

A/E SEAL ON DRAWINGS

The purpose of these charts and notes is for quick reference to determine in accordance with § 54.1-402 of the Code of Virginia if an architect's or professional engineer's (A/E) seal is required on documents for proposed construction.

CHART A - GENERAL DESIGN

A proposed structure which is classified within any of the categories marked "Yes" requires an A/E seal on the documents. Separate requirements apply as to when the electrical, plumbing or mechanical systems in such structures require an A/E seal (see Charts B and C).

Additions, remodeling or interior design defined under § 54.1-402 of the Code of Virginia might not require an A/E seal. For construction, additions or remodeling resulting in a change in occupancy, occupancy load, modification to the structural system, change in access or egress or an increase in fire hazard an A/E seal is required in accordance with § 54.1-402, although footnote 1 and general note 3 still apply.

GROUP	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AREA (SQ. FT.)			HEIGHT (STORIES)	
		5,000 OR LESS	5,001 TO 15,000	OVER 15,000	3 OR LESS	OVER 3
A ¹	ASSEMBLY	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
B	BUSINESS		YES	YES		YES
E	EDUCATIONAL	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
F	FACTORY			YES		YES
H	HIGH-HAZARD	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
I	INSTITUTIONAL	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
M	MERCANTILE		YES	YES		YES
R-1	RESIDENTIAL:					
	CONGREGATE LIVING FACILITIES / BOARDING HOUSING					YES
	HOTEL / MOTEL	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
R-2	RESIDENTIAL:					
	CONGREGATE LIVING FACILITIES / BOARDING HOUSING / APARTMENT HOUSES					YES
	ALL OTHERS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
R-3	RESIDENTIAL					YES
R-4	RESIDENTIAL					YES
S	STORAGE			YES		YES
U	UTILITY & MISCELLANEOUS	SEE GENERAL NOTE 6 BELOW				

Notes: (Apply the following notes to all categories as applicable.)

Footnotes

1. Churches are exempt if building does not exceed 5,000 square feet or three stories, and the occupant load does not exceed 100.

General Notes

1. One and two family dwellings regulated by the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC), International Residential Code (IRC), and construction documents, are not required to be sealed unless determined by the building official.
2. The law requires that, where an A/E seal is not required, the plans must be signed by the individual (not company) responsible for the design, including the individual's occupation and address.
3. A local building code official may require an A/E seal even if not required to do so by this chart.
4. Any unique design of structural elements for floors, walls, roofs or foundations requires an A/E seal, regardless of whether or not the remainder of the plans require such certification.

5. 54.1-402A.9. Further exemptions...buildings, structures, or electrical and mechanical installations which are not otherwise exempted but which are of standard design, provided they bear the certification of a professional engineer or architect registered or licensed in another state, and provided that the design is adapted for the specific location and conformity with local codes, ordinances and regulations, and is so certified by a professional engineer or architect licensed in Virginia may not require an A/E seal.
6. Group U includes agricultural (farm) buildings and structures which are exempt from the Uniform Statewide Code (USBC). In addition, Group U retaining walls with less than three feet of unbalanced fill and fences do not require permits under the USBC. Other Group U structures such as bridges, towers, private garages, tanks, etc., may require A/E design at the discretion of the local building official.

CHART B - ELECTRICAL DESIGN (cont.)

A proposed electrical system which is classified within any of the categories marked "Yes" requires an A/E seal on the construction documents. Those NOT marked "Yes" may not require an A/E seal only if designed by a licensed master electrician or Class A electrical contractor (see General Notes 2 and 4). Separate requirements apply as to whether the mechanical systems or the general design of such structures require an A/E seal (see Charts A and C).

GROUP	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	HEIGHT (STORIES)		OCCUPANT LOAD		VOLTS		AMPS	
		3 OR LESS	OVER 3	100 OR LESS	OVER 100	600 OR LESS	OVER 600	800 OR LESS	OVER 800
A ^{1,2}	ASSEMBLY		YES				YES		YES
B	BUSINESS		YES				YES		YES
E	EDUCATIONAL	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
F	FACTORY		YES				YES		YES
H	HIGH-HAZARD	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
I ³	INSTITUTIONAL	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
M	MERCANTILE		YES				YES		YES
R-1	RESIDENTIAL:								
	CONGREGATE LIVING FACILITIES / BOARDING HOUSING		YES				YES		YES
	HOTEL / MOTEL		YES				YES		YES
R-2	RESIDENTIAL:								
	CONGREGATE LIVING FACILITIES / BOARDING HOUSING / APARTMENT HOUSES		YES				YES		YES
	ALL OTHERS		YES				YES		YES
R-3	RESIDENTIAL		YES				YES		YES
R-4	RESIDENTIAL		YES				YES		YES
S	STORAGE		YES				YES		YES
U	UTILITY & MISCELLANEOUS	SEE GENERAL NOTE 5 BELOW							

Notes: (Apply the following notes to all categories as applicable.)

Footnotes

1. Churches are exempt if the building does not exceed three stories, and the electric installations do not exceed 600 volts and 800 amps. General Notes 2 and 4 are also applicable.
2. Theaters are not exempt if the occupant load exceeds 100 persons.
3. Day care nurseries and clinics without life support systems are exempt if the building does not exceed three stories and the electric installations do not exceed 600 volts and 800 amps. General Notes 2 and 4 are also applicable.

General Notes

1. A local building official may require an A/E seal for electrical work even if not required to do so by this chart.
2. The law requires that, where an A/E seal is not required, the plans must be signed by the individual (not company) responsible for the design, including the individual's occupation and address.
3. The above chart applies both to new construction and to additions or remodeling.
4. The exemption for Class A electrical contractors and Master level electricians is applicable only when both design and installation are under their direction or control, as stated in § 54.1-402(6).
5. Group U includes agricultural (farm) buildings and structures which are exempt from the Uniform Statewide Code (USBC). Other Group U structures such as bridges, towers, private garages, tanks, etc., may require A/E design at the discretion of the local building official.
6. One and two family dwellings regulated by the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC), International Residential Code (IRC), and construction documents, are not required to be sealed unless determined by the building official.

CHART C - PLUMBING AND MECHANICAL DESIGN (cont.)

A proposed plumbing or mechanical system which is classified within any of the categories marked "Yes" requires an A/E seal on the construction documents. Those NOT marked "Yes" may not require an A/E seal only if designed by a person licensed as a master plumber, master mechanical worker, or Class A contractor in those specialties by written examination (see General Notes 2 and 4). Separate requirements apply as to whether the electrical system or the general design of such structures requires an A/E seal (see Charts A and B).

GROUP	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	HEIGHT (STORIES)		OCCUPANT LOAD	
		3 OR LESS	OVER 3	100 OR LESS	OVER 100
A ^{1,2}	ASSEMBLY		YES		
B	BUSINESS		YES		
E	EDUCATIONAL	YES	YES	YES	YES
F	FACTORY		YES		
H	HIGH- HAZARD	YES	YES	YES	YES
I ³	INSTITUTIONAL	YES	YES	YES	YES
M	MERCANTILE		YES		
R-1	RESIDENTIAL:				
	CONGREGATE LIVING FACILITIES / BOARDING HOUSING		YES		
	HOTEL / MOTEL		YES		
R-2	RESIDENTIAL:				
	CONGREGATE LIVING FACILITIES / BOARDING HOUSING / APARTMENT HOUSES		YES		
	ALL OTHERS		YES		
R-3	RESIDENTIAL		YES		
R-4	RESIDENTIAL		YES		
S	STORAGE		YES		
U	UTILITY & MISCELLANEOUS	SEE GENERAL NOTE 5 BELOW			

Notes: (Apply the following notes to all categories as applicable.)

Footnotes

1. Churches are exempt if the building does not exceed three stories. General Notes 2 and 4 are also applicable.
2. Theaters are not exempt if the occupant load exceeds 100 persons.
3. Day care nurseries and clinics without life support systems are exempt if the building does not exceed three stories. General Notes 2 and 4 are also applicable.

General Notes

1. A local building official may require an A/E seal for plumbing and mechanical systems even if not required to do so by this chart.

2. The law requires that, where an A/E seal is not required, the plans must be signed by the individual (not company) responsible for the design, including the individual's occupation and address.
3. The above chart applies to both new construction and to additions or remodeling.
4. The exemptions for plumbers, HVAC workers, and mechanical contractors are applicable only when both design and installation are under his/her direction or control and the plumbing and mechanical systems are using packaged mechanical equipment, such as equipment of catalogued standard design which has been coordinated and tested by the manufacturer, which comply with applicable codes and do not exceed gauge pressures of 125 pounds per square inch, other than refrigeration, or temperatures other than flue gas of 300⁰ F (150 degrees C).
5. Group U includes agricultural (farm) buildings and structures which are exempt from the Uniform Statewide Code (USBC). Other Group U structures such as bridges, towers, private garages, tanks, etc., may require A/E design at the discretion of the local building official.
6. One and two family dwellings regulated by the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC), International Residential Code (IRC), and construction documents, are not required to be sealed unless determined by the building official.