

SECTION 311 VACANT PREMISES

311.1 General. Temporarily unoccupied buildings, structures, premises or portions thereof, including tenant spaces, shall be safeguarded and maintained in accordance with this section.

311.1.1 Abandoned premises. Buildings, structures and premises for which an *owner* cannot be identified or located by dispatch of a certificate of mailing to the last known or registered address, which persistently or repeatedly become unprotected or unsecured, which have been occupied by unauthorized *persons* or for illegal purposes, or which present a danger of structural collapse or fire spread to adjacent properties shall be considered abandoned, declared unsafe and abated by demolition or rehabilitation in accordance with the *International Building Code*.

311.1.2 Tenant spaces. Storage and lease plans required by this code shall be revised and updated to reflect temporary or partial vacancies.

311.2 Safeguarding vacant premises. Temporarily unoccupied buildings, structures, premises or portions thereof shall be secured and protected in accordance with this section.

311.2.1 Security. Exterior and interior openings accessible to other tenants or unauthorized *persons* shall be boarded, locked, blocked or otherwise protected to prevent entry by unauthorized individuals. The *fire code official* is authorized to placard, post signs, erect barrier tape or take similar measures as necessary to secure public safety.

311.2.2 Fire protection. Fire alarm, sprinkler and standpipe systems shall be maintained in an operable condition at all times.

Exceptions:

1. When the premises have been cleared of all combustible materials and debris and, in the opinion of the *fire code official*, the type of construction, *fire separation distance* and security of the premises do not create a fire hazard.
2. Where buildings will not be heated and where *fire protection systems* will be exposed to freezing temperatures, fire alarm and sprinkler systems are permitted to be placed out of service and standpipes are permitted to be maintained as dry systems (without an automatic water supply), provided the building has no contents or storage, and windows, doors and other openings are secured to prohibit *entry*.

311.2.3 Fire separation. Fire-resistance-rated partitions, *fire barriers* and *fire walls* separating vacant tenant spaces from the remainder of the building shall be maintained. Openings, joints and penetrations in fire-resistance-rated assemblies shall be protected in accordance with Chapter 7.

311.3 Removal of combustibles. *Persons* owning, or in charge or control of, a vacant building or portion thereof, shall remove therefrom all accumulations of combustible materials, flammable or combustible waste or rubbish and shall securely lock or otherwise secure doors, windows and other openings to prevent entry by unauthorized *persons*. The premises shall be maintained clear of waste or hazardous materials.

Exceptions:

1. Buildings or portions of buildings undergoing additions, *alterations*, repairs or change of occupancy in accordance with the *International Building Code*, where waste is controlled and removed as required by Section 304.
2. Seasonally occupied buildings.

311.4 Removal of hazardous materials. *Persons* owning or having charge or control of a vacant building containing hazardous materials regulated by Chapter 27 shall comply with the facility closure requirements of Section 2701.6.

311.5 Placards. Any vacant or abandoned buildings or structures determined to be unsafe pursuant to Section 110 of this code relating to structural or interior hazards shall be marked as required by Sections 311.5.1 through 311.5.5.

311.5.1 Placard location. Placards shall be applied on the front of the structure and be visible from the street. Additional placards shall be applied to the side of each entrance to the structure and on penthouses.

311.5.2 Placard size and color. Placards shall be 24 inches by 24 inches (610 mm by 610 mm) minimum in size with a red background, white reflective stripes and a white reflective border. The stripes and border shall have a 2-inch (51 mm) minimum stroke.

311.5.3 Placard date. Placards shall bear the date of their application to the building and the date of the most recent inspection.

311.5.4 Placard symbols. The design of the placards shall use the following symbols:

1. This symbol shall mean that the structure had normal structural conditions at the time of marking.
2. This symbol shall mean that structural or interior hazards exist and interior fire-fighting or rescue operations should be conducted with extreme caution.
3. This symbol shall mean that structural or interior hazards exist to a degree that consideration should be given to limit fire fighting to exterior operations only, with entry only occurring for known life hazards.
4. Vacant marker hazard identification symbols: The following symbols shall be used to designate known hazards on the vacant building marker. They shall be placed directly above the symbol.
 - 4.1. R/O—Roof open
 - 4.2. S/M—Stairs, steps and landing missing
 - 4.3. F/E—Avoid fire escapes
 - 4.4. H/F—Holes in floor

311.5.5 Informational use. The use of these symbols shall be informational only and shall not in any way limit the discretion of the on-scene incident commander.