

BUILDING STANDARDS COMMISSION

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CALIFORNIA BUILDING STANDARDS COMMISSION INFORMATION BULLETIN 25-03

DATE: September 22, 2025

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

SUBJECT: AB 130 (Chapter 22, Statutes of 2025) and Impact on Process for
Local Amendments to Title 24, California Building Standards
Code

The purpose of this information bulletin is to alert local building departments, state agencies and departments, and interested parties of new requirements in the California Health & Safety Code (HSC) relating to changes in laws governing the Title 24 building standard local amendment process.

Background

[Budget trailer bill AB 130 \(Chapter 22, Statutes of 2025, see Sections 29-31 and 37-42 of the bill\)](#) became effective June 30, 2025, and enacted a moratorium on state and local building standards affecting residential units beginning October 1, 2025, and ending June 1, 2031. This bulletin seeks to provide local agencies guidance on these new laws now in effect.

Residential Units Not Defined

The scope of the moratorium on residential building standards enacted by AB 130 encompasses “residential units,” which is currently not defined in statute and regulation. As such, the commission interprets this to mean all Residential Group R occupancies, as listed in Section 310 of the California Building Code (Part 2 of Title 24), as well as detached one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses, as listed in the California Residential Code (Part 2.5 of Title 24). Specifically, the residential Group R occupancies listed in Section 310 of the CBC would include Residential Groups R-1, R-2, R-2.1, R-2.2, R-3, R-3.1, and R-4.

6-year Moratorium on Local Amendments Affecting Residential Units

AB 130 amends Health and Safety Code Sections 17958, 17958.5, 17958.7, and 18941.5 relative to local amendments to Title 24, and prohibits cities and counties from making changes that are applicable to residential units, unless one of the following conditions is met:

(1) The changes or modifications are substantially equivalent to changes or modifications that were previously filed by the governing body of the city or county and were in effect as of September 30, 2025.

The commission interprets this to mean a local amendment applicable to residential units being carried forward from a previously filed ordinance (i.e., an ordinance amending the 2022 edition of Title 24) with no material change in regulatory effect to the existing standards.

(2) The commission deems those changes or modifications necessary as emergency standards to protect health and safety.

The commission interprets this to mean a local ordinance that has been adopted on an emergency and/or urgency basis in order to protect the health and safety of the regulated community, and necessitates an emergency/urgency finding or justification be included with the ordinance along with other findings required by state law.

(3) The changes or modifications relate to home hardening.

The term “home hardening” is not defined in statute or regulation. As such, the commission interprets this to mean local amendments to the California Wildland-Urban Interface Code (Part 7 of Title 24). For local amendments that pertain to home hardening outside of Part 7, the commission may review in consultation with the Office of the State Fire Marshal.

(4) The building standards relate to home hardening and are proposed for adoption by a fire protection district pursuant to Section 13869.7.

As a reminder, local amendments made by fire protection districts are required to be filed with the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), not the California Building Standards Commission. If such ordinances are submitted to the commission, they will be referred to HCD for consideration.

(5) The changes or modifications are necessary to implement a local code amendment that is adopted to align with a general plan approved on or before June 10, 2025, and that permits mixed-fuel residential construction consistent with federal law while also incentivizing all-electric construction as part of an adopted greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategy.

The commission strongly recommends local agencies include the following information in their filed ordinance:

1. Clearly identify the adopted greenhouse gas reduction strategy and general plan approved on or before June 10, 2025, and

2. Clearly explain how the ordinance incentivizes all-electric construction and complies with federal law in permitting mixed-fuel residential construction.

The commission, in determining that a modification or change meets any of the criteria contained in paragraphs (1) through (5) above, may rely on a statement by the local agency to that effect.

The commission strongly recommends local agencies include a statement that cites the specific exception(s) from AB 130 that authorize all code changes affecting residential units contained within the filed ordinance. The commission will review this statement, along with reviewing the details of each local ordinance submitted to ensure compliance with these new laws.

Local Administrative Standards

The definition of “Building Standard” in Health and Safety Code Section 18909 includes the following statement relative to administrative standards:

Health and Safety Code Section 18909(c) “Building standard” includes a regulation or rule relating to the implementation or enforcement of a building standard not otherwise governed by statute, but does not include the adoption of procedural ordinances by a city or other public agency relating to civil, administrative, or criminal procedures and remedies available for enforcing code violations.”

While the definition of “Building Standard” does not include specified administrative provisions, AB 130 authorizes changes or modifications related to administrative practices that are proposed for adoption during the intervening period pursuant to Section 18942, and exclusively result in any of the following:

(A) Reductions in time for a local agency to issue a postentitlement permit.

(B) Alterations to a local agency’s postentitlement fee schedule.

(C) Modernization of, or adoption of, new permitting platforms and software utilized by the local agency.

(D) Reductions in cost of internal operation for a local agency.

(E) Establishment, alteration, or removal of local programs related to enforcement of building code violations or complaints alleging building code violations.

These administrative changes or modifications made may be filed with the commission and shall be reviewed by the commission, in consultation with the Department of Housing and Community Development, within 60 days of receipt, if requested by the local agency.

The commission interprets this to mean that a local jurisdiction is not required to include these or other administrative provisions which are not building standards within their ordinance, but they may if they choose. However, the commission and department will only review the administrative provisions specified in paragraphs (A) through (E) above if formally requested by the local agency, and requires the local agency to include this formal request in the cover letter or transmission email included with the ordinance filing.

Model Home Design Exception

AB 130 also amended Health and Safety Code 18938.5 relative to model home designs. Notwithstanding other laws, AB 130 authorizes that “the state and local building standards in effect at the time an application for a building permit is submitted, for a residential dwelling based on a model home design approved under those standards, shall apply to all future residential dwellings based on that approved model home design in the same jurisdiction, unless the model home design substantially changes at a later date or 10 years have passed since the building permit for the model home design was approved by the jurisdiction, whichever comes first.”

The commission notes this new provision does not directly affect the programs, policies and laws under its purview (e.g., review/processing of state and local amendments, administration of the building standard code adoption process, codification and publication of Title 24, etc.). Therefore, the commission is unable to provide guidance on this statute and recommends local jurisdictions consult with their legal counsel and/or relevant industry associations.

Next Steps

In most cases, the commission cannot interpret statute on behalf of local authorities having jurisdiction. Due to the breadth and scope of AB 130 and its impact on the Title 24 local amendment process, the commission’s goal is to provide uniform guidance to local jurisdictions and the regulated community and will continue to do so in the months ahead. Once again, the commission recommends that local jurisdictions consult with their legal counsel when implementing these new laws.

If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact our office at (916) 263-0916 or email your inquiry to cbssc@dgs.ca.gov.

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