

Number of electrical services permitted for buildings

National Electrical Code (NEC) Section 230.4 states that a building or other structure served shall be supplied by only one service, with certain limited exceptions. This generally prohibits the installation of more than one set of service conductors to a building or structure.

Summary of electrical installation requirements

- Only one service drop, set of overhead service conductors, set of underground service conductors, or service lateral is allowed to serve a building, unless the installation falls under one or more of the conditions mentioned in NEC Section 230.4.
- Occupancies that are cut off from adjoining structures by fire walls as discussed above for IBC buildings may have more than one service drop, set of overhead service conductors, set of underground service conductors, or service lateral.
- Multiple occupancy buildings may have service entrance conductors extended from the service drop, set of overhead service conductors, set of underground service conductors, or service lateral, but to only one location in each occupancy.
- The terms "condominium" and "townhome" describe different occupancies determined by the architect or local building official. Townhouses will be classified as IRC-3. Condominiums (apartments) will be classified as R-2. Townhouses are permitted to have a service to each dwelling unit. Condominiums are built the same as apartments. The only difference is ownership for condominiums, rent for apartments.
- A service is permitted to have no more than six service disconnects grouped in one location.
- Structures designated as R-2 are buildings comprised of three or more dwelling units. Each occupancy of an R-2 building is within the same building, and only one set of (service drop or lateral) conductors -or one set of (overhead or underground service), is permitted to serve the entire building unless one or more of conditions mentioned in NEC Section 230.4 apply.
- Unless a multi-occupancy building has management supervisory personnel continuously on-site, each tenant must have ready access to the service equipment serving their space. In all cases, each tenant must have ready access to the circuit breakers or fuses for wiring in their space. The circuit breakers or fuses for one occupant's space are not permitted to be located in another tenant's space.