

EXISTING STRUCTURES GUIDIELINES

We realize that most existing buildings do not measure up to the current building codes for new construction. For most of these useable buildings, it would be cost prohibitive to require full compliance with today's building codes. At the same time, it is important to ensure safety conditions remain at their current level of compliance or are improved as detailed in the Ohio Building Code (OBC) Chapter 34.

The intent of this document is to set forth basic guidelines for the:

1. Change of Occupancy
2. Alteration
3. Addition

of existing buildings and achieve an acceptable degree of safety without requiring full and rigid compliance with all elements of the Ohio Building Code.

Section 3410 of the OBC (“Compliance Alternatives”) contains the methodology to determine compliance for existing structures and details the evaluation process. This section provides for the qualitative and quantitative analysis of existing and proposed building attributes. The worksheet is found in table 3410.7.

Section 3410.4 addresses what must be done by the owner/designer to evaluate the structure under the guidelines of Chapter 34. The following actions must be taken:

1. Make a full investigation of the building by on-site inspections and research of available building and construction documents.
2. Make an evaluation of the building using sections 3410.6, the table 3410.7 and a structural analysis.
3. Submit to the Building Department documented results of the evaluation and proposed compliance alternatives.

The Building Department must then determine if the proposed work will comply with these code provisions. A full, proper and satisfactorily prepared submission with this information supplied by the owner/designer is required.

If compliance cannot be obtained with this approach and the building owner requests a variance from the OBC, then an adjudication order and a request for appeal can be filed with the State of Ohio Board of Building Standards. The State Appeals Boards may then grant a variance from the Ohio Building Code.