
FIRE PREVENTION AND BUILDING SAFETY COMMISSION

Interpretation by
Building Law Compliance Officer
Division of Fire and Building Safety
Indiana Department of Homeland Security

November 22, 2010

Title: Interpretation of Dialysis Centers/Clinics as I-2 Occupancy

Purpose: To clarify that all dialysis centers shall be classified as I-2 occupancies.

Interpretation: The Building Law Compliance Officer interprets the following sections of the 2008 Indiana Building Code as establishing that all dialysis centers (i.e., clinics, outpatient treatment facilities, etc.) shall be classified as I-2 occupancies.

Section 304.1 – Includes professional services as a broad category, and includes such services as attorneys, architects, engineers, dentists, and physicians offices. This is not meant to include facilities such as outpatient services where medical and surgical procedures are performed.

In addition, clinics – outpatient are also included in this definition, but again, this is a broad category as it includes such facilities such as "Med-Checks", Blood Donation Centers, etc. Dialysis clinics have many patients that are not capable of self-preservation due to the necessary procedures when undergoing treatment dialysis treatment. Although some patients are able to walk and may be mobile, many are not as they are either wheelchair-bound or in beds/gurneys, and consequently will need to rely upon clinic staff members for assistance in exiting the facility during an emergency. Many facilities do not have adequate personnel and staffing to assist the number of patients undergoing treatment.

Section 308.1 – Group I occupancies include a building or a portion thereof, in which people are cared for in supervised environment, having physical limitations because of health or age are harbored for medical treatment or other care or treatment. This would include patients in for dialysis treatment who are considered incapacitated, or immobile while undergoing treatment at a dialysis center or clinic.

Section 308.3 – "I-2 occupancies" shall include buildings and structures used for medical and surgical procedures. Although it does indicate these types of facilities include "nursing or custodial care on a 24-hour basis", these are separate and distinct uses. Therefore, "I-2 occupancies" shall include intermediate care facilities utilized for outpatient facilities such as dialysis centers.

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