Table 1004.1.2

Occupant Load Factors

CHANGE SUMMARY: This change has revised the mercantile occupant load factor and created one factor for all floors.

2015 CODE:

TABLE 1004.1.2 Maximum Floor Area Allowances Per Occupant

| Function Of Space	Occupant Load Factor[a]
Mercantile	<u>60 gross</u>
~~Areas on other floors~~	~~60 gross~~
~~Basement and grade floor areas~~	~~30 gross~~
Storage, stock, shipping areas	300 gross

For SI: 1 square foot = 0.0929 m^2.

a. Floor area in square feet per occupant.

(Remaining portions of table not shown are unchanged.)

CHANGE SIGNIFICANCE: For years the code has provided two occupant load factors for retail spaces, with a smaller occupant load factor being used for grade floors and basements and a larger occupant load factor for other levels. Unfortunately, the code was never clear if the grade floor requirement was applicable to the first floor of the retail space or if it was applicable only to floors that were located at grade level.

The change will allow all retail spaces regardless of which floor level or what type of merchandise to use a single factor of 60 square feet per occupant. When the previous factors were placed into the code they were based on multi-story single operator buildings such as large department stores. Many of these had lower density uses such as furniture or housewares on the upper levels while the spaces on the entry levels were used for higher density sales areas or for things like a bargain basement. Most retail facilities now are not constructed in taller multi-story facilities but instead tend to use larger floor areas and fewer stories. With the changes

Group M occupancy

Occupant load factor—mercantile
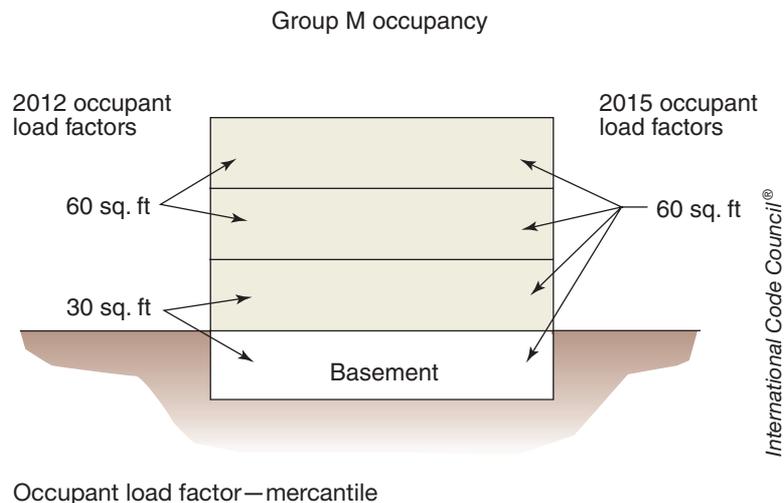
in retail display and merchandising, the revised code will make it easier for the requirements to be applied, since all floor levels will use the same occupant load factor. The use of the 60 square foot per occupant (based on the gross area) factor matches what was previously accepted for retail sale areas "on other floors." This factor was felt to be a more reasonable number given today's retail environment and that much of the floor area is covered with display cases and counters.