



2015 SBC Code Interpretation

**SBC 106.13.1, 106.13.1.4,
106.13.2, 1601.1 Exception 2
Structural Design Load for
Temporary Structure**

Release Date: October 5, 2020

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The following interpretation 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:

What structural design loads provide a reasonable level for safety for temporary structures?

Policy:

Temporary structures are required to be designed for full gravity floor loading as specified in the building code. Temporary structures, such as tents and seasonal holiday displays, may be designed for a reduced snow load of 5 psf, provided they will not be occupied during snow and ice accumulation. However, temporary structures are permitted to use reduced lateral design loads as defined in Table 1 below. The loading is based on the duration of the installation and the occupant load. The occupant loads listed in the table are guidelines and may be adjusted at the discretion of the code official based on an assessment of hazard.

Table 1: Wind and Seismic Loading

Duration	Occupant Load	
	≤ 300	> 300
≤ 4 weeks	Generally reviewed by Seattle Fire Department (SFD)	Reviewed by SDCI at SFD discretion Wind: 50-year MRI Seismic: 70% in 50-years
≤ 6 months	Wind: 50-year MRI ¹ Seismic: 70% in 50-years	Wind: 100-year MRI Seismic: 50% in 50-years
≤ 18 months	Wind: 100-year MRI ² Seismic: 50% in 50-years	Use 75% SBC forces

1. MRI: Mean Recurrence Interval
2. Seismic Probability of Exceedance

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>