



## City of Ashland Building Safety Division

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## Policies / Interpretations / Procedures

BD-PP-0012

### DEFINITION OF UNFINISHED AND SEMI-FINISHED BASEMENTS OR OTHER AREAS

#### **Policy Summary:**

For purposes of conducting a code review and determining project valuation, this policy defines the terms "unfinished" and "semi-finished" when referring to basements or other areas.

#### **Background:**

The adopted valuation chart assigns differing cost per square foot values for finished and unfinished basements or other areas. In addition, some projects elect to not complete the "finish" leaving certain areas in a semi-finished condition as defined below. The code does not define the terms "unfinished" and "semi-finished."

#### **Discussion:**

In order to assure consistency and clarify this issue for the public, this policy provides definitions for the terms "unfinished" and "semi-finished."

#### **Policy:**

When assessing code compliance or assigning value from the adopted valuation chart to "unfinished" or "semi-finished" basements or other areas, the following definitions will be utilized:

- "Unfinished" basement or other areas - an unheated portion or area not intended as a habitable space and limited to storage, housing of mechanical equipment, general work area or similar uses. If there is plumbing in the area, it will be limited to floor drains, water and drain lines serving mechanical equipment, or similar purposes. There will be no other framing for interior walls other than as required for structural support. The area will not be insulated other than the ceiling/floor separation. The ceiling height may be as low as 6 feet 8 inches except for under beams, girders, ducts or other obstructions where the clear height may be not less than 6 feet 4 inches.
- "Semi-finished" basement or other areas - intended for future use as a habitable space and/or similar use. May not be dry-walled or heated. Has a clear ceiling height of not less than 7 feet. Walls or partitions may be rough framed, have rough-in plumbing and electrical. All plumbing for future fixtures is protected from freezing, capped and no fixtures are set. Exterior walls may be insulated. Since the space is not heated, the floor ceiling separation is insulated to not less than R-25.

Semi-finished areas will be assessed a valuation as "unfinished". Systems development charges will not be assessed at semi-finished or unfinished stages.

- Heated spaces will be considered as "finished" and constructed to comply with the applicable codes.
- Note: The assigned inspector will verify the unfinished, semi-finished, or finished condition of the basement at final inspection. Basements found to be at a phase that is greater than originally stated in plans shall be directed to resubmit plans and pay additional fees if necessary.
- Note: Projects that proceed to finish semi-finished or unfinished areas after final inspection approval shall be considered as work conducted without a permit. The owner will be required to obtain a new permit for the finished work and will be assessed appropriate investigation fees.