; repair is possible. Significant delays in reoccupancy can be expected.

**[BG] 304.2.3.2 Nonstructural systems.** Nonstructural systems needed for normal building or facility use are significantly damaged and inoperable; egress routes may be impaired by light debris; emergency systems may be significantly damaged, but remain operational.

**[BG] 304.2.3.3 Occupant hazards.** Injuries to building or facility occupants from hazard-related applied loads may be locally significant with a high risk to life, but are generally moderate in numbers and in nature. There is a moderate likelihood of single life loss, with a low probability of multiple life loss. The nature of the applied load, such as fire hazards, may result in higher levels of expected injuries and damage in localized areas, whereas the balance of the areas may sustain fewer injuries and less damage.

**[BG] 304.2.3.4 Overall extent of damage.** Damage to building or facility contents from hazard-related applied loads may be locally total and generally significant. The nature of the applied load, such as fire hazards, may result in higher levels of expected injuries and damage in localized areas, whereas the balance of the areas may sustain fewer injuries and less damage.

**[BG] 304.2.3.5 Hazardous materials.** Hazardous materials are released to the environment with localized relocation needed for buildings and facilities in the immediate vicinity.

**[BG] 304.2.4 Severe impact.** The tolerable impacts of the design loads are assumed as follows:

**[BG] 304.2.4.1 Structural damage.** There is substantial structural damage, but all significant components continue to carry gravity load demands. Repair may

not be technically possible. The building or facility is not safe for reoccupancy, as reoccupancy could cause collapse.

**[BG] 304.2.4.2 Nonstructural systems.** Nonstructural systems for normal building or facility use may be completely nonfunctional. Egress routes may be impaired; emergency systems may be substantially damaged and nonfunctional.

**[BG] 304.2.4.3 Occupant hazards.** Injuries to building or facility occupants from hazard-related applied loads may be high in numbers and significant in nature. Significant risk to life may exist. There is a high likelihood of single life loss and a moderate likelihood of multiple life loss. The nature of the applied load, such as fire hazards, may result in higher levels of expected injuries and damage in localized areas, whereas the balance of the areas may sustain fewer injuries and less damage.

**[BG] 304.2.4.4 Overall extent of damage.** Damage to building or facility contents from hazard-related applied loads may be total. The nature of the applied load, such as fire hazards, may result in higher levels of expected injuries and damage in localized areas, whereas the balance of the areas may sustain fewer injuries and less damage.

**[BG] 304.2.4.5 Hazardous materials.** Significant hazardous materials are released to the environment, with relocation needed beyond the immediate vicinity.

## SECTION 305 MAGNITUDES OF EVENT

**[BG] 305.1 General.** Magnitude of event encompasses all loads that can be reasonably expected to impact on a building or facility, its users and its contents, during construction and throughout its intended life. This includes building and facility-related and occupancy-related loads, as well as loads resulting from natural and technological hazards.

Determination of magnitude of event shall take into account the design performance levels established by this code, the risk factors identified in Section 302.4 and specific performance criteria established by relevant authoritative documents.

**[BG] 305.1.1 Natural hazards.** The types of loads affecting main-force-resisting systems, components and contents that may be reasonably expected to impact on the building or facility, its users and its contents during its intended life are provided in Chapter 5 of this code.

**[BG] 305.1.2 Technological hazards.** The types of loads due to technological hazards that may be reasonably expected to impact on the building or facility, its users and its contents during construction and throughout its intended life include, but are not limited to:

**[BG] 305.1.2.1 Fires** (Chapters 6, 16 and 17).

**[BG] 305.1.2.2 Explosions** (Chapters 5, 22 and Section 801).