



CITY OF TACOMA
BUILDING AND LAND USE SERVICES DIVISION
POLICY STATEMENT

AUTOMOBILE REPAIR AS HOME OCCUPATIONS

October 23, 2006

Automobile repair falls into a variety of Occupancies as defined by the Uniform Building Code as adopted and amended by the City of Tacoma. The difference in the occupancies is based on the degree of hazard associated with the level of repair work being done. For the purposes of applying these uses to buildings being used for home occupations the following will be used as a guideline:

Light Automotive Repair: Shall be defined as oil changes, tune ups, minor repair or replacement of engine parts, and minor body work, for repair of exterior body sheet metal work, however excluding welding, painting, sanding or any work which requires the removal of the fuel tank. Cleaning solvents shall be limited to a maximum of two gallons including storage, and storage shall be in one-gallon containers.

General Engine repair: Shall include all uses included under Light Automotive Repair, and in addition shall include dismantling of engines. Cleaning solvents shall be limited to a maximum of five gallons including storage, and storage shall be in one gallon containers. General Engine repair shall not include welding, painting, sanding or any work which includes the removal of fuel tanks in excess of five (5) gallons capacity.

Major Engine repair: Shall include all uses include under General Engine repair, but shall also include welding. This use shall be classified as a Group S, Division 1 Occupancy. **Such Use Shall not be permitted as a Home Occupation.**

Limited Body Shop: Shall include all uses included under Major Engine Repair, plus it shall include dismantling vehicles, include removal of fuel tanks, straightening frames and major automobile body and chassis repair, excluding sanding and painting. This use shall be classified as a group S, Division 1 Occupancy. **Such Use Shall not be permitted as a Home Occupation.**

Body Shop: Shall include all uses included under the Limited Body Shop category plus it shall include sanding and painting. This use shall be classified as a Group S, Division 1 occupancy with some Group H, Division 2 occupancy. **Such Use Shall not be permitted as a Home Occupation.**

Private garages, with floor areas of 1000 square-feet or less, located on properties used for residential purposes are classified as Group U occupancies. Home occupations for light automotive repair, and general engine repair shall be permitted in such building provided the fire resistance requirements listed in the following table are met:

	Walls⁽¹⁾	Openings⁽²⁾	Eave Soffit⁽³⁾	Roof
Distance from Interior Property Line	Protect <3 Feet	None < 3 Feet	Protect < 3 Feet	No Protection Required
Distance from Center Line of Public Right of Way	Protect <10 Feet	None <3 Feet Protect <10 Feet	Protect<10 Feet	No Protection Required
Distance from Single Family Dwelling	Protect<6 Feet	None <6 Feet	Protect<6 Feet	No Protection Required

1. Wall Protection shall be one layer of 5/8 inch type-X gypsum sheathing on the interior side of the wall or one layer of 5/8 inch type-X gypsum sheathing on the exterior side of the wall under the siding.

2. Door openings shall be permitted from the garage space to a dwelling unit provided the opening is protected by a one and three-quarters (1-3/4) inch thick solid core self-closing door or a 20 minute labeled, self-closing, fire-rated assembly.
3. Eave Soffit protection shall mean that the soffit of the overhang is covered with 5/8 inch type-X gypsum sheathing. No roof vents will be permitted in such soffit.

Private garages with floor areas in excess of 1000 but less than 3000 square-feet used for light automotive repair or general engine repair Home Occupations shall be classified as a Group S, Division 1 occupancy. Fire resistance shall be in accordance with the following table:

	Walls⁽¹⁾	Openings⁽²⁾⁽³⁾	Eave Soffit⁽⁴⁾	Roof⁽⁵⁾
Distance from Interior Property Line	Protect <10 Feet	None < 5 Feet Protect <10 Feet Openings limited to 10% of wall area	Protect < 10 Feet	Protect <10 Feet
Distance from Center Line of Public Right of Way	Protect <10 Feet	None <5 Feet Protect <10 Feet Openings limited to 10% of wall area	Protect<10 Feet	Protect<20 Feet
Distance from Single Family Dwelling	Protect<13 Feet	None <8 Feet Protect <13 Feet Openings limited to 10% of wall area	Protect<13 Feet	Protect<13 Feet

1. Wall Protection shall be one layer of 5/8 inch type-X gypsum sheathing on the interior side of the wall and one layer of 5/8 inch type-X gypsum sheathing on the exterior side of the wall under the siding.
2. Opening Protection shall mean protection by a three-quarters hour (45 minute) labelled self closing fire assembly.
3. Openings shall be permitted from the garage space to a dwelling unit provided the opening is protected by a one-hour labeled, self-closing, fire-rated assembly.
4. Eave Soffit protection shall mean that the soffit of the overhang is covered with 5/8 inch type-X gypsum sheathing. No roof vents will be permitted in such soffit.
5. Roof protection shall mean that a layer of 5/8 inch type-X gypsum sheathing is installed between the roofing material and the roof sheathing. No roof vents, or other penetrations will be permitted in areas of the roof required to be protected.

Licensing Classification: Garages Grade 1, 2 and 3 may be permitted as Home Occupations subject to the stipulation that no fueling is permitted, no work on fuel tanks is permitted, and the use of arc welders, gas welders, or any open flame is prohibited. Garages Grades 5, 6 and 7 are not permitted as home occupations.