



California State Fire Marshal **CODE INTERPRETATION**

Date Issued	8/11/06	Interpretation #	05-046
Topic	Pre-School Fire Alarms		
Code Section(s)	§ 305.9.1 California Building Code (2001) § 1006.2.4.1 California Fire Code (2001)		
Requested by	Mike Herbert, System Manager Bay Cities Pyrotecotor 1435 Park Avenue Emeryville, CA 94608		

I have a customer who owns a Montessori Pre-School in the city of Oakland. The school consists of one 2 story building and one 1 story building. The buildings are more than 20 feet apart. The occupancy of the complete school campus is 50 persons. The maximum allowable occupancy for the 2 story building is 36 persons. The 2 story building is fully sprinkled. There are classrooms on both floors. All classrooms either have an exit directly outside or a short hallway to the exit. There are existing smoke detectors in the 2 story building but they are not interconnected. According to my interpretation the building occupancy is either Group E Division 2 or Group E Division 3.

Is a fire alarm system required for this type of occupancy if the actual occupant load of each building is less than 50 persons?

Yes. A fire alarm system would be required for the pre-school buildings based on the information provided. The pre-school would be classified as a Group E, Division 3 Occupancy (Nonresidential Building used for day-care purposes for more than 6 children).

The California Building Code, Section 305.9.1 and California Fire Code, Section 1006.2.4.1 both require a fire alarm system in educational occupancies of 50 or more persons. The CBC also requires a fire alarm system where the facility has more than one classroom.