



2015 SBC Code Solution

SBC Section 1604.5.1

Risk Category Determination for
Multiple Towers on Single Podium

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The following interpretation, policy or code alternate is intended to provide guidance to staff for consistency of review and is subject to change without notice. Application of this interpretation, policy or code alternate to specific projects may vary.

Code Issue:

How is a building's Risk Category determined if the building is structurally separated or comprised of multiple towers supported by a single podium?

Interpretation:

A building can have multiple portions which may or may not be structurally separated. The Seattle Building Code (SBC) Section 1604.5.1 allows separate Risk Categories to be assigned to those portions of the building which are structurally separated. However, the higher Risk Category governs where the separated portion(s) provides access to, required egress from, or shares life safety components.

For multiple towers supported by a single podium, SDCI allows the summation of occupant loads, shown below for three different conditions, to be used to determine the Risk Category for each tower and podium or portion of the podium. Where the Podium's Risk Category is determined multiple times as in Conditions 1 and 2 the higher Risk Category governs.

Condition 1) Podium not structurally separated:

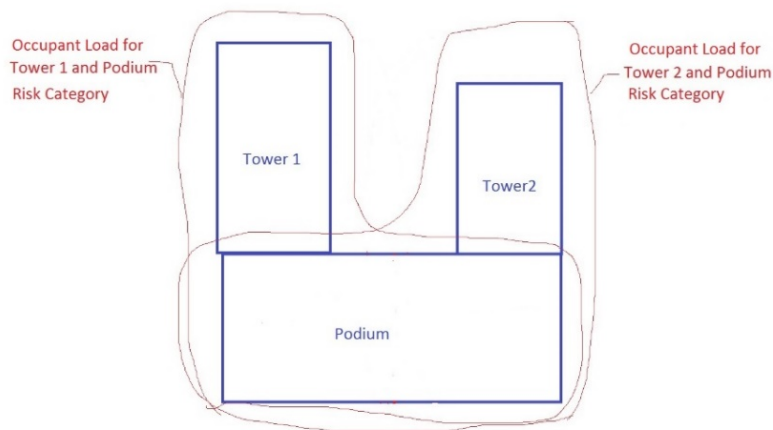


Figure 1: Risk Categories for Non-Structurally Separated Podium



Condition 2) Podium structurally separated and required access, egress, or life safety components cross structural separation:

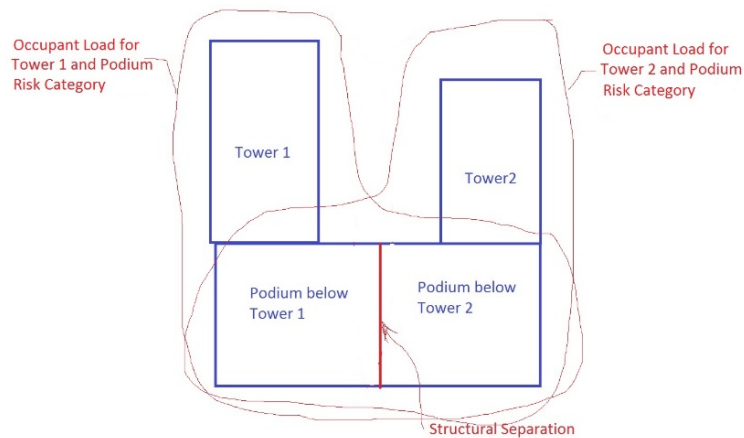


Figure 2: Risk Categories for Structurally Separated Podium with Dependent Access, Egress, and Life Safety Components

Condition 3) Podium structurally separated and required access, egress, or life safety components do not cross structural separation:

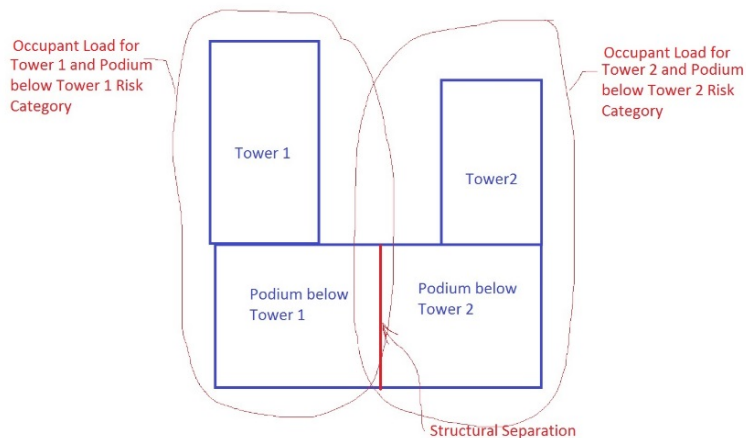


Figure 3: Risk Categories for Structurally Separated Podium with Independent Access, Egress, and Life Safety Components

For questions about whether this code solution applies to your project:

- If you have submitted a permit application, contact the Building Code plan reviewer assigned to your application
- If you have not submitted an application, send us a question through the SDCI website <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/toolsresources/sendusaquestion/default.htm> or in person at the Applicant Services Center. Visit the Applicant Services Center website for more information about hours and location <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/aboutus/whoweare/applicantservicescenter/default.htm>