Contacts

Board of Engineers and Architects

Main Office: (402) 471-2021

Compliance Officer: (402) 471-9602

For more brochures/materials: (402) 471-3044

State Fire Marshal

Main Office: (402) 471-2027

Local Fire Marshal:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Local Building Official/Inspector:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Local Electrical Official/Inspector:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Nebraska Board of Engineers and Architects
PO Box 95165, Lincoln, NE 68509
402-471-2021
ea.nebraska.gov

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BEFORE YOU BUILD

A Guide to Knowing When Architects & Professional Engineers are Required in Nebraska

STATE OF NEBRASKA BOARD OF ENGINEERS AND ARCHITECTS

Who we are

The Nebraska Board of Engineers and Architects was created in 1937 to protect life, health and property and to promote the public welfare of Nebraska citizens and visitors. We license architects and professional engineers to ensure they are competent to practice and assist the public in determining if new buildings or renovations require the involvement of a licensee.

Our Board is comprised of four professional engineers, three architects, and one member of the public.

The Nebraska Engineers and Architects Regulation Act

The Nebraska Engineers and Architects Regulation Act contains the statutes that describe when licensees are required. Board Rules – Title 110 of the Nebraska Administrative Code – further clarify provisions of the E&A Act. Both the E&A Act and Board Rules can be found online at *ea.nebraska.gov/ea-act.* A handbook containing the E&A Act and Board Rules may be requested by emailing *nbea.office@nebraska.gov*.

Cost of non-compliance

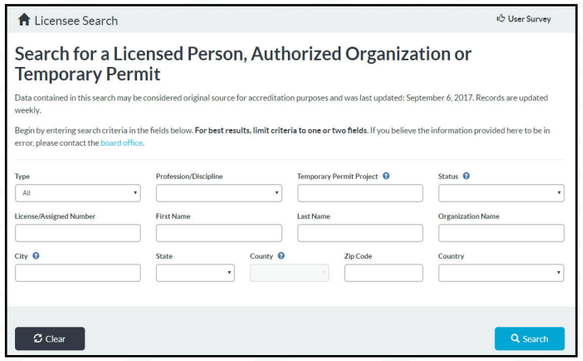
Following the E&A Act can help you protect your property, protect persons on your property, and prevent damage or liability from improperly constructed buildings.

When the E&A Act is not followed, property owners and developers may be liable if a structure was in violation of the Act when built and subject to fines and civil penalties authorized by state statute.

Finding a licensee

Our Licensee Lookup search feature is ideal for finding a qualified professional for your building or remodeling project. Simply visit our site at *ea.nebraska.gov* and use our Licensee Lookup. You can search by name, city or zip code for all licensed professionals in your local area.

The lookup feature is updated weekly and includes all current architects, professional engineers and firms that are licensed to practice in Nebraska.



Contacting us

This brochure is meant to be a helpful guide in determining if your project needs a licensed professional. However, our staff understands that navigating rules and regulations can be a daunting task. If you have any questions about exemptions, licensees, or making sure your project is compliant with Nebraska state laws, please call our office at 402-471-2021 and our staff will be able to assist you further.

ARCHITECTS AND PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS ARE REQUIRED WHEN YOUR PROJECT IS EQUAL TO OR GREATER THAN:

1,000 SQUARE FEET — Assembly (A), Education (E)

Daycare (I-4), Hazardous (H-1, 2, 3, 4) — **2,000** SQUARE FEET

3,000 SQUARE FEET — Business (B), Detention (I-3), Mercantile (M), Personal Care (I-1)

Residential (R-1, -2, -4) *Except three- and four-plexes, Hazardous (H-5) — **4,000** SQUARE FEET

5,000 SQUARE FEET — Factory (F), Healthcare (I-2), Storage (S), Utility (U)

Single-Family, Duplex, Three-plex and Four-plex Residential — **10,000** SQUARE FEET

*To read all statutes and rules, please refer to The Nebraska Engineers and Architects Regulation Act (Neb. Rev. Stat. – § 81-3401 and § 81-3455). A handbook containing the Act and Board Rules can be found on our website at **ea.nebraska.gov** under **Regulations**.*

If there are portions of this document that conflict with the Engineers and Architects Regulation Act and Board Rules, the Act and Rules take precedence.

Do I need a licensed architect and/or a professional engineer on my project?

Nebraska state law requires that any building or structure that will exceed the square footages defined in the E&A Regulation Act and the Board's Rules must be designed by an architect and/or professional engineer.

The determination of whether or not a licensed architect or professional engineer needs to be involved is based on two predominant factors:

1. the area in square feet that the project affects, and;
2. the project Occupancy Classification according to the state building code (N.R.S. § 71-6403).

These factors are specifically described in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-3449 and § 81-3453, and Board Rule 10.3.

Do I have to check if county and/or city building codes apply?

Yes. Counties and cities have the authority to adopt local building codes. Before building or remodeling, check with local officials to ensure your project is compliant with any local requirements.

What is occupancy classification?

Occupancy Classification categorizes structures based on their primary usage, such as a home's main purpose is residential or a hospital's main purpose is healthcare.

Knowing a project's Occupancy Classification is a vital first step toward determining if an architect or professional engineer is required. If you know a structure's classification, the chart to the left can be helpful in determining if you require a licensee.

If a structure contains more than one Occupancy Classification, use the most restrictive occupancy for determining if a licensee must be involved.

Do I need a licensee for an addition or renovation project?

Renovations and one-level additions to an existing building, structure, or work shall be exempt from the E&A Act if:

1. the total impacted area is less than the area shown in the chart to the left and;
2. the area of renovation or addition does not adversely impact the mechanical system; the electrical system; the structural integrity; the means of egress; and does not change or come into conflict with the Occupancy Classification of the existing or adjacent tenant space, building, structure or work.

Are architects & engineers interchangeable?

While much of what architects and professional engineers produce may at times look similar (such as creating plans, designs, drawings, and technical submissions), the practices of architecture and engineering are separate and distinct.

Do agricultural buildings require a licensee?

The provisions of the E&A Act regulating the practice of engineering and architecture do not apply to the construction, remodeling, alteration, or renovation of farm buildings, including barns, silos, sheds, or housing for farm equipment and machinery, livestock, poultry, or storage, if the structures are designed to be occupied by no more than twenty persons.

Can an organization offer both construction services & engineering/architectural services?

An organization may offer or provide engineering and/or architectural services combined with construction services following the conditions set forth in N.R.S. § 81-3436.01 and Board Rule 7.4. The architect and/or professional engineer must participate substantially in aspects of the services which involve architectural and/or engineering services, respectively.

THE NEBRASKA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

The mission of the Plans Review Division is to provide thorough and accurate plan reviews that ensure buildings are safe and accessible for everyone in order to reduce the loss of life and property to fire. The Division carries out the statutory duty of enforcement of the state fire codes and the state accessibility guidelines. The state fire codes consist of approximately 100 documents as published by the National Fire Protection Association. The Nebraska State Fire Marshal or its delegated authorities must review plans for all commercial buildings, whether remodels or new construction before construction work can begin.

When must plans be submitted for review?

Plan submittal is required to be made to the Nebraska State Fire Marshal for all state-owned properties and all projects that involve commercial construction, except for those that are one and two-family dwellings or an apartment building with less than three living units.

How many copies must be submitted?

The State Fire Marshal's Office retains one set of plans for its records. Up to four additional sets may be submitted with sufficient postage and self addressed packaging to be stamped and returned.

Where should plans be sent?

All plans must be submitted to the Main Office (Lincoln) or Delegated Authority. The jurisdiction of the State Fire Marshal encompasses the entire state except for those areas in which the State Fire Marshal has Delegated Authorities. In these areas, plans should be submitted to the Delegated Authority in lieu of the State Fire Marshal's Office, unless they are state-owned properties or federally certified health care facilities.

www.sfm.nebraska.gov