



# Clark County Department of Building & Fire Prevention

4701 West Russell Road, Las Vegas, NV 89118 ~ (702) 455-3000

## Unique Interiors Building Permit Guide

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### Part I. General Information

This guide is intended to help design professionals understand the fire protection concepts for unique building interiors, such as wall hangings/coverings, awnings/ceilings, and other decorative interior features/structures. This guide primarily addresses decorative materials that exceed the intent of the Fire Code. Therefore must be considered building materials and meet the requirements of the Building Code. The general rules identified in this guide apply to reasonably large spaces in buildings that are fully protected by automatic fire sprinklers. Decorative features that are clearly governed by the Building or Fire Codes are not addressed herein and must be discussed with the respective department.

### Part II. Applicant's Responsibility

The Design Professional is expected to thoroughly review this guide and provide all information necessary to demonstrate compliance.

### Part III. Applicable Codes

The currently adopted version:

- International Building Code (IBC) with Southern Nevada Building Code Amendments (SNBC).

### Part IV. Jurisdiction

- Clark County Department of Building
  - Regulates components that are part of a building in accordance with the IBC and SNBC.
  - Regulates interior wall and ceiling finishes along with the associated surface-burning characteristics.
  - Regulates partitions, pony walls, counters, bars, flooring, draperies, decorative materials and trim.
  - Regulates plastics and foam plastics intended for use in building components (i.e. partitions, glazing, insulation, decorative moldings/trim).
  - Reviews structural and fire-resistive aspects of construction.
- Contact the Clark County Fire Department at 575 East Flamingo Road, Las Vegas, Nevada 89119 (702) 455-7311 for their position and enforcement procedures on decorative materials not regulated by the Clark County Department of Building, which may include:
  - Combustible materials within structures as addressed in the International Fire Code (IFC) and not included in the IBC. (E.g. see IFC Sections 803, 805, 806, 808 and portions of 807).
  - Furnishings.
  - Objects/Materials/Props on the stage side of a proscenium.
  - The design of sprinkler systems to help limit fire propagation within the space.

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## Part V. Review Process

- General Information
  - If anyone at anytime can pick up the decorative item and carry it inside the building, it's likely Clark County will consider the item decorative materials as regulated by the Fire Code. If the decorative feature takes a crew of people to haul it inside the building and assemble it, the Clark County Department of Building will typically require the decorative feature to be constructed out of the same materials required for the base building.
  - Clark County allows multiple items to be considered decorative materials in accordance with the IFC when the fuel array does not exceed the dimensions indicated herein and adjacent fuel arrays are separated by at least the maximum dimension of the fuel array. This separation is applicable to all decorative wall, ceiling and interior features.
  - Clark County will consider decorative materials in excess of the limits listed herein upon a documented engineering analysis addressing the potential hazard and mitigating measures. Both the Clark County Department of Building and Clark County Fire Department will review these submittals on a case-by-case basis.
- Clark County Department of Building
  - Structural and fire protection aspects of decorative items exceeding the limitations listed in this guide shall be prepared and/or reviewed by a Nevada registered design professional in accordance with State laws.
  - Drawings documenting pertinent aspects of the proposed installations shall be submitted with an original wet stamp and signature to the Plans Examination Division for review and approval prior to installation and may be a deferred submittal.
  - In most cases, a Fire Protection Report (FPR) addressing the extent of work and pertinent aspects will be required to accompany the drawing submittal.
  - Although some of the unique applications that fall within the intent of these guidelines are exempt from permits, Section 22.02.185 of the Clark County Building Administrative Code clarifies that those items are not exempt from compliance.
- Clark County Fire Department
  - Coordinate directly with Clark County Fire Department for their position and enforcement procedures on decorative materials less than the limitations listed herein.

## Part VI. Consideration of Potential Fire Hazard

- The following conditions are to be included in engineered analyses (FPRs) and may be used to distinguish decorative materials/fuel loading within the building from decorative features that are part of the building:
  - Proximity to fire sprinklers
  - Obstruction to sprinkler discharge
  - Sprinkler system design aspects (density and area of coverage)
  - Combustible concealed voids
  - Burning characteristics of the decorative item (size, thickness, mass to surface area ratio and product type)
  - Type of substrate and method of attachment
  - Configuration of the decorative item (e.g. horizontal vs. vertical)
  - Properties of topical applications (pigments, varnishes)
  - Fire-retardant applications
  - Recognized fire tests

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- Proximity to, and significance of, ignition sources and adjacent fuel packages
  - Obstruction to occupant evacuation
  - Temporary (not exceeding 3 to 5 days) vs. permanent

## Part VII. Trim

- **Trim** is addressed in IBC Section 806.5 and includes:
  - Picture molds
  - Chair rails
  - Baseboards
  - Handrails
  - Door and window frames (when opening protection is not required)
  - Crown molding
- **Foam plastics** may be used as trim within certain restrictions per IBC Section 2604.
- **When exceeding 6 inches** maximum width, materials will be **reviewed** in accordance with IBC Chapter 8 **as interior wall and ceiling applications.**
- **When exceeding ten percent** of the specific wall or ceiling to which it is attached, materials will be **considered interior wall and ceiling finish.**
- **Combustible concealed voids** are regulated by both Building and Fire Codes. Several recognized approaches for mitigating combustible voids include:
  - Installing automatic sprinklers in the void
  - Filling the void with a noncombustible material
  - Encapsulating the combustible surface inside the void with a noncombustible material
  - Fire blocking small voids with a recognized material at intervals not exceeding 8 feet

## Part VIII. Decorative Wall Applications

- **Decorative wall applications** include the following items and may be affixed or suspended:
  - Tapestries
  - Murals
  - Pictures
  - Signs
  - Draperies
  - Decorative planters
  - Projection screens
  - Big screen televisions
- **Textiles/Thin Combustible Materials**
  - Draperies limited to 10 percent of the associated wall are considered decorative hangings and governed by IBC Section 806.
  - Draperies are not allowed to be used as room dividers. Room dividers are partitions and must be of the type of construction required for the building in which they are installed. Draperies hung from the ceiling to create separations may constitute up to 10 percent of the projected wall line. (Except as specifically allowed by IBC Section 806 for fabric partitions in Group B and M occupancies.)

- Clark County Fire Department may consider free hanging fabrics and textiles, as well as other thin combustible materials under the IFC if they do not exceed 10 feet by 10 feet.
  - Clark County Fire Department may consider **temporary draperies** exceeding 10 feet by 10 feet when adequate protection is provided and may require testing in accordance with NFPA 701 Test Method 2, NFPA 265 or NFPA 286, as applicable.
  - Other than draperies described in the preceding bullets, thin combustible materials used as interior finish must be adhered to a noncombustible substrate with a high temperature, noncombustible adhesive and comply with IBC Section 803.
  - Textile wall coverings shall be in accordance with IBC Section 803.5.
- **Light-Transmitting Plastics and Plastic Signs**
    - Plastic signs in malls are limited as specified in IBC Section 402.16.
    - Other than in malls, fire-resistive aspects of plastic signs shall be in accordance with the SNBC Section 2611.
    - Light-transmitting plastics must be submitted to the Clark County Department of Building for review in accordance with IBC Chapter 26 and the SNBC.
    - Big screen televisions are considered wall-type applications. If they exceed 10 feet by 10 feet, the plastic material must comply with applicable requirements of the IBC.  
**NOTE:** Tube-type televisions listed by a recognized testing laboratory and installed separately or in a bank are considered appliances and are not regulated as interior wall finish under the IBC.
  - **Other decorative wall applications** exceeding 10 feet by 10 feet must comply with the IBC.
  - **Architectural / decorative features that limit or restrict occupant access / circulation** are considered interior partitions when they exceed 5 feet - 9 inches high or 10 feet in length.

## Part IX. Decorative Ceilings

- **Decorative ceilings** inside buildings include:
  - Umbrellas
  - Awnings
  - Canopies
  - Interior eaves/projections
  - Non-occupiable/decorative balconies
  - Lattice and other similar ceilings
  - Roofs of interior structures (e.g. kiosks and carousels)
  - Horizontal installation/application of any material that can cause obstruction to, or delay activation of, automatic sprinklers
- **Decorative ceilings** exceeding 10 feet by 10 feet must comply with the IBC.
- **Automatic sprinklers** must be installed to eliminate/reduce concealed fires in accordance with NFPA 13.
- **Unprotected, noncombustible construction** is acceptable for partitions and/or columns that only support ceilings and do not qualify as structural frame or bearing walls.
- Clark County Department of Building considers columns supporting ceilings or other decorative features to be “structural frame” and requires protection from fire when the associated column

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line is analyzed as a wall and that wall would qualify as bearing (supports more than 100 lbs per lineal foot of superimposed load).

- **Thermally thin combustible ceilings** (typically any combustible material less than ¼ inch thick) do not comply with the codes adopted by Clark County and must be submitted through the Alternate Materials/Methods provisions of the IBC for consideration.
  - Even when exceeding ¼ inch thick, plastics and fabrics used in ceiling applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- **The Uniform Mechanical Code (UMC)** limits the flame spread index to 25 and smoke developed index to 50 for above ceiling areas that constitute plenums.

## Part X. Artificial Plants, Statues & Similar Decorative Features

- **Artificial plants, statues and similar decorative items** placed within buildings include:
  - Artificial/preserved plants
  - Mannequins
  - Statues
  - Models
  - Small non-occupiable decorative structures
- **Combustible concealed voids** shall be mitigated.
- **Decorative items** exceeding ten feet in height and/or four feet in diameter shall be constructed out of the same materials required for the base building. Substantiation that the feature meets the structural stability aspects of the IBC may be required by the Clark County Department of Building.
- Contact Clark County Fire Department for their position and enforcement procedures on decorative items less than the dimensions described in the preceding bullet.

## Part XI. Bars, Counters & Restaurant Booths

- **Bars, counters and restaurant booths** constructed in place or affixed to the building are:
  - Not exempt from the codes enforced by the Clark County Department of Building.
  - Not exempt from permits.
- **Combustible concealed voids** shall be mitigated.
- **Obstruction to sprinkler discharge** shall be mitigated.
- These features exceeding 5 feet - 9 inches high, 4 feet deep or 10 feet in length shall be constructed out of the same materials required for the base building. Substantiation that the feature meets the structural stability aspects of the IBC may be required by the Clark County Department of Building.
- Contact Clark County Fire Department for their position and enforcement procedures on such features less than the dimensions described in the preceding bullet. Materials used for seats and backrests of restaurant booths are also in accordance with Clark County Fire Department requirements.

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## Part XII. Decorative Structures within Buildings

- Decorative structures:
  - Structures inside buildings that may or may not be standalone features.
  - Are governed by the IBC.
  - May or may not be occupiable.
  - Are more highly regulated than the features described in the preceding portions of this guide.
- Combustible concealed voids shall be mitigated.
- Both the Clark County Department of Building and Clark County Fire Department may review specific aspects (e.g. an artificial tree; the Clark County Department of Building will review structural integrity and the trunk as a partition with interior finish. Clark County Fire Department will review the foliage in accordance with the IFC).
- Interior structures will be reviewed by the Clark County Department of Building for structural stability and shall be constructed of appropriate materials and meet the fire-resistive requirements specified for the base building. Columns (and other members qualifying as structural frame), walls (bearing and non-bearing), partitions (fixed or operable), mezzanines and occupiable floors/balconies shall be of the type of materials and protected as required for the type of construction of the base building.

## Department Of Building & Fire Prevention Locations & Services

<b>MAIN OFFICE</b> 4701 W. Russell Road Las Vegas, NV 89118 (702)455-3000	On-Site Plan Submittals All "Walk-Through" Plan Review / Permitting Functions Residential Tract Submittal / Permitting All Sub-Trade (Electrical, Plumbing & Mechanical) Permitting Building Inspection Scheduling Functions Fire Prevention Inspection Services Records	Temporary Certificate of Occupancy Submittals Building Inspections Building Inspector Inquiries Amusement / Transportation Systems Operation Certificates Approved Fabricators Quality Assurance Agency Listing
<b>LAUGHLIN OFFICE</b> Regional Government Center 101 Civic Way Laughlin, NV 89029 (702)298-2436	Building Inspection Services Fire Prevention Inspection Services	
<b>OVERTON OFFICE</b> 320 North Moapa Valley Blvd. Overton, NV 89040 (702)397-8089	Building Inspection Services Fire Prevention Inspection Services	

### Automated Phone System (702) 455-3000

- Option 1:** For all Inspection services or to report a building code violation.
- Option 2:** For information regarding on-site permits or new plan submittals.
- Option 3:** For the Building Plans Examination division or QAA information.
- Option 4:** For the Zoning Plans Examination division.
- Option 5:** For information or copies regarding land development, construction documents, plans or permits.
- Option 6:** To speak with Management staff.
- Option #:** For hours of operation, Office location and website information.

### Other Clark County Departments/Divisions/Districts

Air Quality & Environmental Management	500 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas NV	(702) 455-5942
Public Works, Development Review Services	500 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas NV	(702) 455-6000
Comprehensive Planning	500 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas NV	(702) 455-4314
Fire Department	575 E. Flamingo Road, Las Vegas NV	(702) 455-7316
Las Vegas Valley Water District	1001 S. Valley View Boulevard, Las Vegas NV	(702) 870-2011
Southern Nevada Health District	625 Shadow Lane, Las Vegas NV	(702) 759-1000
Water Reclamation District	5857 E. Flamingo Road, Las Vegas NV	(702) 668-8888

### State of Nevada

Division of Water Resources	400 Shadow Lane, Suite 201, Las Vegas NV	(702) 486-2770
Nevada State Contractors Board	2310 Corporate Circle, Suite 200, Henderson NV	(702) 486-1100

### Utilities

Nevada Power	6226 W. Sahara Avenue, Las Vegas NV	(702) 402-5555
Southwest Gas	5241 Spring Mountain Road, Las Vegas NV	(877) 860-6020

[www.clarkcountynv.gov/building](http://www.clarkcountynv.gov/building)