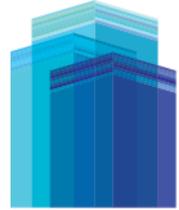


Alternative Family Care Home (AFCH)



Question

What is an *Alternative Family Care Home* (AFCH)?

Answer

An *Alternative Family Care Home* (AFCH) means a dwelling unit used as a single housekeeping unit where care is provided to the residents that provides sleeping accommodations for not more than 10 total occupants, and the occupancy of the building is either *residential occupancy* or *care occupancy*, and there is not more than one other dwelling unit.

Note: This definition is provided in *The Building Code Regulations*. Additional information is available in the *Alternative Family Care Homes Building and Fire Safety Guide* prepared by the Building and Technical Standards Branch of the Government of Saskatchewan.

Question

What are the requirements for an AFCH?

Answer

There are many requirements to be met for an AFCH. These include National Building Code (NBC) requirements, zoning requirements, and site servicing requirements. These are explained in greater detail below.

National Building Code Requirements

The NBC is an occupancy-based code, meaning that there are specific rules for each use. The Government of Saskatchewan has adopted the NBC, and has made significant amendments concerning AFCHs use in Saskatchewan. Requirements are based upon total occupants, occupants-in-care (OIC), and the ability for those in care to be *capable of self-preservation*. Applicants must obtain a building permit from the City of Regina's Building Standards & Inspections Branch and are responsible to ensure they meet all Code requirements. The Building Standards & Inspections Branch will perform inspections of the building, when scheduled by the owner. The following table provides a quick reference for the categories of facilities, occupancy classifications, parts of Code that apply, and a list of the minimum typical requirements. Additional requirements may be required depending on the scope of the work.

| Type of Care Home | Occupancy Classification | NBC Part | <u>Minimum Typical Building Code Requirements</u> [§] |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------|---|
| AFCH (1-5 OIC) | Group C (residential) | Division B, Part 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interconnected smoke alarms • Carbon monoxide alarms • Emergency lighting • Sprinkler system not required if the three requirements above are met (if sprinklers are installed, they must meet NFPA standards[¶]) • Portable fire extinguishers • Code requirements for a Part 9 dwelling unit (eg. egress windows in bedrooms) |
| AFCH (6-10 OIC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All OIC <i>capable of self-preservation</i>; and • Not licensed as a Personal Care Home (PCH) through the Ministry of Health | Group C (residential) | Division B, Part 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interconnected smoke alarms • Carbon monoxide alarms • Emergency lighting • Sprinkler system not required if the three requirements above are met (if sprinklers are installed, they must meet NFPA standards[¶]) • Portable fire extinguishers • Code requirements for a Part 3 dwelling unit (requires a professional designer) |
| AFCH (6-10 OIC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One or more OIC not capable of self-preservation; or • Licensed as a Personal Care Home (PCH) through the Ministry of Health | Group C (residential) | Division B, Part 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interconnected smoke alarms • Carbon monoxide alarms • Emergency lighting • Sprinkler system meeting NFPA standards (NFPA 13D or NFPA 13R)[¶] • Fire alarm system (if required)[¥] • Portable fire extinguishers • Code requirements for a Part 3 dwelling unit (requires a professional designer) |
| Care Facility (>10 total occupants) | Group B (care occupancy) | Division B, Part 3 | Part 3 code requirements for Group B occupancy (professional designer required) |

[§] From the NBC and *The Building Code Regulations*. The items listed are minimum typical requirements of Code. Applicants are responsible to ensure they meet all requirements. Additional requirements may be mandated by the home licensing authority.

[¶] *The Building Code Regulations* provides Saskatchewan amendments to Sentence 3.2.5.12.(2) and Sentence 3.2.5.12.(3).

[¥] A fire alarm system is not required for NFPA 13D sprinkler systems, but is required for NFPA 13R sprinkler systems. Refer to the NFPA standards for more information.

Zoning Requirements

AFCH's are subject to the *Regina Zoning Bylaw No. 2019-19 (Zoning Bylaw)*. It is important to note that the bylaw does not use the term "Alternative Family Care Home". The *Zoning Bylaw* refers to AFCH's as "Dwelling, Group Care." Definitions are provided in Chapter 2 of the *Zoning Bylaw*.

The Current Planning Branch will review the application and site plan including any proposed on-site parking to determine conformance to the *Zoning Bylaw* and issue a development permit when requirements are met. **Designated heritage properties** must also submit a Heritage Alteration Permit application.

Site Servicing Requirements

Developing an AFCH may require upgrades to site services to conform to the City of Regina's current technical standards. Upgrades may include, but are not limited to:

- Larger water service may be required, especially in cases where sprinklers are to be installed
- Sprinklered facilities also require a fire hydrant within 45 meters of the property
- Replacing any water connections made of lead or another material that do not meet current standards
- Disconnecting and capping redundant connections at the water main
- No changes are required to drainage provided the property meets the same discharge rate as before (depending on what the change may be, a storm water plan may be required)

The applicant can send an email to locates@regina.ca for more information regarding site services of the property. The applicant will be responsible to ensure required upgrades are performed, and the Development Engineering Branch will inspect the upgraded services.

What changes will apply to taxes?

A change in use will most likely result in a change in either the property's assessed value and/or the property taxes. Please contact 306-777-7000 for more information.

For more information on Building Permits, Building Safety or Zoning Information, please visit Regina.ca or contact [Service Regina](#).