

**MINNEAPOLIS FIRE DEPARTMENT
FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU POLICY #7-3
OCCUPANCY SEPARATIONS**

Original Issue 1-03-05

Last Revision 3-7-07

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ISSUE:

Fire separations of occupancies, furnace, shops, laundry and storage rooms in existing buildings.

CODE REQUIREMENTS:

Residential occupancies shall be separated from other occupancies by one (1) hour fire resistive construction.

Exceptions:

1. *Residential occupancies are to be separated from Group E (educational), Group I (institutional) and Group H (hazardous) occupancies as required by the MSBC. (This requires greater than one (1) hour rating).*
2. *A separation is not required where all non-residential occupancies are protected throughout by an approved automatic sprinkler system.*
3. *Storage and laundry rooms less than 100 square feet in area.*

PROBLEM:

Many existing buildings do not have fire rated separations between dwelling areas and other occupancies, furnace rooms or storage rooms. In many of those buildings it is not practicable to install fire rated ceilings in basements due to existing pipes, conduit, ducts, etc, that are in place under low ceilings.

ACCEPTABLE MEANS of COMPLIANCE:

(Laundry areas: For purposes of this policy washing machines are not considered as constituting a "laundry area". A total of three dryers may be located on each floor and not be considered as a "laundry area" larger than 100 sq. ft.)

1. One hour fire rated occupancy separation. (MSFC)
2. All non-residential areas protected by an approved automatic sprinkler system. (MSFC)
3. A non-fire rated smoke separation may be used between residential and other occupancies or basements where dwelling units are no higher than two (2) floors above the lowest level of exit discharge and all non-residential occupancies are monitored throughout by a "Certified Fire Alarm System" complying with MFD Policy #9-11. Exit stairways and shaftways are to be separated from the building by one (1) hour fire rated construction. (MFD Policy)
4. See policy #7-7 for detailed requirements for furnace rooms. (MFD Policy)