

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 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).

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	SCHOOLS & DAY CARE CENTERS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
F	FACTORY & INDUSTRIAL	–	–	YES	–	YES
H	HIGH HAZARD	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
I	INSTITUTIONAL	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
M	MERCANTILE	–	YES	YES	–	YES
R-1	HOTEL, MOTEL & DORMITORY	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
R-2 ⁷	MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	–	–	YES	YES	YES
R-3	2 FAMILY ATTACHED	–	–	YES	–	YES
R-4	RESIDENTIAL ASSISTED LIVING	–	–	YES	–	YES
R-5	1 & 2 FAMILY DWELLINGS	–	–	YES	–	YES
S	STORAGE (NON-FARM)	–	–	YES	–	YES
U	UTILITY & MISCELLANEOUS	–	–	YES	–	YES
ALL	INTERIOR DESIGN	SEE NOTE NUMBER 4				

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

1. Churches are exempt if building does not exceed 5,000 square feet or three stories, and the occupant load does not exceed 100.
2. A local building code official may require an A/E seal even if not required to do so by this chart.
3. The law requires that, where an A/E seal is not present, the plans must be signed by the individual (not company) responsible for the design, including the individual's occupation and address.
4. Additions, remodeling or interior design defined under § 54.1-400 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 § 54.1-400, although notes 1 and 2 still apply.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. One exit and three stories or less Group R-2 buildings would normally be exempted from an A/E seal except where required by Note 2. Most all other three stories or less Group R-2 multi-family buildings are required by the building officials to have A/E seals for the construction documents.