

## CHAPTER 32

# HIGH-PILED COMBUSTIBLE STORAGE

### SECTION 3201 GENERAL

**3201.1 Scope.** *High-piled combustible storage* shall be in accordance with this chapter. In addition to the requirements of this chapter, the following material-specific requirements shall apply:

1. Aerosols shall be in accordance with Chapter 51.
2. Flammable and *combustible liquids* shall be in accordance with Chapter 57.
3. Hazardous materials shall be in accordance with Chapter 50.
4. Storage of combustible paper records shall be in accordance with NFPA 13.
5. Storage of *combustible fibers* shall be in accordance with Chapter 37.
6. General storage of combustible material shall be in accordance with Chapter 3.

**3201.2 Permits.** A permit shall be required as set forth in Section 105.6.

**3201.3 Construction documents.** At the time of building permit application for new structures designed to accommodate high-piled storage or for requesting a change of occupancy/use, and at the time of application for a storage permit, plans and specifications shall be submitted for review and approval. In addition to the information required by the *International Building Code*, the storage permit submittal shall include the information specified in this section. Following approval of the plans, a copy of the *approved* plans shall be maintained on the premises in an *approved* location. The plans shall include all of the following:

1. Floor plan of the building showing locations and dimensions of *high-piled storage areas*.
2. Usable storage height for each storage area.
3. Number of tiers within each rack, if applicable.
4. Commodity clearance between top of storage and the sprinkler deflector for each storage arrangement.
5. Aisle dimensions between each storage array.
6. Maximum pile volume for each storage array.
7. Location and classification of commodities in accordance with Section 3203.
8. Location of commodities that are banded or encapsulated.
9. Location of required fire department access doors.
10. Type of fire suppression and fire detection systems.
11. Location of valves controlling the water supply of ceiling and in-rack sprinklers.

12. Type, location and specifications of smoke removal and curtain board systems.
13. Dimension and location of transverse and longitudinal flue spaces.
14. Additional information regarding required design features, commodities, storage arrangement and fire protection features within the high-piled storage area shall be provided at the time of permit, when required by the *fire code official*.

**3201.4 Evacuation plan.** Where required by the *fire code official*, an evacuation plan for public accessible areas and a separate set of plans indicating location and width of *aisles*, location of *exits*, *exit access* doors, *exit* signs, height of storage, and locations of hazardous materials shall be submitted at the time of permit application for review and approval. Following approval of the plans, a copy of the *approved* plans shall be maintained on the premises in an *approved* location.

### SECTION 3202 DEFINITIONS

**3202.1 Definitions.** The following terms are defined in Chapter 2:

**ARRAY.**

**ARRAY, CLOSED.**

**AUTOMATED RACK STORAGE.**

**BIN BOX.**

**COMMODITY.**

**EARLY SUPPRESSION FAST-RESPONSE (ESFR) SPRINKLER.**

**EXPANDED PLASTIC.**

**EXTRA-HIGH-RACK COMBUSTIBLE STORAGE.**

**HIGH-PILED COMBUSTIBLE STORAGE.**

**HIGH-PILED STORAGE AREA.**

**LONGITUDINAL FLUE SPACE.**

**MANUAL STOCKING METHODS.**

**MECHANICAL STOCKING METHODS.**

**SHELF STORAGE.**

**SOLID SHELVING.**

**TRANSVERSE FLUE SPACE.**

### SECTION 3203 COMMODITY CLASSIFICATION

**3203.1 Classification of commodities.** Commodities shall be classified as Class I, II, III, IV or high hazard in accordance with this section. Materials listed within each commodity

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classification are assumed to be unmodified for improved combustibility characteristics. Use of flame-retarding modifiers or the physical form of the material could change the classification. See Section 3203.7 for classification of Group A, B and C plastics.

**3203.2 Class I commodities.** Class I commodities are essentially noncombustible products on wooden pallets, in ordinary corrugated cartons with or without single-thickness dividers, or in ordinary paper wrappings with or without pallets. Class I commodities are allowed to contain a limited amount of Group A plastics in accordance with Section 3203.7.4. Examples of Class I commodities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Alcoholic beverages not exceeding 20-percent alcohol
- Appliances noncombustible, electrical
- Cement in bags
- Ceramics
- Dairy products in nonwax-coated containers (excluding bottles)
- Dry insecticides
- Foods in noncombustible containers
- Fresh fruits and vegetables in nonplastic trays or containers
- Frozen foods
- Glass
- Glycol in metal cans
- Gypsum board
- Inert materials, bagged
- Insulation, noncombustible
- Noncombustible liquids in plastic containers having less than a 5-gallon (19 L) capacity
- Noncombustible metal products

**3203.3 Class II commodities.** Class II commodities are Class I products in slatted wooden crates, solid wooden boxes, multiple-thickness paperboard cartons or equivalent combustible packaging material with or without pallets. Class II commodities are allowed to contain a limited amount of Group A plastics in accordance with Section 3203.7.4. Examples of Class II commodities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Alcoholic beverages not exceeding 20-percent alcohol, in combustible containers
- Foods in combustible containers
- Incandescent or fluorescent light bulbs in cartons
- Thinly coated fine wire on reels or in cartons

**3203.4 Class III commodities.** Class III commodities are commodities of wood, paper, natural fiber cloth, or Group C plastics or products thereof, with or without pallets. Products are allowed to contain limited amounts of Group A or B plastics, such as metal bicycles with plastic handles, pedals, seats and tires. Group A plastics shall be limited in accordance with Section 3203.7.4. Examples of Class III commodities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Aerosol, Level 1 (see Chapter 51)
- Biomass briquettes, bagged, and static piles
- Biomass pellets, bagged, and static piles
- Charcoal
- Combustible fiberboard
- Cork, baled

- Corn cobs, static piles
- Corn stover, baled and chopped
- Feed, bagged
- Fertilizers, bagged
- Firewood
- Food in plastic containers
- Forest residue, round wood or chipped (branches, bark, cross-cut ends, edgings and treetops)
- Furniture: wood, natural fiber, upholstered, nonplastic, wood or metal with plastic-padded and covered armrests
- Glycol in combustible containers not exceeding 25 percent
- Lubricating or hydraulic fluid in metal cans
- Lumber
- Mattresses, excluding foam rubber and foam plastics
- Noncombustible liquids in plastic containers having a capacity of more than 5 gallons (19 L)
- Paints, oil base, in metal cans
- Paper, waste, baled
- Paper and pulp, horizontal storage, or vertical storage that is banded or protected with approved wrap
- Paper in cardboard boxes
- Peanut hulls, bagged, and static piles
- Pillows, excluding foam rubber and foam plastics
- Plastic-coated paper food containers
- Plywood
- Rags, baled
- Recovered construction wood
- Rice hulls, bagged, and static piles
- Rugs, without foam backing
- Seasonal grasses, baled and chopped
- Straw, baled
- Sugar, bagged
- Wood, baled
- Wood chips, bagged, and static piles
- Woody biomass, round wood or chipped (vase-shaped stubby bushes, bamboo, willows; branches, bark and stem wood)
- Wood doors, frames and cabinets
- Wood pellets, bagged, and static piles
- Yarns of natural fiber and viscose

**3203.5 Class IV commodities.** Class IV commodities are Class I, II or III products containing Group A plastics in ordinary corrugated cartons and Class I, II and III products with Group A plastic packaging, with or without pallets. Group B plastics and free-flowing Group A plastics are also included in this class. The total amount of nonfree-flowing Group A plastics shall be in accordance with Section 3203.7.4. Examples of Class IV commodities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Aerosol, Level 2 (see Chapter 51)
- Alcoholic beverages, exceeding 20-percent but less than 80-percent alcohol, in cans or bottles in cartons
- Clothing, synthetic or nonviscose
- Combustible metal products (solid)
- Furniture, plastic upholstered
- Furniture, wood or metal with plastic covering and padding
- Glycol in combustible containers (greater than 25 percent and less than 50 percent)
- Linoleum products

Paints, oil base in combustible containers  
 Pharmaceutical, alcoholic elixirs, tonics, etc.  
 Rugs, foam back  
 Shingles, asphalt  
 Thread or yarn, synthetic or nonviscose

**3203.6 High-hazard commodities.** High-hazard commodities are high-hazard products presenting special fire hazards beyond those of Class I, II, III or IV. Group A plastics not otherwise classified are included in this class. Examples of high-hazard commodities include, but are not limited to, the following:

Aerosol, Level 3 (see Chapter 51)  
 Alcoholic beverages, exceeding 80-percent alcohol, in bottles or cartons  
 Commodities of any class in plastic containers in carousel storage  
 Flammable solids (except solid combustible metals)  
 Glycol in combustible containers (50 percent or greater)  
 Lacquers that dry by solvent evaporation, in metal cans or cartons  
 Lubricating or hydraulic fluid in plastic containers  
 Mattresses, foam rubber or foam plastics  
 Pallets and flats that are idle combustible  
 Paper and pulp, rolled, in vertical storage that is unbanded or not protected with an *approved* wrap  
 Paper, asphalt, rolled, horizontal storage  
 Paper, asphalt, rolled, vertical storage  
 Pillows, foam rubber and foam plastics  
 Pyroxylin  
 Rubber tires  
 Vegetable oil and butter in plastic containers

**3203.7 Classification of plastics.** Plastics shall be designated as Group A, B or C in accordance with Sections 3203.7.1 through 3203.7.4.

**3203.7.1 Group A plastics.** Group A plastics are plastic materials having a heat of combustion that is much higher than that of ordinary combustibles, and a burning rate higher than that of Group B plastics. Examples of Group A plastics include, but are not limited to, the following:

ABS (acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene copolymer)  
 Acetal (polyformaldehyde)  
 Acrylic (polymethyl methacrylate)  
 Butyl rubber  
 EPDM (ethylene propylene rubber)  
 FRP (fiberglass-reinforced polyester)  
 Natural rubber (expanded)  
 Nitrile rubber (acrylonitrile butadiene rubber)  
 PET or PETE (polyethylene terephthalate)  
 Polybutadiene  
 Polycarbonate  
 Polyester elastomer  
 Polyethylene  
 Polypropylene  
 Polystyrene (expanded and unexpanded)  
 Polyurethane (expanded and unexpanded)  
 PVC (polyvinyl chloride greater than 15-percent plasticized, e.g., coated fabric unsupported film)

SAN (styrene acrylonitrile)  
 SBR (styrene butadiene rubber)

**3203.7.2 Group B plastics.** Group B plastics are plastic materials having a heat of combustion and a burning rate higher than that of ordinary combustibles, but not as high as those of Group A plastics. Examples of Group B plastics include, but are not limited to, the following:

Cellulosics (cellulose acetate, cellulose acetate butyrate, ethyl cellulose)  
 Chloroprene rubber  
 Fluoroplastics (ECTFE, ethylene-chlorotrifluoroethylene copolymer; ETFE, ethylene-tetrafluoroethylene copolymer; FEP, fluorinated ethylene-propylene copolymer)  
 Natural rubber (nonexpanded)  
 Nylon (Nylon 6, Nylon 6/6)  
 PVC (polyvinyl chloride greater than 5-percent, but not exceeding 15-percent plasticized)  
 Silicone rubber

**3203.7.3 Group C plastics.** Group C plastics are plastic materials having a heat of combustion and a burning rate similar to those of ordinary combustibles. Examples of Group C plastics include, but are not limited to, the following:

Fluoroplastics (PCTFE, polychlorotrifluoroethylene; PTFE, polytetrafluoroethylene)  
 Melamine (melamine formaldehyde)  
 Phenol  
 PVC (polyvinyl chloride, rigid or plasticized less than 5 percent, e.g., pipe, pipe fittings)  
 PVDC (polyvinylidene chloride)  
 PVDF (polyvinylidene fluoride)  
 PVF (polyvinyl fluoride)  
 Urea (urea formaldehyde)

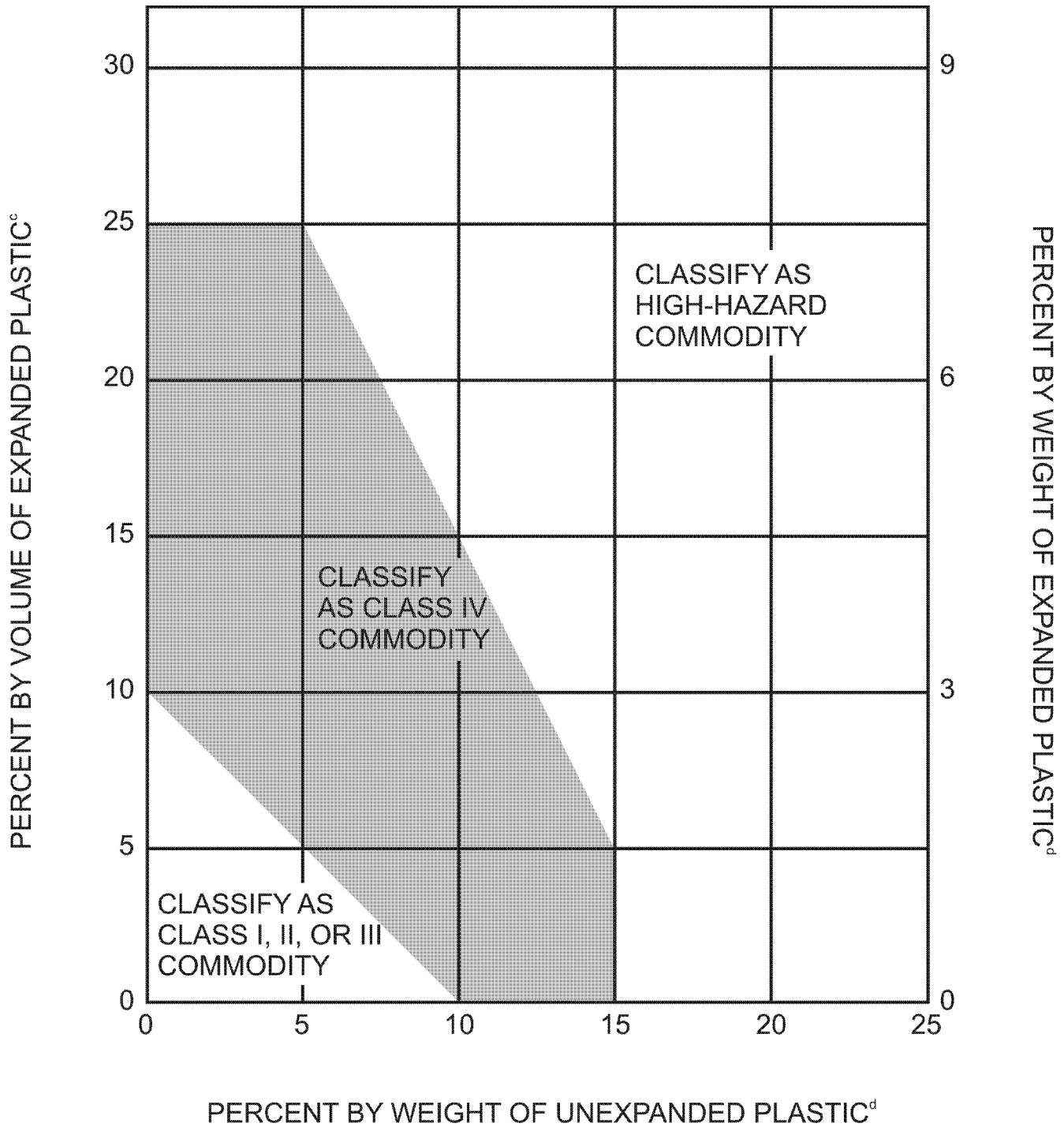
**3203.7.4 Limited quantities of Group A plastics in mixed commodities.** Figure 3203.7.4 shall be used to determine the quantity of Group A plastics allowed to be stored in a package or carton or on a pallet without increasing the commodity classification.

## SECTION 3204

### DESIGNATION OF HIGH-PILED STORAGE AREAS

**3204.1 General.** *High-piled storage areas*, and portions of *high-piled storage areas* intended for storage of a different commodity class than adjacent areas, shall be designed and specifically designated to contain Class I, Class II, Class III, Class IV or high-hazard commodities. The designation of a *high-piled combustible storage area*, or portion thereof intended for storage of a different commodity class, shall be based on the highest hazard commodity class stored except as provided in Section 3204.2.

**3204.2 Designation based on engineering analysis.** The designation of a *high-piled combustible storage area*, or portion thereof, is allowed to be based on a lower hazard class than that of the highest class of commodity stored when a limited quantity of the higher hazard commodity has been demonstrated by engineering analysis to be adequately pro-



**FIGURE 3203.7.4  
MIXED COMMODITIES<sup>a, b</sup>**

- a. This figure is intended to determine the commodity classification of a mixed commodity in a package, carton or on a pallet where plastics are involved.
- b. The following is an example of how to apply the figure: A package containing a Class III commodity has 12-percent Group A expanded plastic by volume. The weight of the unexpanded Group A plastic is 10 percent. This commodity is classified as a Class IV commodity. If the weight of the unexpanded plastic is increased to 14 percent, the classification changes to a high-hazard commodity.

c. Percent by volume =  $\frac{\text{Volume of plastic in pallet load}}{\text{Total volume of pallet load, including pallet}}$

d. Percent by weight =  $\frac{\text{Weight of plastic in pallet load}}{\text{Total weight of pallet load, including pallet}}$

ected by the *automatic sprinkler system* provided. The engineering analysis shall consider the ability of the sprinkler system to deliver the higher density required by the higher hazard commodity. The higher density shall be based on the actual storage height of the pile or rack and the minimum allowable design area for sprinkler operation as set forth in the density/area figures provided in NFPA 13. The contiguous area occupied by the higher hazard commodity shall not exceed 120 square feet (11 m<sup>2</sup>) and additional areas of higher hazard commodity shall be separated from other such areas by 25 feet (7620 mm) or more. The sprinkler system shall be capable of delivering the higher density over a minimum area of 900 square feet (84 m<sup>2</sup>) for wet pipe systems and 1,200 square feet (111 m<sup>2</sup>) for dry pipe systems. The shape of the design area shall be in accordance with Section 903.

### SECTION 3205 HOUSEKEEPING AND MAINTENANCE

**3205.1 Rack structures.** The structural integrity of racks shall be maintained.

**3205.2 Ignition sources.** Clearance from ignition sources shall be provided in accordance with Section 305.

**3205.3 Smoking.** Smoking shall be prohibited. *Approved* "No Smoking" signs shall be conspicuously posted in accordance with Section 310.

**3205.4 Aisle maintenance.** When restocking is not being conducted, aisles shall be kept clear of storage, waste material and debris. Fire department access doors, aisles and *exit* doors shall not be obstructed. During restocking operations using manual stocking methods, a minimum unobstructed aisle width of 24 inches (610 mm) shall be maintained in 48-inch (1219 mm) or smaller aisles, and a minimum unobstructed aisle width of one-half of the required aisle width shall be maintained in aisles greater than 48 inches (1219 mm). During mechanical stocking operations, a minimum unobstructed aisle width of 44 inches (1118 mm) shall be maintained in accordance with Section 3206.9.

**3205.5 Pile dimension and height limitations.** Pile dimensions and height limitations shall comply with Section 3207.3.

**3205.6 Designation of storage heights.** Where required by the *fire code official*, a visual method of indicating the maximum allowable storage height shall be provided.

**3205.7 Arrays.** Arrays shall comply with Section 3207.4.

**3205.8 Flue spaces.** Flue spaces shall comply with Section 3208.3.

### SECTION 3206 GENERAL FIRE PROTECTION AND LIFE SAFETY FEATURES

**3206.1 General.** Fire protection and life safety features for *high-piled storage areas* shall be in accordance with Sections 3206.2 through 3206.10.

**3206.2 Extent and type of protection.** Where required by Table 3206.2, fire detection systems, smoke and heat removal

and automatic sprinkler design densities shall extend the lesser of 15 feet (4572 mm) beyond the *high-piled storage area* or to a permanent partition. Where portions of *high-piled storage areas* have different fire protection requirements because of commodity, method of storage or storage height, the fire protection features required by Table 3206.2 within this area shall be based on the most restrictive design requirements.

**3206.3 Separation of high-piled storage areas.** *High-piled storage areas* shall be separated from other portions of the building where required by Sections 3206.3.1 through 3206.3.2.2.

**3206.3.1 Separation from other uses.** Mixed occupancies shall be separated in accordance with the *International Building Code*.

**3206.3.2 Multiple high-piled storage areas.** Multiple *high-piled storage areas* shall be in accordance with Section 3206.3.2.1 or 3206.3.2.2.

**3206.3.2.1 Aggregate area.** The aggregate of all *high-piled storage areas* within a building shall be used for the application of Table 3206.2 unless such areas are separated from each other by 1-hour *fire barriers* constructed in accordance with Section 707 the *International Building Code*. Openings in such *fire barriers* shall be protected by opening protectives having a 1-hour *fire protection rating*.

**3206.3.2.2 Multiclass high-piled storage areas.** *High-piled storage areas* classified as Class I through IV not separated from *high-piled storage areas* classified as high hazard shall utilize the aggregate of all *high-piled storage areas* as high hazard for the purposes of the application of Table 3206.2. To be considered as separated, 1-hour *fire barriers* shall be constructed in accordance with Section 707 of the *International Building Code*. Openings in such *fire barriers* shall be protected by opening protectives having a 1-hour *fire protection rating*.

**Exception:** As provided for in Section 3204.2.

**3206.4 Automatic sprinklers.** *Automatic sprinkler systems* shall be provided in accordance with Sections 3207, 3208 and 3209.

**3206.4.1 Pallets.** Automatic sprinkler system requirements based upon the presence of pallets shall be in accordance with NFPA 13.

**3206.4.1.1 Plastic pallets.** Plastic pallets listed and labeled in accordance with UL 2335 or FM 4996 shall be treated as wood pallets for determining required sprinkler protection.

**3206.5 Fire detection.** Where fire detection is required by Table 3206.2, an *approved* automatic fire detection system shall be installed throughout the *high-piled storage area*. The system shall be monitored and be in accordance with Section 907.

**3206.6 Building access.** Where building access is required by Table 3206.2, fire apparatus access roads in accordance with Section 503 shall be provided within 150 feet (45 720

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**TABLE 3206.2  
GENERAL FIRE PROTECTION AND LIFE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS**

COMMODITY CLASS	SIZE OF HIGH-PILED STORAGE AREA <sup>a</sup> (square feet) (see Sections 3206.2 and 3206.4)	ALL STORAGE AREAS (See Sections 3206, 3207 and 3208) <sup>b</sup>				SOLID-PILED STORAGE, SHELF STORAGE AND PALLETIZED STORAGE (see Section 3207.3)		
		Automatic fire-extinguishing system (see Section 3206.4)	Fire detection system (see Section 3206.5)	Building access (see Section 3206.6)	Smoke and heat removal (see Section 3206.7)	Maximum pile dimension <sup>c</sup> (feet)	Maximum permissible storage height <sup>d</sup> (feet)	Maximum pile volume (cubic feet)
I-IV	0-500	Not Required <sup>a</sup>	Not Required	Not Required <sup>e</sup>	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required
	501-2,500	Not Required <sup>a</sup>	Yes <sup>i</sup>	Not Required <sup>e</sup>	Not Required	100	40	100,000
	2,501-12,000 Public accessible	Yes	Not Required	Not Required <sup>e</sup>	Not Required	100	40	400,000
	2,501-12,000 Nonpublic accessible (Option 1)	Yes	Not Required	Not Required <sup>e</sup>	Not Required	100	40	400,000
	2,501-12,000 Nonpublic accessible (Option 2)	Not Required <sup>a</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>j</sup>	100	30 <sup>f</sup>	200,000
	12,001-20,000	Yes	Not Required	Yes	Yes <sup>j</sup>	100	40	400,000
	20,001-500,000	Yes	Not Required	Yes	Yes <sup>j</sup>	100	40	400,000
	Greater than 500,000 <sup>g</sup>	Yes	Not Required	Yes	Yes <sup>j</sup>	100	40	400,000
High hazard	0-500	Not Required <sup>a</sup>	Not Required	Not Required <sup>e</sup>	Not Required	50	Not Required	Not Required
	501-2,500 Public accessible	Yes	Not Required	Not Required <sup>e</sup>	Not Required	50	30	75,000
	501-2,500 Nonpublic accessible (Option 1)	Yes	Not Required	Not Required <sup>e</sup>	Not Required	50	30	75,000
	501-2,500 Nonpublic accessible (Option 2)	Not Required <sup>a</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>j</sup>	50	20	50,000
	2,501-300,000	Yes	Not Required	Yes	Yes <sup>j</sup>	50	30	75,000
	300,001-500,000 <sup>g, h</sup>	Yes	Not Required	Yes	Yes <sup>j</sup>	50	30	75,000

For SI: 1 foot = 304.8 mm, 1 cubic foot = 0.02832 m<sup>3</sup>, 1 square foot = 0.0929 m<sup>2</sup>.

- a. Where automatic sprinklers are required for reasons other than those in Chapter 32, the portion of the sprinkler system protecting the high-piled storage area shall be designed and installed in accordance with Sections 3207 and 3208.
- b. For aisles, see Section 3206.9.
- c. Piles shall be separated by aisles complying with Section 3206.9.
- d. For storage in excess of the height indicated, special fire protection shall be provided in accordance with Note g where required by the fire code official. See Chapters 51 and 57 for special limitations for aerosols and flammable and combustible liquids, respectively.
- e. Section 503 shall apply for fire apparatus access.
- f. For storage exceeding 30 feet in height, Option 1 shall be used.
- g. Special fire protection provisions including, but not limited to, fire protection of exposed steel columns; increased sprinkler density; additional in-rack sprinklers, without associated reductions in ceiling sprinkler density; or additional fire department hose connections shall be provided when required by the fire code official.
- h. High-piled storage areas shall not exceed 500,000 square feet. A 2-hour fire wall constructed in accordance with Section 706 of the *International Building Code* shall be used to divide high-piled storage exceeding 500,000 square feet in area.
- i. Not required where an automatic fire-extinguishing system is designed and installed to protect the high-piled storage area in accordance with Sections 3207 and 3208.
- j. Not required where storage areas are protected by either early suppression fast response (ESFR) sprinkler systems or control mode special application sprinklers with a response time index of 50 (m • s)<sup>1/2</sup> or less that are listed to control a fire in the stored commodities with 12 or fewer sprinklers, installed in accordance with NFPA 13.

mm) of all portions of the *exterior walls* of buildings used for high-piled storage.

**Exception:** Where fire apparatus access roads cannot be installed because of topography, railways, waterways, nonnegotiable grades or other similar conditions, the *fire code official* is authorized to require additional fire protection.

**3206.6.1 Access doors.** Where building access is required by Table 3206.2, fire department access doors shall be provided in accordance with this section. Access doors shall be accessible without the use of a ladder.

**3206.6.1.1 Number of doors required.** Not less than one access door shall be provided in each 100 linear feet (30 480 mm), or fraction thereof, of the exterior walls that face required fire apparatus access roads. The required access doors shall be distributed such that the lineal distance between adjacent access doors does not exceed 100 feet (30 480 mm).

**Exception:** The linear distance between adjacent access doors is allowed to exceed 100 feet (30 480 mm) in existing buildings where no change in occupancy is proposed. The number and distribution of access doors in existing buildings shall be approved.

**3206.6.1.2 Door size and type.** Access doors shall be not less than 3 feet (914 mm) in width and 6 feet 8 inches (2032 mm) in height. Roll-up doors shall not be used unless *approved*.

**3206.6.1.3 Locking devices.** Only *approved* locking devices shall be used.

**3206.7 Smoke and heat removal.** Where smoke and heat removal is required by Table 3206.2 it shall be provided in accordance with Section 910.

**3206.8 Fire department hose connections.** Where *exit* passageways are required by the *International Building Code* for egress, a Class I standpipe system shall be provided in accordance with Section 905.

**3206.9 Aisles.** Aisles providing access to *exits* and fire department access doors shall be provided in *high-piled storage areas* exceeding 500 square feet (46 m<sup>2</sup>), in accordance with Sections 3206.9.1 through 3206.9.3. Aisles separating storage piles or racks shall comply with NFPA 13. Aisles shall also comply with Chapter 10.

**Exception:** Where aisles are precluded by rack storage systems, alternate methods of access and protection are allowed when *approved*.

**3206.9.1 Width.** Aisle width shall be in accordance with Sections 3206.9.1.1 and 3206.9.1.2.

**Exceptions:**

1. Aisles crossing rack structures or storage piles, that are used only for employee access, shall be not less than 24 inches (610 mm) wide.
2. Aisles separating shelves classified as shelf storage shall be not less than 30 inches (762 mm) wide.

**3206.9.1.1 Sprinklered buildings.** Aisles in sprinklered buildings shall be not less than 44 inches (1118 mm) wide. Aisles shall be not less than 96 inches (2438 mm) wide in *high-piled storage areas* exceeding 2,500 square feet (232 m<sup>2</sup>) in area, that are accessible to the public and designated to contain high-hazard commodities.

**Exception:** Aisles in *high-piled storage areas* exceeding 2,500 square feet (232 m<sup>2</sup>) in area, that are accessible to the public and designated to contain high-hazard commodities, are protected by a sprinkler system designed for multiple-row racks of high-hazard commodities shall be not less than 44 inches (1118 mm) wide.

Aisles shall be not less than 96 inches (2438 mm) wide in areas accessible to the public where mechanical stocking methods are used.

**3206.9.1.2 Nonsprinklered buildings.** Aisles in nonsprinklered buildings shall be not less than 96 inches (2438 mm) wide.

**3206.9.2 Clear height.** The required aisle width shall extend from floor to ceiling. Rack structural supports and catwalks are allowed to cross aisles at a minimum height of 6 feet 8 inches (2032 mm) above the finished floor level, provided that such supports do not interfere with fire department hose stream trajectory.

**3206.9.3 Dead-end aisles.** Dead-end aisles shall not exceed 20 feet (6096 mm) in length in Group M occupancies. Dead-end aisles shall not exceed 50 feet (15 240 mm) in length in all other occupancies.

**Exception:** Dead-end aisles are not limited where the length of the dead-end aisle is less than 2.5 times the least width of the dead-end aisle.

**3206.10 Portable fire extinguishers.** Portable fire extinguishers shall be provided in accordance with Section 906.

## SECTION 3207 SOLID-PILED AND SHELF STORAGE

**3207.1 General.** Shelf storage and storage in solid piles, solid piles on pallets and bin box storage in bin boxes not exceeding 5 feet (1524 mm) in any dimension, shall be in accordance with Sections 3206 and this section.

**3207.2 Fire protection.** Where automatic sprinklers are required by Table 3206.2, an *approved automatic sprinkler system* shall be installed throughout the building or to 1-hour *fire barriers* constructed in accordance with Section 707 of the *International Building Code*. Openings in such *fire barriers* shall be protected by opening protectives having a 1-hour *fire protection rating*. The design and installation of the *automatic sprinkler system* and other applicable fire protection shall be in accordance with the *International Building Code* and NFPA 13.

**3207.2.1 Shelf storage.** Shelf storage greater than 12 feet (3658 mm) but less than 15 feet (4572 mm) in height shall be in accordance with the fire protection requirements set forth in NFPA 13. Shelf storage 15 feet (4572 mm) or

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more in height shall be protected in an *approved* manner with special fire protection, such as in-rack sprinklers.

**3207.3 Pile dimension and height limitations.** Pile dimensions, the maximum permissible storage height and pile volume shall be in accordance with Table 3206.2.

**3207.4 Array.** Where an *automatic sprinkler system* design utilizes protection based on a closed array, array clearances shall be provided and maintained as specified by the standard used.

### SECTION 3208 RACK STORAGE

**3208.1 General.** Rack storage shall be in accordance with Section 3206 and this section. Bin boxes exceeding 5 feet (1524 mm) in any dimension shall be regulated as rack storage.

**3208.2 Fire protection.** Where automatic sprinklers are required by Table 3206.2, an *approved automatic sprinkler system* shall be installed throughout the building or to 1-hour *fire barriers* constructed in accordance with Section 707 of the *International Building Code*. Openings in such *fire barriers* shall be protected by opening protectives having a 1-hour *fire protection rating*. The design and installation of the *automatic sprinkler system* and other applicable fire protection shall be in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1 and the *International Building Code*.

**3208.2.1 Plastic shelves.** Storage on plastic shelves shall be protected by *approved* specially engineered *fire protection systems*.

**3208.2.2 Racks with solid shelving.** Racks with solid shelving having an area greater than 20 square feet (1.9 m<sup>2</sup>), measured between *approved* flue spaces at all four edges of the shelf, shall be in accordance with this section.

#### Exceptions:

1. Racks with mesh, grated, slatted or similar shelves having uniform openings not more than 6 inches (152 mm) apart, comprising not less than 50 percent of the overall shelf area, and with *approved* flue spaces are allowed to be treated as racks without solid shelves.
2. Racks used for the storage of combustible paper records, with solid shelving, shall be in accordance with NFPA 13.

**3208.2.2.1 Fire protection.** Fire protection for racks with solid shelving shall be in accordance with NFPA 13.

**3208.3 Flue spaces.** Flue spaces shall be provided in accordance with Table 3208.3. Required flue spaces shall be maintained.

**3208.3.1 Flue space protection.** Where required by the *fire code official*, flue spaces required by Table 3208.3, in single-, double- or multiple-row rack storage installations shall be equipped with *approved* devices to protect the required flue spaces. Such devices shall not be removed or modified.

**3208.4 Column protection.** Steel building columns shall be protected in accordance with NFPA 13.

**3208.5 Extra-high-rack storage systems.** Approval of the *fire code official* shall be obtained prior to installing extra-high-rack combustible storage.

**3208.5.1 Fire protection.** Buildings with extra-high-rack combustible storage shall be protected with a specially engineered *automatic sprinkler system*. Extra-high-rack combustible storage shall be provided with additional special fire protection, such as separation from other buildings and additional built-in fire protection features and fire department access, where required by the *fire code official*.

### SECTION 3209 AUTOMATED STORAGE

**3209.1 General.** Automated storage shall be in accordance with this section.

**3209.2 Automatic sprinklers.** Where automatic sprinklers are required by Table 3206.2, the building shall be equipped throughout with an *approved automatic sprinkler system* in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1.

**3209.3 Carousel storage.** *High-piled storage areas* having greater than 500 square feet (46 m<sup>2</sup>) of carousel storage shall be provided with automatic shutdown in accordance with one of the following:

1. An automatic smoke detection system installed in accordance with Section 907, with coverage extending 15 feet (4575 mm) in all directions beyond unenclosed carousel storage systems and that sounds a local alarm at the operator's station and stops the carousel storage system upon the activation of a single detector.
2. An automatic smoke detection system installed in accordance with Section 907 and within enclosed carousel storage systems, that sounds a local alarm at the operator's station and stops the carousel storage system upon the activation of a single detector.
3. A single dead-man-type control switch that allows the operation of the carousel storage system only when the operator is present. The switch shall be in the same room as the carousel storage system and located to provide for observation of the carousel system.

**3209.4 Automated rack storage.** *High-piled storage areas* with automated rack storage shall be provided with a manually activated emergency shutdown switch for use by emergency personnel. The switch shall be clearly identified and shall be in a location *approved* by the fire chief.

### SECTION 3210 SPECIALTY STORAGE

**3210.1 General.** Records storage facilities used for the rack or shelf storage of combustible paper records greater than 12 feet (3658 mm) in height shall be in accordance with Sections 3206 and 3208 and NFPA 13. Palletized storage of records shall be in accordance with Section 3207.



**TABLE 3208.3  
REQUIRED FLUE SPACES FOR RACK STORAGE**

RACK CONFIGURATION	AUTOMATIC SPRINKLER PROTECTION		SPRINKLER AT THE CEILING WITH OR WITHOUT MINIMUM IN-RACK SPRINKLERS			IN-RACK SPRINKLERS AT EVERY TIER	NONSPRINKLERED
			≤ 25 feet		> 25 feet		
	Storage height		Option 1	Option 2		Any height	Any height
Single-row rack	Transverse flue space	Size <sup>b</sup>	3 inches	Not Applicable	3 inches	Not Required	Not Required
		Vertically aligned	Not Required	Not Applicable	Yes	Not Applicable	Not Required
	Longitudinal flue space		Not Required	Not Applicable	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required
Double-row rack	Transverse flue space	Size <sup>b</sup>	6 inches <sup>a</sup>	3 inches	3 inches	Not Required	Not Required
		Vertically aligned	Not Required	Not Required	Yes	Not Applicable	Not Required
	Longitudinal flue space		Not Required	6 inches	6 inches	Not Required	Not Required
Multirow rack	Transverse flue space	Size <sup>b</sup>	6 inches	Not Applicable	6 inches	Not Required	Not Required
		Vertically aligned	Not Required	Not Applicable	Yes	Not Applicable	Not Required
	Longitudinal flue space		Not Required	Not Applicable	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required

For SI: 1 inch = 25.4 mm, 1 foot = 304.8 mm.

a. Three-inch transverse flue spaces shall be provided not less than every 10 feet where ESFR sprinkler protection is provided.

b. Random variations are allowed, provided that the configuration does not obstruct water penetration.

