

## BC BUILDING CODE 2012 DISTILLERIES

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Sentence 3.1.2.1.(1) outlines the Building Code's major occupancy classifications. The intent is to "classify buildings or portions of buildings based on use and occupancy to determine the appropriate requirements in the Building Code".

The Building Code broadly classifies a distillery as a Group F, Division 1 occupancy regardless of the size or relative hazard of the operation. A micro, or boutique, distillery produces beverage grade alcohol in small quantities. Similar to the profusion of microbreweries over the past 20 years, micro-distilleries are a growing trend. According to our research, prior to the 1920's the small family-operated distillery was a significant part of the North American liquor industry. Prohibition put all but the largest operations out of business and triggered an era of industrial type distilleries. Thus, the inclusion of distilleries in Appendix A of the Building Code as an example of a Group F, Division 1 occupancy reflects the large industrial operation that has been the norm for the past 90 years.

The objectives related to protection of Group F, Division 1 occupancies are to limit the effects of fire on occupants and on the building and to limit the potential for occupants being delayed in moving to a safe place. The only guidance provided with regard to distilleries is their inclusion in Appendix A as an example of a high hazard industrial occupancy.

Based on analysis of combustible contents, including the product, and potential explosion hazards we have determined at a number of small distilleries that the occupancy classification is within the range of a Group F, Division 3 (low) or Group F, Division 2 (medium) hazard industrial occupancy as defined by the Building Code.



### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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