

**BUILDING STANDARDS COMMISSION**

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## CALIFORNIA BUILDING STANDARDS COMMISSION INFORMATION BULLETIN 20-03

**DATE:** November 30, 2020

**TO:** CBSC INTERESTED PARTIES  
LOCAL BUILDING DEPARTMENTS  
STATE AGENCIES AND DEPARTMENTS

**SUBJECT:** 2020 LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

This information bulletin summarizes the 2020 legislative changes to state laws related to the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC) and state building standards. The statutory changes summarized in this bulletin become effective on January 1, 2021, unless otherwise specified in statute. The links will take you to the *California Legislative Information* website for the complete text on each law.

[AB 841 \(Ting, Chapter 372, Statutes of 2020\) Energy: transportation electrification: energy efficiency programs: School Energy Efficiency Stimulus Program](#)

Current law requires the California Public Utilities Commission, (PUC), in consultation with the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission and the State Air Resources Board, to direct electrical corporations to file applications for programs and investments to accelerate widespread transportation electrification to reduce dependence on petroleum, meet air quality standards, achieve the goals set forth in the Charge Ahead California Initiative, and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 and to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. That law requires that the programs proposed by electrical corporations seek to minimize overall costs and maximize overall benefits. The PUC is required to approve, or modify and approve, programs and investments in transportation electrification, including those that deploy charging infrastructure, through a reasonable cost recovery mechanism, if they are consistent with the above-described purposes, do not unfairly compete with nonutility enterprises, include performance accountability measures, and are in the interests of ratepayers. This bill requires not less than 35% of the investments pursuant to these provisions to be in underserved communities, as defined.

[AB 2553 \(Ting, Chapter 147, Statutes of 2020\) Emergency Housing Ordinances—Filing †](#)

Current law, upon a declaration of a shelter crisis by specified local jurisdictions, specifies additional provisions applicable to a shelter crisis declared by one of those jurisdictions.

Upon declaration of a shelter crisis, existing law, among other things, suspends certain state and local laws, regulations, and ordinances, including those prescribing standards of housing, health, or safety, to the extent that strict compliance would prevent, hinder, or delay the mitigation of the effects of the shelter crisis and allows a city, county, or city and county, in lieu of compliance, to adopt by ordinance reasonable local standards and procedures for the design, site development, and operation of homeless shelters and the structures and facilities therein. This bill applies those additional provisions to a shelter crisis declared by any county or city. Existing law, among other things, exempts from the California Environmental Quality Act specified actions by a state agency or a city, county, or city and county relating to land owned by a local government to be used for, or to provide financial assistance to, a homeless shelter constructed pursuant to these provisions, and provides that homeless shelters constructed or allowed pursuant to these shelter crisis declarations are not subject to specified laws, including the Special Occupancy Parks Act. Current law also defines a “homeless shelter” as a facility with overnight sleeping accommodations, the primary purpose of which is to provide temporary shelter for the homeless that is not in existence after the declared shelter crisis. Current law requires a city, county, or city and county that declares a shelter crisis pursuant to these provisions to develop a plan to address the shelter crisis on or before July 1, 2019, or July 1, 2020, as applicable, and to annually report particular information, as indicated, to specified committees of the Legislature on or before January 1, 2019, or on or before January 1 of the year following the declaration of the shelter crisis, as applicable, and annually thereafter until January 1, 2023. Current law repeals these additional provisions as of January 1, 2023. This bill instead applies those additional provisions to a shelter crisis declared by any county or city.

For more information, including, filing an emergency housing ordinance, refer to Housing and Community Development’s (HCD) information bulletin:

[HCD Information Bulletin 2020-09](#)

[AB 2960 \(Gipson, Chapter 148, Statutes of 2020\) Shelter crises: fire & life safety standards](#) ††

This bill authorizes a city with a population of more than 3,500,000 to permit the operation of an emergency housing facility year round when the facility does not comply with state building standards for local fire and life safety standards if they submit reasonable standards to the State Fire Marshal that include specified minimum requirements, including, among other things, 24-hour active fire watch, emergency evacuation signage and emergency egress lighting, among other things. The State Fire Marshal is required to review the standards within 30 days and either approve them or respond as to why they do not meet the threshold requirements. The bill authorizes permits for a period of 90 days and authorizes 90-day extensions, not to exceed 730 days of operation, and prohibits the authorization of new permits on and after January 1, 2023.

[AB 3074 \(Friedman, Chapter 259, Statutes of 2020\) Fire prevention: wildfire risk: defensible space: ember-resistant zones](#) ††

Current law requires a person who owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains an occupied dwelling or structure in, upon, or adjoining a mountainous area, forest-covered land, brush-covered land, grass-covered land, or land that is covered with flammable material that is within a very high fire hazard severity zone, as designated by a local agency, or a

building or structure in, upon, or adjoining those areas or lands within a state responsibility area, to maintain a defensible space of 100 feet from each side and from the front and rear of the structure, as specified. A violation of these requirements is a crime. This bill requires a person described above to use more intense fuel reductions between 5 and 30 feet around the structure, and to create an ember-resistant zone within 5 feet of the structure, based on regulations promulgated by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, as provided.

[SB 1030 \(Committee on Housing, Chapter 165, Statutes of 2020\) Housing Omnibus](#) †

Current law requires each county and each city to make a central inventory of all surplus land, as defined, and certain lands in excess of its foreseeable needs, identified as provided, on or before December 31 of each year and to make a description of each parcel and its present use a matter of public record. Current law requires each county and each city to provide a list of its surplus land and excess land to, among other entities, a citizen upon request and without charge. This bill revises this provision to instead require a county or city to provide a list of surplus land and excess land to an individual upon request and without charge, and makes other minor changes to existing law, as specified.

As appropriate, CBSC updates the California Building Standards Code (Cal. Code Regs., Title 24) with changes resulting from newly enacted legislation. This information bulletin is *not* intended to be a complete digest of all new laws affecting buildings, building standards, and CBSC.

Sincerely,



Mia Marvelli, Executive Director  
Department of General Services, California Building Standards Commission

† Please contact the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for further information on bills that have an impact on housing:

(800) 952-8356  
Department of Housing and Community Development  
9342 Tech Center Drive, Suite 500  
Sacramento, CA 95826  
[HCD website](#)

†† Please contact the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) for further information on bills that have an impact on fire safety:

(916) 568-3800  
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL—Headquarters  
2251 Harvard Street, Suite 400  
Sacramento, CA 95815  
PO Box 944246  
[OSFM website](#)