




City of Phoenix

FIRE DEPARTMENT
FIRE PREVENTION DIVISION

Explanatory Policy – Group A-2 Occupancy Sprinkler Retrofit

SUBJECT: Group A-2 Occupancy Sprinkler Retrofit	EFFECTIVE DATE: July 19, 2019
REFERENCES: The Phoenix Fire Code (2018 Edition) Sections 1103.5.1, 1103.5.5	REVIEW DATE: July 2022
APPROVED:	
 John Mertens, Fire Marshal	

Scope:

All Group A-2 occupancies having an occupant load of 300 or more, where alcoholic beverages are consumed, shall be equipped with an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with 903.3.1.1 no later than July 19, 2024. Plans shall be submitted for review for sprinkler and any required fire underground installation no later than July 2021, permits will be valid for three years and installation may be done in phases. Automatic sprinkler protection may be required earlier than this date if the occupancy or business has a change of ownership or undergoes renovation or alteration which requires permitting or falls under previously adopted Tarver Ordinance requirements, expands its footprint or changes occupancy.

This requirement is to come into compliance with:

Section 1103.5.1 Where alcoholic beverages are consumed in a Group A-2 occupancy having an occupant load of 300 or more, the fire area containing the Group A-2 occupancy shall be equipped with an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1.

- A fire area is a fire-rated compartment that separates one area of the building from another. Sprinkler protection is required throughout the entirety of the occupancy up to a 2-hour separation if the occupancy changes. All associated auxiliary areas where alcohol is not being consumed, such as the bathroom and kitchen area, shall be sprinkler protected within the 2-hour fire barriers. If the floor and ceiling of the area of alcohol consumption is fire-rated with 2-hour fire barrier horizontal assemblies with no living quarters above the other spaces may be exempted outside of the 2-hour envelope.
- A fire area with assembly occupant loads can be as large as 4,500 sq. ft. (tables and chairs: 15 sq/ft net) or as low as 1,500 sq. ft. (standing room only: 5 sq/ft net).



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- Where there are fire areas that separate the areas where alcohol is being consumed versus the non-consumption areas, the fire sprinkler system may be installed, in accordance with NFPA 13, in the fire area where alcohol is being consumed.

This occupancy count applies only where alcohol is consumed within the two-hour containment to fire areas adjacent to and above and below. If a neighborhood bar has a basement used only for storage or a second-floor existing apartment that push the occupancy numbers over 300 and the alcohol consumption area is less than 300 occupants per fire area, sprinklers would not be required.

A full fire sprinkler system provides life-safety, lower insurance premiums and a shorter business interruption when a fire occurs. With the current tax reform changes, small business owners can now fully expense the cost of retrofitting the fire sprinkler system up to \$1 million per year.