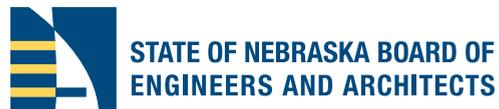


BEFORE YOU BUILD

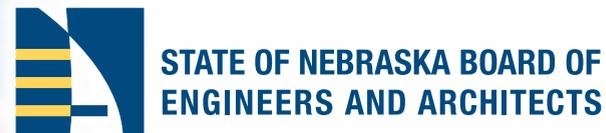
Be sure you know the Nebraska laws regarding your needs for architectural and engineering professionals.

www.ea.nebraska.gov

- Select [Licensee Lookup](#) to locate an architect or professional engineer in your area.
- Select [E&A Regulations and Statutes](#) for the complete law and rules governing building projects in Nebraska.



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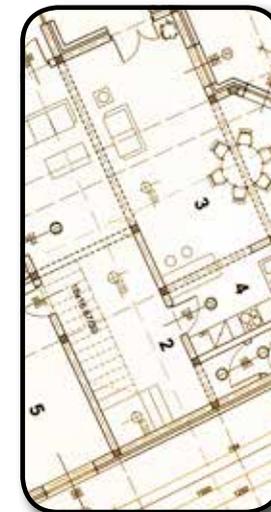
STATE OF NEBRASKA BOARD OF ENGINEERS AND ARCHITECTS



In 1937, the Nebraska Legislature passed a state law intended to safeguard life, health, and property by regulating the practices of engineering and architecture.

Amended over the years, the Nebraska Engineers and Architects Regulation Act protects the public by requiring construction projects as determined by size, complexity and use be designed by architects and/or professional engineers.

This guide has been developed to help you understand Nebraska's state laws regulating the practices of architecture and engineering, and to assist you in determining if your project requires the involvement of licensed architects and/or professional engineers.



Building area, occupancy definitions, and examples are taken from the state building code, established by the Nebraska Building Construction Act (N.R.S. §§ 71-6401 to 71-6407). In addition, other local codes and ordinances may also apply to your project. We encourage you to work closely with your local building officials and inspectors to make sure your project meets all state and local requirements.

Under the E&A Regulation Act, the requirements for architects and professional engineers on a residential or commercial building project is based primarily on two factors:

- Building area in square feet, and
- Occupancy classification, or the building's intended use.



Nebraska State law requires that any building that will exceed the square footages defined in the E&A Regulation Act must be designed by a licensed architect and/or professional engineer.

KEY FUNCTIONS OF ARCHITECTS AND PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

Licensed design professionals (architects and professional engineers) are required to provide design and construction phase services for all projects subject to the E&A Regulation Act. These include:

- **Design services** including the preparation of drawings, plans, specifications, and other documents that show the features and detail of the project to be constructed.
- **Preparation of plans required for the permitting process.** These plans must include a seal, the design professional's signature, and date. Failure to obtain the proper seal may delay the start of your project.
- **Construction phase services** including visits to the project site to determine that the project is being built as designed, and processing technical submissions required of the contractor by terms of the contract documents.

Improper design and construction can put lives and property at risk.

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.



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WHEN DO YOU NEED A LICENSED DESIGN PROFESSIONAL?

Many small-scale building projects in Nebraska may be designed by persons who are not licensed as architects or engineers. The size limit on buildings that can be designed by non-licensed persons is based upon occupancy classification which vary depending on the type of use.



ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS ARE NOT INTERCHANGEABLE

Architects cannot practice engineering and professional engineers cannot practice architecture. However, most larger, complex projects will require at least one professional engineer and an architect. Communicating with the Board and local building officials will help you determine which is necessary for your project.

EXEMPTIONS The table below illustrates when a project is exempt from professional design services, according to size and use.

Occupancy Classification	Maximum Building Area
A - Assembly	<1,000 sq.ft.
B - Business	<3,000 sq.ft.
E - Educational	<1,000 sq.ft.
F - Factory	<5,000 sq.ft.
H - Hazardous	
H-1, H-2, H-3, H-4	<2,000 sq.ft.
H-5	<4,000 sq.ft.
I - Institutional	
I-1 Personal care	<3,000 sq.ft.
I-2 Healthcare	<5,000 sq.ft.
I-3 Detention	<3,000 sq.ft.
I-4 Day care	<2,000 sq.ft.
M - Mercantile	<3,000 sq.ft.
R - Residential	
R-1, R-2, R-4	<4,000 sq.ft.
R-3, Single family thru 4-plex	<10,000 sq.ft.
S - Storage	<5,000 sq.ft.
U - Utility	<5,000 sq.ft.

If you think your project may be exempt from the Act, please contact the building official for the project's location as jurisdictions may require licensed design professionals.

For complete details consult an architect or professional engineer, or refer to the Nebraska E&A Regulation Act.



For definitions of Occupancy Classification, consult your local building official for which version of the International Building Code is being used for the area where your structure is being built. The State Fire Marshal follows classifications defined by the National Fire Protection Association.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What's included in the residential building area calculation?

- All enclosed, potentially habitable spaces, above grade.
- Attached and detached garages with more than three stalls.
- If there is a walkout basement, the entire basement area is included.



What's excluded from residential building area calculations?

- Detached sheds or storage buildings.
- Attached and detached garages with three stalls or fewer.

What if the project includes more than one occupancy type?

- The most restrictive occupancy type is used according to the matrix to the left.

Definitions of the practice of architecture and professional engineering are contained in the E&A Regulation Act.