



Development Services Department Building Division Handout

Significant Changes for the 2016 Residential Building Code

Projections (R302.1 (1))

Clarification to projections from exterior walls of dwellings located close to property lines. [R302.1; Tables R302.1 (1); R302.1(2)]

Exterior wall projections are not allowed from exterior walls with a FSD < 2 feet. This is a significant clarification, because it confirms that eave extensions are not permitted within 2 feet of a property line, regardless of whether the underside is protected with 1-hour construction or if the building is sprinklered.

Under-Floor Protection (R302.13)

A new requirement has been added to require either a 1/2" gypsum board or 5/8" structural wood panel finish on the underside of floors when the underside is exposed to an area which could be used for storage or placement of a fuel burning appliance. [R302.13]

Minimum Habitable Room Area (R304.1)

The requirement for one habitable room with a minimum floor area of 120 square feet has been removed from the code. Habitable rooms shall have a floor area of not less than 70 square feet.

Exceptions: Kitchens

Ceiling Height (R305)

Habitable space, hallways, and portions containing these spaces shall have a ceiling height of not less than 7 feet. Bathrooms, toilet rooms, and laundry rooms shall have a ceiling height of not less than 6 feet 8 inches.

Electric Vehicle Charging [R309.8]

R309.8 Electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. Newly constructed one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses with attached private garages shall comply with EV infrastructure requirements in accordance with the California Green Building Standards Code, Chapter 4, Division 4.1. See CALGreen 4.106.4.2.3 for details regarding 208/240-volt raceway, cabinet, and 40-ampere.

Residential Photovoltaic

Size of Solar photovoltaic array (R324.7.2.1)

Each photovoltaic array shall be limited to 150 by 150 feet. Multiple arrays shall be separated by a clear access pathway not less than 3' in width.

Hip Roof layouts. (R324.7.2.2) Panels and modules shall be located in a manner that provides a clear access pathway not less than 3 feet in width from the eave to the ridge on each roof slope where the panels or modules are located.

Location of Solar PV Conduits (R324.7.2.7)

Specific provisions for placement of electrical conduits on roofs with solar photovoltaic systems has been established to require locations closest to a ridge/hip/valley as well as utilizing the shortest conduit runs practicable. [3111.2.2.6, 3111.2.3.4 & R324.7.2.6]

Location of Smoke Alarms (R314.3.1)

Smoke alarms or smoke detectors shall be installed at least 20 feet horizontally from permanently installed cooking appliances.

Exception

Ionization smoke alarms with silencing switch or photoelectric smoke alarms shall be permitted to be installed 10 feet or greater from permanently installed cooking appliances.

Photoelectric smoke alarms shall be at least 6 feet horizontally from permanently installed cooking appliances where the kitchen or cooking area and adjacent spaces have no clear interior partitions and the 10 ft. distances would prohibit the placement of a smoke alarms as required by other code sections.

Smoke alarm installation near bathrooms (R314.3.3). All types – at least 3 feet horizontally from door or opening of a bathroom that contains a bathtub or shower.

Combination Alarms (R314.5)

Combination smoke and carbon monoxide alarms shall be permitted to be used in lieu of smoke alarms. Systems and components shall be California State Fire Marshal listed and approved in accordance with California Code of Regulations, title 19, Division 1, for the purpose for which they are installed.

Construction Waste Management (R334.1)

Recycle and/or salvage for reuse a minimum of 65 percent of the nonhazardous construction and demolition waste in accordance with the California Green Building Standards Code, Chapter 4, Division 4.4. This is an increase from 50 percent required from the previous code cycle.

Factory-Built Wood-Burning Fireplaces (R1004.1.1)

Factory-built wood fireplaces shall be qualified at U.S. EPA's Voluntary Fireplace Program Phase 2 emissions level and be in accordance with California Green Building Standards Code, Chapter 4, Division 4.5.