



**CATAWBA COUNTY GOVERNMENT
BUILDING SERVICES DIVISION
OPERATION POLICY**

TO: BUILDING SERVICES DIVISION
FROM: ARMIN J. WALLNER, CHIEF BUILDING SERVICES OFFICIAL
SUBJECT: FIXTURING AND STOCKING POLICY
DATE: MAY 1, 2004

The following information is to be used as a guideline when allowing contractors and building owners to begin installing fixtures, moving furniture, merchandise, or stock into their buildings prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy. This information is not inclusive of all the requirements; it is intended to address the most common issues that arise. Failure of the contractor or building owner to abide by the requirements of the appropriate inspections department can result in the fixtures, furniture, merchandise, or stock being removed from the building before additional inspections are conducted. Failure to obtain a temporary certificate of occupancy prior to allowing employees or the public to occupy any portion of the building is a violation of NC General Statute 160A-423.

An alternate to installing fixtures and merchandising is to place a commercial transportation trailer on the site to temporarily store merchandise. The following transport companies will drop off trailers for 30 day periods: Dedicated Transportation Group Attn: Jason Sharpe, 324-7005, Ramseur Trucking Company 324-2595, New-Con Transportation Inc. Attn: John Eckerd 465-0257, Trailer Sales & Service – Attn: Bill Toddy 465-1800.

Definitions

- **Fixtures** – equipment that is fixed, attached, or movable that is intended for permanent use within the building. Examples: racks and modular workstations.
 - Racks – any combination of vertical, horizontal, or diagonal members that support stored material.
- **Furniture** – equipment that is not fixed or attached to the building used in readying an area for occupancy or use. Examples: desks, tables, chairs, file cabinets, shelves, display cases, bed frames, headboards, etc.
- **Merchandising or Stocking** - product that is brought into the building to be displayed, or stored on shelves and racks, etc. These items can be for the purpose of retail/wholesale sales or for internal use.

- **Temporary Certificate of Compliance** – may be issued for a portion or portions of a building that may safely be utilized prior to final completion of the building. The conditions of the TCC will be stated such as for training of employees only.

Requirements

1. **Unregulated furnishings** – The following items are not intended to be regulated by this policy:
 - Kitchen/break-room - permanently attached furnishings such as cabinets and countertops.
 - Motel/Hotel – permanently attached furnishings that are designed for permanent attachment to walls such as headboards, dressers, and end tables.
 - Plumbing, mechanical and electrical fixtures.

Required Inspections

2. **Fixtures** – The following requirements shall be satisfied prior to installing fixtures in a building (This is not a final inspection of the premises or any of the service systems):
 - Written approval from the Fire Inspector stating the approved areas of the building.
 - (Normally fire hydrants must be in place, accessible and operational.)
 - All overhead inspections such as sprinkler, fire alarm, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, and general construction must be complete, inspected and approved.
 - All electrical wiring and devices shall be properly terminated with wire nuts and recessed into electrical device boxes (This does not include junction box covers). No electrical wiring shall be open to contact.
 - All electrical devices in walls must be installed and inspected prior to moving fixtures such as modular workstations and racks into these areas.
 - Caution must be utilized in placement of fixtures and/or furniture to ensure all electrical, plumbing and mechanical equipment remains accessible and placement will not interfere with inspections or work to be completed.
 - If fixtures, equipment or construction materials such as refrigeration coolers, industrial machinery, drywall, cartons of ceiling tile or furniture must be installed in an area under construction due to extenuating circumstances, prior approval and inspection of this area shall first be obtained.
 - A functional air velocity test of all duct detectors shall be conducted. If the building is not equipped with a fire alarm notification system both an audible/visual notification device shall be installed in the vicinity of the unit served. (Tests may be delayed, however it shall be conducted and approved prior to merchandising or stocking the space.)
3. **Furniture** – Same requirements as merchandising or stocking.
4. **Merchandising or Stocking** – The following requirements shall be satisfied prior to merchandising or stocking (This is not a final inspection of the premises or any of the service systems):

- Successful completion of all requirements listed above for Fixtures.
- All construction in exits and exit stairwells shall be completed with panic hardware and free of trash and construction debris.
- All construction at exterior exit discharge areas shall be complete and free of trash, debris and construction material. This shall include areas such as sidewalks, exterior stairways and parking decks.
- A functional air velocity test of all duct detectors shall be conducted. If the building is not equipped with a fire alarm notification system both an audible/visual notification device shall be installed in the vicinity of the unit served.
- Upon approval to stock, caution must be utilized in placement of furniture to ensure all electrical, plumbing and mechanical fixtures are accessible for final inspections.
- Coordinate with fire inspector to determine operational requirements of sprinkler and fire alarm systems.

2. Temporary Certificate of Compliance – The following requirements shall be satisfied prior to issuance of a Temporary Certificate of Compliance (This is not a final inspection of the premises or any of the service systems):

- Successful completion of all requirements listed above for fixtures and merchandising.
- Written temporary or permanent approval by the Engineering, Fire, Utility and Zoning Departments having jurisdiction that state the approved areas of the building.
- Inspection and temporary approval of the building shall be conducted prior to public occupancy or any scheduled grand opening.
- Both interior and exterior building, plumbing, mechanical and electrical systems shall be completed and final inspections must be conducted, final approval of temporary occupancy will be at the discretion of the building service officials conducting the inspection. *It will be the responsibility of the BSO performing the building inspection to ensure all disapproved TCC's are coordinated with their respective area supervisors.*
- All emergency lighting and exit signage shall be completed and operational.
- All acceptance tests such as smoke detection systems, hood systems, fire alarms and/or sprinkler systems shall be conducted and approved prior to requesting a Temporary or Final Certificate of Compliance. It is the responsibility of both the fire alarm and sprinkler contractor to contact the Fire Inspectors office twenty-four hours in advance to schedule their inspections. This date must correspond with the date that the general contractor schedules with the Building Services Division.
- Provide approvals from the NC Department of Labor for public elevators and for boilers greater than or equal to 200,000 Btu input.
- A Temporary Certificate of Compliance may be issued on a floor-by-floor basis at the discretion of the Building Services Division and Fire Inspectors Office.
 - An accessible path of travel shall be provided to the elevator for the general public.

- Exterior lighting, electric menu boards, electric signs etc. that have not been completed shall be properly terminated with approved covers.
- All exterior accessibility features such as sidewalks, ramps, curb cuts, parking and signage shall be in place.
- When required to separate areas of construction from areas to be occupied, the Code Enforcement Official shall designate the type and location of temporary partitions. Temporary partitions shall be in place prior to request for inspection.
- Coordinate with fire inspector to determine operational requirements of sprinkler and fire alarm systems.

Please understand that all electrical power will be de-energized during the final inspection to check various items, you may want to take certain precautions to back up any technology systems prior to de-energizing the electrical systems. The purpose of the above requirements is to provide minimum safeguards to life safety and property.