

Building Standards Occupancy Program

July 2026

Background

An occupancy permit is authorization issued in writing, by a local government agency, to occupy any building or part thereof. Generally, the installation of affixed furniture such as cupboards and shelving is considered a part of the construction process. However, moving of loose furniture, stock or goods, inventory, accessory equipment, or personal belongings into the premises is considered occupancy.

Occupancy approval can be issued at two stages:

- 1) During construction (interim/partial occupancy); or
- 2) Upon completion of construction (final occupancy).

Definitions

- 1) **Occupancy Permit:** authorization issued in writing by a local authority having jurisdiction to occupy a building or part thereof.
- 2) **Occupancy:** the use or intended use of a building or part thereof for the shelter or support of persons, animals or property.
- 3) **High Risk Buildings:** for the purposes of interim occupancy, high risk building means a building equipped with a fire alarm system. This includes a building required by the NBC to be equipped with a fire alarm system or a building that is voluntarily providing a fire alarm system. The City of Saskatoon reserves the right to deem a building as high risk, if it may pose a significant hazard to public safety if it is occupied prior to the completion of construction. This does not include ground-orientated dwelling units, including alternative family care homes (AFCH), with a fire alarm system.

Programs

The City of Saskatoon currently offers:

- 1) **Mandatory Interim Occupancy Permit Program** - for buildings defined as high risk where the scope of work includes the following:
 - a. New buildings or additions with a fire alarm system; and
 - b. Existing buildings where the scope of the alteration includes a major redevelopment including a new or replaced fire alarm system.

2) **Voluntary Interim Occupancy Permit Program** – for all buildings not deemed as high risk.

3) **Voluntary Final Occupancy Permit Program** - for all commercial buildings.

An occupancy permit is not required once the building permit has been closed. However, applicants may choose to apply for a voluntary occupancy permit after permit closure. For new one- and two-unit dwellings, closed building and plumbing permits will be issued with a certificate of completion, indicating the dwelling is ready for occupancy in the City of Saskatoon. However, applicants may choose to apply for a voluntary occupancy permit.

Application

Application for an interim or final occupancy permit can be made by emailing a completed occupancy application form along with all required and applicable documents listed on the application to Buildingstandards@saskatoon.ca.

Upon receipt of a complete application, an occupancy permit fee will be applied and the applicant will be contacted to arrange payment.

Fees

For a complete list of building permit fees, refer to Schedule 'A' of the [Building Bylaw](#).

The Saskatoon Fire Department may charge additional fees for research, reporting, and inspection time. These fees are invoiced directly to the applicant.

Once required documentation is submitted and payment is received, an occupancy inspection will be scheduled. Approval will be required from:

- Building Inspections
- Plumbing Inspections
- Saskatoon Fire Department

Enforcement

Occupancy of a building prior to the closure of required permits or issuance of an interim occupancy permit may result in enforcement action, including orders to remedy contraventions or orders to cease occupancy.

Guidelines for Issuance

1) Final Occupancy Permit:

A final occupancy permit may be issued for any building, provided that all plumbing permits and building permits for said building are closed, and all mechanical and electrical installations

associated with said building have, to the best of the City of Saskatoon's knowledge, been completed in all respects.

An occupancy permit may be issued for a 'base' commercial building even in cases where all spaces to be occupied have yet to be developed. This occupancy permit signifies that the core building life safety systems have been established. However, these units are required to obtain approved building and development permits to develop the spaces prior to occupancy.

2) Interim Occupancy Permit:

An interim occupancy permit may be issued at the City's discretion for the use of a part of a building (floor, wing or defined area) or for the entire building prior to full completion. An interim occupancy permit will typically list conditions and/or outstanding defects or work yet to be completed.

Where interim/ partial occupancy is requested, certain construction and life safety systems must be complete for the entire building, including areas not proposed for occupancy.

Occupancy Contact Information

Commercial Building Permits
Building Standards
306.975.2645
Building.Standards@Saskatoon.ca