CHAPTER 3
USE AND OCCUPANCY CLASSIFICATION

SECTION 302.1.1
IBC Interpretation No. 24-04
2003 Edition
Issued: 05-09-05

302.1.1 Incidental use areas. Spaces which are incidental to the main occupancy shall be separated or protected, or both, in accordance with Table 302.1.1 or the building shall be classified as a mixed occupancy and comply with Section 302.3. Areas that are incidental to the main occupancy shall be classified in accordance with the main occupancy of the portion of the building in which the incidental use area is located.

Exception: Incidental use areas within and serving a dwelling unit are not required to comply with this section.

TABLE 302.1.1
INCIDENTAL USE AREAS
(TABLE NOT SHOWN)

Q: Is an Incidental Use Area identified in Table 302.1.1 permitted to be classified as an occupancy use group different from the building in which it is located, and the building classified as a mixed use building subject to the requirements of Section 302.3, Mixed Occupancies?

A: Yes. Section 302.1.1 is intended to apply to specific areas that are considered to be part of the main occupancy classification, which generally represent a higher relative fire hazard. Section 302.1.1 is allowing these to be considered as part of the main occupancy, thus not requiring consideration of designing the building as if it contained a occupancy classification such as S or F, because the presence of this area with higher relative hazard is accounted for by requiring that area to be separated and/or protected by a fire suppression system.

However, when such areas are classified separately as to their occupancy, and the building is considered to be of mixed occupancy, the presence of the higher relative fire hazard is accounted for in a different way – by fire protection features that result from considering such areas as one of the building’s multiple occupancy classifications. The application of Section 302.3 will result in certain building features being governed by code requirements commensurate with higher relative fire hazard or a storage or workshop area.