

**CALIFORNIA BUILDING STANDARDS LAW  
HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE  
DIVISION 13, PART 2.5, SECTIONS 18901-18949.31**

*Effective January 1, 2026*

**LEGEND:**

If using assistive technology, please adjust your settings to recognize underline, strikeout, italic and ellipsis.

- New statutory language is shown in **underline, bold and italics**
- Repealed statutory language appears in **~~bold strikeout~~**

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**18901. Short Title**

- (a) This part shall be known and may be cited as the California Building Standards Law.
- (b) The California Building Standards Commission shall continue within the Department of General Services.

**18902. State Building Standards Code; Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations; references**

All references to the State Building Standards Code, Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations shall mean the California Building Standards Code.

**18905. Construction**

Unless the context otherwise requires, the definitions contained in this article shall govern the construction of this part.

**18905.5. Adopting agency**

"Adopting agency" means a state agency responsible for the adoption of building standards.

**18906. Adoption or adopt**

"Adoption" or "adopt" means, with respect to the procedure for promulgation of a building standard, the final act of a state agency that has the legislative authority and responsibility to take proposed building standards to public hearing.

**18907. Approval**

"Approval" means, with respect to the procedure for promulgation of a building standard, the action of approval by the California Building Standards Commission. Until there is approval of the standard by the commission, it shall be a proposed building standard or regulation.

**18908. Building; structure**

- (a) "Building" means any structure used for support or shelter of any use or occupancy.  
"Structure" means that which is built or constructed, an edifice or building of any kind or any piece of work artificially built or composed of parts joined together in some definite manner, except any mobilehome as defined in Section 18008, manufactured home, as defined in Section 18007, special purpose commercial coach, as defined in Section 18012.5, and recreational vehicle, as defined in Section 18010.
- (b) "Building" includes a structure wherein things may be grown, made, produced, kept, handled, stored, or disposed of.
- (c) All appendages, accessories, apparatus, appliances, and equipment installed as a part of building or structure shall be deemed to be a part thereof.
- (d) "Building" does not include machinery, equipment, or appliances installed for manufacture or process purposes only, any construction installations which are not a part of a building, or any tunnel, mine shaft, highway, or bridge.

**18909. Building standard**

- (a) "Building standard" means any rule, regulation, order, or other requirement, including any amendment or repeal of that requirement, that specifically regulates, requires, or forbids the method of use, properties, performance, or types of materials used in the construction, alteration, improvement, repair, or rehabilitation of a building, structure, factory-built

housing, or other improvement to real property, including fixtures therein, and as determined by the commission.

- (b) Except as provided in subdivision (d), "building standard" includes architectural and design functions of a building or structure, including, but not limited to, number and location of doors, windows, and other openings, stress or loading characteristics of materials, and methods of fabrication, clearances, and other functions.
- (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.
- (d) "Building standard" does not include any safety regulations that any state agency is authorized to adopt relating to the operation of machinery and equipment used in manufacturing, processing, or fabricating, including, but not limited to, warehousing and food processing operations, but not including safety regulations relating to permanent appendages, accessories, apparatus, appliances, and equipment attached to the building as a part thereof, as determined by the commission.
- (e) "Building standard" does not include temporary scaffoldings and similar temporary safety devices and procedures that are used in the erection, demolition, moving, or alteration of buildings.
- (f) "Building standard" does not include any regulation relating to the internal management of a state agency.
- (g) "Building standard" does not include any regulation, rule, order, or standard that pertains to mobilehomes, manufactured homes, commercial coaches, special purpose commercial coaches, or recreational vehicles.
- (h) "Building standard" does not include any regulation, rule, or order or standard that pertains to a mobilehome park, as defined by Section 18214, or special occupancy park, as defined by Section 18862.43, except that "building standard" includes the construction of permanent buildings and plumbing, electrical, and fuel gas equipment and installations within permanent buildings in a mobilehome park or special occupancy park. For purposes of this subdivision, "permanent building" means any permanent structure constructed in the mobilehome park or special occupancy park that is a permanent facility under the control and ownership of the park operator.
- (i) "Building standard" does not include any regulation, rule, order, or standard that pertains to mausoleums regulated under Part 5 (commencing with Section 9501) of Division 8.
- (j) "Building standard" does not include any regulation adopted by the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, the Department of Toxic Substances Control, the Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board, or the State Water Resources Control Board concerning the discharge of waste to land or the treatment, transfer, storage, resource recovery, disposal, or recycling of the waste.

#### **18910. Code**

"Code" means the California Building Standards Code, including the triennial editions and supplements.

#### **18911. Codification; codify**

"Codification" or "codify" means to arrange building standards in the publication format of the code as determined by the commission.

### **18912. Commission**

"Commission" means the California Building Standards Commission.

### **18913. Emergency standard**

"Emergency standard" means a building standard or an order of repeal of a building standard filed for publication in the code by the commission pursuant to Section 11346.1 of the Government Code.

### **18914. Executive director**

"Executive director" means the Executive Director of the California Building Standards Commission.

### **18915. Local agency**

"Local agency" means a city, county, and city and county, whether general law or chartered, district agency, authority, board, bureau, department, commission, or other governmental entity of less than statewide jurisdiction. Local agency includes any entity of regional jurisdiction. Local agency does not include an agency of the federal government.

### **18916. Model code**

"Model code" means any building code drafted by private organizations or otherwise, and shall include, but not be limited to, the latest edition of the following:

- (a) The International Building Code of the International Code Council.
- (b) The Uniform Plumbing Code of the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials.
- (c) The Uniform Mechanical Code of the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials.
- (d) The National Electrical Code of the National Fire Protection Association.
- (e) The International Fire Code of the International Code Council.
- (f) The International Existing Building Code of the International Code Council.
- (g) The International Residential Code of the International Code Council.
- (h) **The International Wildland-Urban Interface Code of the International Code Council.**

### **18917. Occupancy**

"Occupancy" means the purpose for which a building, structure, or other improvement to property, or a part thereof, is used or intended to be used.

#### **18917.2. Propose**

"Propose" refers, with respect to the procedure for promulgation of a building standard, to the state agency that has the legislative authority and responsibility to write proposed building standards.

#### **18917.3. Publication; publish**

"Publication" or "publish" means to print and make available to the public the California Building Standards Code or administrative regulations that apply directly to the implementation or enforcement of building standards.

#### **18917.5. Secretary**

"Secretary" means the Secretary of Government Operations.

**18918. State agency**

"State agency" means a state agency as defined in Section 11000 of the Government Code.

**18919. Regulation**

"Regulation" means any rule, regulation, ordinance, or order promulgated by a state or local agency, including rules, regulations, or orders relating to occupancy or the use of land.

"Regulation" includes building standards.

**18920. Existence; composition**

There is continued in existence in the Government Operations Agency a California Building Standards Commission consisting of the Secretary of Government Operations and 10 members appointed by the Governor subject to confirmation by the Senate.

**18921. Appointed members**

- (a) The appointed members of the commission shall be selected from, and represent the public, design professions, the building and construction industry, local government building officials, fire and safety officials, and labor in accordance with the following:
- (b) Four members shall be appointed from among the professions and industries concerned with building construction as follows:
  - (1) An architect.
  - (2) A mechanical or electrical engineer or fire protection engineer.
  - (3) A structural engineer.
  - (4) A licensed contractor.
- (c) Three members shall be appointed from among the general public at least one of whom shall be a person with physical disabilities.
- (d) One member shall be appointed from organized labor in the building trades.
- (e) One member shall be appointed who is a local building official.
- (f) One member shall be appointed who is a local fire official.
- (g) At least one member of the commission shall be experienced and knowledgeable in barrier free architecture and aware of, and sensitive to, the requirements necessary to ensure public buildings are accessible to, and usable by, persons with physical disabilities.
- (h) At least one member of the commission shall be experienced and knowledgeable in building energy efficiency standards.
- (i) At least one member of the commission shall be experienced and knowledgeable in sustainable building, design, construction, and operation.
- (j) As used in this section, "persons with physical disabilities" means persons who have permanent mobility impairments which affect ambulation due to cerebral palsy, poliomyelitis, spinal cord injury, amputation, and other conditions or diseases which reduce mobility or require the use of crutches, canes, or wheelchairs.

**18922. Chair; vice chair**

The Secretary of Government Operations or the secretary's representative shall serve as the chair of the commission. The commission shall elect a vice chair annually from among its members.

**18923. Term of office**



- (a) The term of office of members of the commission shall be four years and they shall hold office until the appointment and qualification of their successors, not to exceed 180 days after the term is expired.
- (b) The terms of members of the commission shall be staggered based on the following cycle:
  - (1) The terms of two members shall expire on January 1, 1981.
  - (2) The terms of three members shall expire on January 1, 1982.
  - (3) The terms of two members shall expire on January 1, 1983.
  - (4) The terms of three members shall expire on January 1, 1984.
- (c) Prior members of the commission may be reappointed.
- (d) In the event of a vacancy prior to the expiration of a term, an appointment shall be made to fill the balance of the unexpired term.

#### **18924. Compensation; travel expenses**

The members of the commission shall serve without compensation. Members of the commission who are not state officers shall be paid their actual necessary travel expenses.

#### **18925. Executive director**

The commission shall appoint an Executive Director of the California Building Standards Commission, who shall hold office at the pleasure of the commission. The executive director shall make public the processes of the commission. The executive director shall appoint, in accordance with civil service and other provisions of law, officers and employees necessary to carry out the intent and purposes of this part.

#### **18926. Coordinating council; existence; membership; duties**

- (a) There is, in the office of the executive director, a coordinating council. The membership of the council shall consist of the executive director, who shall serve as chairperson, and representatives appointed by the State Director of Public Health, the Director of the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, the Director of Housing and Community Development, the State Fire Marshal, the Executive Director of the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission, and the Director of General Services.
- (b) Subject to the pleasure of the commission:
  - (1) The council or any member of the council shall, when called and directed in writing by the executive director, work with and assist an agency proposing building standards or adopting building standards, or both, in the development of proposals for building standards.
  - (2) When a state agency contemplates the adoption of any building standard, it shall, prior to commencing any action to prepare a draft of the proposal, advise the executive director, in writing, of that intent and request the executive director to call the council, or any member of the council, as appropriate, for assistance.
  - (3) Whenever the commission returns for amendment, or rejects any proposed building standard, and one of the reasons for that action is that approval of the proposal would create a conflict with existing building standards of other adopting agencies, the executive director shall call the council or any member of the council, as appropriate, to assist in the elimination of the conflict.
  - (4) The council shall draft proposed building standards which the commission is authorized to adopt pursuant to Section 18933 for the consideration of the commission and approval, utilizing the criteria of Section 18930.

**18927. Advisory panels; qualifications of persons appointed; compensation**

The commission may appoint from the design professions, the building and construction industry, the affected general public, and interested governmental agencies, appropriate advisory panels to advise the commission and its staff with respect to building standards. The persons appointed to the panels shall be specifically knowledgeable and qualified in the type of work embraced by the building standards in question. These persons shall serve without compensation, but may receive actual necessary travel expenses.

**18928. Model code, national standard, or specification; adoption of and reference to most recent edition; date of publication; committee**

- (a) Each state agency adopting or proposing adoption of a model code, national standard, or specification shall reference the most recent edition of applicable model codes, national standards, or specifications.
- (b) Each state agency adopting or proposing adoption of a model code, national standard, or specification shall adopt or propose adoption of the most recent editions of the model codes, as amended or proposed to be amended by the adopting agency, within one year after the date of publication of the model codes, national standards, or specifications. The "date of publication of a model code, national standard, or specification" is either of the following:
  - (1) The date of publication printed in the model code, national standard, or specification. If only a month and year are shown by the model code, national standard, or specification adopting agency or body, the date of publication shall be considered to be the last day of the month shown.
  - (2) The date determined by the commission, if no publication date is shown in the model code, national standard, or specification. The commission shall notify all adopting agencies of its determination within 15 days.
- (c) If the adopting agencies fail to comply with subdivision (b), the commission shall convene a committee to recommend to the commission the adoption, amendment, or repeal, on the agencies' behalf, of the most recent editions of the model codes, national standards, or specifications and necessary state standards.

**18928.1. Building standards; incorporation of model codes, applicable national specifications or published standards; publication agreement**

Building standards adopted or approved by the commission shall incorporate the text of the model codes, applicable national specifications, or published standards, in whole or in part, only by reference, with appropriate additions or deletions therefrom. The commission may elect to adopt or approve standards which incorporate, in whole or in part, the text of these publications, with changes therein, or deletions therefrom, directly incorporated into the text of the California Building Standards Code, but no textual material contained in any of the model codes, as enumerated in Section 18916, may be included in the California Building Standards Code by means other than incorporation by reference, unless the commission and the governing body of the organization that publishes the model codes first reach a written agreement concerning the terms and conditions of the publication, including, but not limited to, whether the publication will be by the commission or the model code organization, or both. The model code governing body may not withhold any publication agreement on the basis of the substantive provisions contained in the California Building Standards Code.

**18929. Adoption of administrative regulations applying to implementation or enforcement of building standards; publication, certain Housing and Community Development Department regulations excepted**

- (a) Except as otherwise provided in subdivision (b), administrative regulations adopted by state agencies that apply directly to the implementation or enforcement of building standards shall be forwarded to the California Building Standards Commission for approval. Each regulation shall be adopted in compliance with the procedures specified in Section 18930 and in Article 5 (commencing with Section 11346) of Chapter 3.5 of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code. These administrative regulations shall be published in the administrative part of the California Building Standards Code.
- (b) This section shall not apply to any regulations adopted by the Department of Housing and Community Development that apply directly to the implementation or enforcement of building standards.

**18929.1. Eighteen-month code adoption cycle; procedures; intent**

- (a) Except as provided in subdivision (c), the commission shall receive proposed building standards from state agencies for consideration in an 18-month code adoption cycle. The commission shall develop regulations setting forth the procedures for the 18-month adoption cycle. The regulations shall ensure all of the following:
  - (1) Adequate public participation in the development of building standards prior to submittal to the commission for adoption and approval.
  - (2) Adequate notice, in written form, to the public of the compiled building standards and their justification.
  - (3) Adequate technical review of proposed building standards and accompanying justification by advisory bodies appointed by the commission.
  - (4) Adequate time for review of recommendations by advisory bodies prior to action by the commission.
  - (5) The procedures shall meet the intent of the Administrative Procedure Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code) and Section 18930.
- (b) Where this section is in conflict with other provisions of this part, the intent of this section shall prevail.
- (c) Commencing October 1, 2025, to June 1, 2031, inclusive, subdivision (a) shall not apply to any building standards affecting residential units and proposed building standards affecting residential units shall not be considered, approved, or adopted by the commission, unless any of the following conditions are met:
  - (1) The commission deems those changes necessary as emergency standards to protect health and safety.
  - (2) The building standards are amendments by the State Fire Marshal to building standards within the California Wildland-Urban Interface Code (Part 7 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations).
  - (3) The building standards are proposed for adoption in relation to standards researched pursuant to Section 13108.5.2.
  - (4) The building standards are proposed for adoption pursuant to Section 17921.9, 17921.11, or 18940.7 of this code, or Section 13558 of the Water Code.
  - (5) The building standards are necessary to ensure the latest editions of the model codes specified in Section 18916 are incorporated into the triennial edition of the California Building Standards Code, along with any necessary and related state amendments supporting or facilitating the incorporation of the model codes.

- (6) **The building standards are necessary to incorporate errata or emergency updates to the national model codes specified in Section 18916, along with any necessary and related state amendments supporting or facilitating the incorporation of errata or emergency updates to the model codes.**
- (7) **The building standards under consideration would take effect on or after January 1, 2032.**

**18930. Approval or adoption of building standards; analysis and criteria; review considerations; factual determinations**

- (a) **Except as provided in subdivision (g),** any building standard adopted or proposed by state agencies shall be submitted to, and approved or adopted by, the California Building Standards Commission prior to codification. Prior to submission to the commission, building standards shall be adopted in compliance with the procedures specified in Article 5 (commencing with Section 11346) of Chapter 3.5 of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code. Building standards adopted by state agencies and submitted to the commission for approval shall be accompanied by an analysis written by the adopting agency or state agency that proposes the building standards which shall, to the satisfaction of the commission, justify the approval thereof in terms of the following criteria:
- (1) The proposed building standards do not conflict with, overlap, or duplicate other building standards.
  - (2) The proposed building standard is within the parameters established by enabling legislation and is not expressly within the exclusive jurisdiction of another agency.
  - (3) The public interest requires the adoption of the building standards. The public interest includes, but is not limited to, health and safety, resource efficiency, fire safety, seismic safety, building and building system performance, and consistency with environmental, public health, and accessibility statutes and regulations.
  - (4) The proposed building standard is not unreasonable, arbitrary, unfair, or capricious, in whole or in part.
  - (5) The cost to the public is reasonable, based on the overall benefit to be derived from the building standards.
  - (6) The proposed building standard is not unnecessarily ambiguous or vague, in whole or in part.
  - (7) The applicable national specifications, published standards, and model codes have been incorporated therein as provided in this part, where appropriate.
    - (A) If a national specification, published standard, or model code does not adequately address the goals of the state agency, a statement defining the inadequacy shall accompany the proposed building standard when submitted to the commission.
    - (B) If there is no national specification, published standard, or model code that is relevant to the proposed building standard, the state agency shall prepare a statement informing the commission and submit that statement with the proposed building standard.
  - (8) The format of the proposed building standards is consistent with that adopted by the commission.
  - (9) The proposed building standard, if it promotes fire and panic safety, as determined by the State Fire Marshal, has the written approval of the State Fire Marshal.
- (b) In reviewing building standards submitted for its approval, the commission shall consider only the record of the proceedings of the adopting agency, except as provided in subdivision (b) of Section 11359 of the Government Code.

- (c) Where the commission is the adopting agency, it shall consider the record submitted to, and considered by, the state agency that proposes the building standards and the record of public comment that results from the commission's adoption of proposed regulations.
- (d)
- (1) The commission shall give great weight to the determinations and analysis of the adopting agency or state agency that proposes the building standards on each of the criteria for approval set forth in subdivision (a). Any factual determinations of the adopting agency or state agency that proposes the building standards shall be considered conclusive by the commission unless the commission specifically finds, and sets forth its reasoning in writing, that the factual determination is arbitrary and capricious or substantially unsupported by the evidence considered by the adopting agency or state agency that proposes the building standards.
  - (2) Whenever the commission makes a finding, as described in this subdivision, it shall return the standard to the adopting agency or state agency that proposes the building standards for a reexamination of its original determination of the disputed fact.
- (e) Whenever a building standard is principally intended to protect the public health and safety, its adoption shall not be a "factual determination" for purposes of subdivision (d). Whenever a building standard is principally intended to conserve energy or other natural resources, the commission shall consider or review the cost to the public or benefit to be derived as a "factual determination" pursuant to subdivision (d). Whenever a building standard promotes fire and panic safety, each agency shall, unless adopted by the State Fire Marshal, submit the building standard to the State Fire Marshal for prior approval.
- (f) Whenever the commission finds, pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (a), that a building standard is adopted by an adopting agency pursuant to statutes requiring adoption of the building standard, the commission shall not consider or review whether the adoption is in the public interest pursuant to paragraph (3) of subdivision (a).
- (g) **Commencing October 1, 2025, to June 1, 2031, inclusive, proposed building standards affecting residential units shall not be considered, approved, or adopted by the commission or any other adopting agency, unless any of the following conditions are met:**
- (1) **The commission deems those changes necessary as emergency standards to protect health and safety.**
  - (2) **The building standards are amendments by the State Fire Marshal to building standards within the California Wildland-Urban Interface Code (Part 7 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations).**
  - (3) **The building standards are proposed for adoption in relation to standards researched pursuant to Section 13108.5.2.**
  - (4) **The building standards are proposed for adoption pursuant to Section 17921.9, 17921.11, or 18940.7 of this code, or Section 13558 of the Water Code.**
  - (5) **The building standards are necessary to ensure the latest editions of the model codes specified in Section 18916 are incorporated into the triennial edition of the California Building Standards Code, along with any necessary and related state amendments supporting or facilitating the incorporation of the model codes.**
  - (6) **The building standards are necessary to incorporate errata or emergency updates to the national model codes specified in Section 18916, along with any necessary and related state amendments supporting or facilitating the incorporation of errata or emergency updates to the model codes.**

- (7) *The building standards are necessary to incorporate updates to accessibility requirements that align with minimum federal accessibility laws, standards, and regulations.*
- (8) *The building standards under consideration would take effect on or after January*
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#### **18930.5. Green building standards; agencies with green building standards expertise**

- (a) If no state agency has the authority or expertise to propose green building standards applicable to a particular occupancy, the commission shall adopt, approve, codify, update, and publish green building standards for those occupancies.
- (b) The commission and other state agencies that propose green building standards shall allow for input by other state agencies that have expertise in green building subject areas. The process by which these other state agencies shall submit suggested changes for consideration shall be adopted as administrative regulations in Part 1 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations. These administrative regulations shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following:
- (1) The timing for receipt of suggested changes.
  - (2) Whether the suggested changes should be considered for adoption as mandatory or voluntary green building standards.
  - (3) The concurrent submission of appropriate technical analysis that could be used by the agency to support the proposal under the requirements of subdivision (a) of Section 18930, including the rationale supporting the recommendation that the item be considered for adoption as mandatory or voluntary green building standards.
  - (4) The concurrent submission of fiscal analysis necessary for submission to the Department of Finance and for use in complying with the cost of compliance provisions of Sections 11346.2 and 11346.5 of the Government Code.
  - (5) The manner in which the suggestions will be made available to the public.
- (c) If a state agency that proposes green building standards offers advice to the commission via an advisory panel appointed pursuant to Section 18927, as part of its presentation it shall, to the extent feasible, indicate those voluntary green building measures that may be considered for possible adoption as mandatory within the next two subsequent adoption cycles.

#### **18931. Duties**

The commission shall perform the following:

- (a) In accordance with Section 18930 and within 120 days from the date of receipt of adopted standards, review the standards of adopting agencies and approve, return for amendment with recommended changes, or reject building standards submitted to the commission for its approval. When building standards are returned for amendment or rejected, the commission shall inform the adopting agency or state agency that proposes the building standards of the specific reasons for the recommended changes or rejection, citing the criteria required under Section 18930. When standards are not acted upon by the commission within 120 days, the standards shall be approved, including codification and publication in the California Building Standards Code, without further review and without return or rejection by the commission.

- (b) Codify, including publish, all building standards of adopting agencies or state agencies that propose the building standards and statutes defining building standards into one California Building Standards Code.
- (c) Resolve conflict, duplication, and overlap in building standards in the code.
- (d) Ensure consistency in nomenclature and format in the code.
- (e) In accordance with Section 18945, hear appeals resulting from the administration of state building standards.
- (f) Adopt any procedural regulations which it deems necessary to administer this part.

#### **18931.5. Review and publication costs; payment of proportionate share**

- (a) Each state agency that adopts or proposes building standards shall pay annually to the California Building Standards Commission a proportionate share of the cost of the review and publication of building standards which are published or proposed to be published in the California Building Standards Code.
- (b) The commission shall determine the proportional cost to be paid for review of existing building standards and the amount to be paid for review of building standards, adopted or proposed by a state agency, that have been submitted for publication in the California Building Standards Code.

#### **18931.6. Building permit applicants; fees**

- (a) Each city, county, or city and county shall collect a fee from any applicant for a building permit, assessed at the rate of four dollars (\$4) per one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) in valuation, as determined by the local building official, with appropriate fractions thereof, but not less than one dollar (\$1).
- (b) The city, county, or city and county may retain not more than 10 percent of the fees collected under this section for related administrative costs and for code enforcement education, including, but not limited to, certifications in the voluntary construction inspector certification program, and shall transmit the remainder to the commission for deposit in the Building Standards Administration Special Revolving Fund established under Section 18931.7.
- (c) The commission may reduce the rate of the fee upon determining that a lesser amount is sufficient to maintain the programs established under this part.

#### **18931.7. Building Standards Administration Special Revolving Fund; availability of monies**

- (a) All funds received by the commission under this part shall be deposited in the Building Standards Administration Special Revolving Fund, which is hereby established in the State Treasury.
- (b) Moneys deposited in the fund shall be available, upon appropriation, to the commission, the department, and the Office of the State Fire Marshal for expenditure in carrying out this part, the provisions of Part 1.5 (commencing with Section 17910) that relate to building standards, as defined in Section 18909, and the requirements in Section 13159.5 of this code and subdivision (d) of Section 51189 of the Government Code, with emphasis placed on the development, adoption, publication, and updating of green building standards, the updating of verification guidelines for Tier 1 or Tier 2 green building standards and educational efforts, including, but not limited to, training for local building officials associated with green building standards.

### **18931.8. Additional powers and authority; receipt of grants and funding**

The commission shall have the powers and authority necessary to carry out the duties imposed upon it by this chapter, including, but not limited to, both of the following:

- (a) To accept any federal funds granted by an act of Congress or by an Executive order for any purpose of this chapter.

To accept any gift, donation, grant, bequest, or other funding for any purpose of this chapter.

### **18932. Contents and format of code**

- (a) The code shall indicate the agency having responsibility vested by law for the administration of each building standard and the occupancy or occupancies affected by each building standard.
- (b) The code shall include an index and reference guide.
- (c) The commission shall establish the format for the code to conform it as nearly as it deems practicable with the model codes.

### **18933. Amendment or repeal of building standards**

- (a) The commission may give affected state agencies reasonable time, as specified by the commission, to adopt amendments to building standards submitted for approval. If the agencies do not do so within the reasonable time as specified, the commission shall convene a committee composed of a representative from each of the agencies affected and any other qualified persons who are selected by the commission. This committee shall prepare a recommendation for commission action upon the building standards. Upon the recommendation, or if the committee does not prepare a recommendation and deliver it to the commission within 30 days after being appointed, the commission may rewrite, edit, amend, or adopt, and approve the building standards consistent with the intent of this part and in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act and the criteria for approval provided in Section 18930. It shall not, however, be required that hearings or other administrative procedure be duplicated on unchanged portions of building standards previously adopted and approved by the commission.

(b)

- (1) Pursuant to Section 18943, the commission, after publication of building standards pursuant to Section 18941 in the triennial edition of the code, shall recommend to affected state agencies the repeal of building standards of those state agencies which were adopted, or are, in conflict with other published standards in the code. If the state agencies do not repeal the building standards within a reasonable time as specified by the commission, the commission shall convene a committee composed of a representative of each of the agencies affected and other qualified persons selected by the commission to prepare a recommendation for commission action on the building standards.
- (2) Upon the recommendation, or if the committee does not prepare a recommendation and deliver it to the commission within 30 days after being appointed, the commission may repeal the building standards, in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act. This subdivision shall not supersede Section 18943, but, instead, provides the procedure for effecting that section.

### **18934. Public participation; regulations**

State agencies proposing to adopt building standards shall adopt, and the commission shall approve, regulations establishing procedures to ensure public participation in the development of building standards and regulations.



#### **18934.5. Standards for state buildings; adoption, approval, codification and publication**

Where no state agency has the authority to adopt building standards applicable to state buildings, the commission shall adopt, approve, codify, and publish building standards providing the minimum standards for the design and construction of state buildings, including buildings constructed by the Trustees of the California State University and, to the extent permitted by law, to buildings designed and constructed by the Regents of the University of California. Building standards for state buildings shall comply with the criteria in subdivision (a) of Section 18930.

#### **18934.7. Adoption and codification of the International Existing Building Code of the International Code Council; publication of standards**

The commission shall adopt, approve, codify, and publish by reference in the California Building Standards Code the building standards in Appendix Chapter 1 of the International Existing Building Code of the International Code Council to provide minimum standards for buildings specified in that appendix, except for buildings subject to building standards adopted pursuant to Part 1.5 (commencing with Section 17910).

#### **18934.8. Emergency amendments to California Building Standards Code; requirements; procedure**

- (a) Pursuant to subdivision (b), the commission may adopt amendments to the California Building Standards Code provided that they are substantially the same as model code amendments which were adopted on an emergency basis by the code publishers, if the sections being amended are not under the authority of a state agency.
- (b) The commission may consider adoption of emergency amendments made to the model codes in an expedited rulemaking process outside the 18-month code adoption cycle set forth in Section 18929.1. If a model code organization adopts emergency amendments, the commission may adopt those amendments 120 days after the organization's adoption of those amendments. This rulemaking process shall be completed within 180 days from the date the amendments were adopted by the model code organization. The commission shall ensure that the rulemaking process includes all of the following:
  - (1) Adequate public participation in the development of building standards prior to submittal to the commission for adoption and approval.
  - (2) Adequate written notice to the public of the compiled building standards and the written justification therefor.
  - (3) Adequate technical review of proposed building standards and accompanying justification by advisory bodies appointed by the commission.
  - (4) Adequate time for review of recommendations by advisory bodies prior to action by the commission.
- (c) Amendments to the California Building Standards Code adopted pursuant to this section shall take effect 60 days from the date on which they are adopted by the commission.
- (d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to permit amendments to the California Building Standards Code that decrease the level of disabled access provided.

#### **18934.9. Press box construction standards**

- (a) For purposes of this section, "press box" means a space reserved for reporters, press, or other media at a stadium.
- (b)

- (1) The commission, as part of the next triennial building code cycle that begins on or after January 1, 2013, shall adopt standards for press boxes that require that the press boxes are located on a route that is accessible to persons with disabilities.
- (2) Standards adopted by the commission pursuant to paragraph (1) shall not apply to both of the following:
  - (A) A press box in bleachers that have points of entry at only one level, provided that the aggregate area of all press boxes is at a maximum of 500 square feet.
  - (B) A free-standing press box that is elevated above 12 feet minimum grade, provided that the aggregate area of all press boxes is at a maximum of 500 square feet.
- (3) For purposes of this subdivision, where a facility contains multiple assembly areas, the aggregate area of press boxes in each assembly area shall be calculated separately.

### **18935. Proposed building standards; notice and hearings; initial statement of reasons; review and publication; approval; changes**

- (a) Notice of proposed building standards shall be given and hearings shall be held by the adopting agencies, as required by the Administrative Procedure Act, prior to the adoption of the building standards and submission to the commission for approval. The notice of proposed building standards and the initial statement of reasons for the proposed building standards shall comply with Article 5 (commencing with Section 11346) of Chapter 3.5 of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code. The adopting agency or state agency that proposes the building standards shall submit the notice and initial statement of reasons for proposed building standards to the California Building Standards Commission, which shall review them for compliance with Article 5 (commencing with Section 11346) of Chapter 3.5 of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code. If the commission determines that the adopting agency or state agency that proposes the building standards has complied with Article 5 (commencing with Section 11346) of Chapter 3.5 of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code, the commission shall approve the notice and initial statement of reasons for proposed building standards, and submit the notice to the Office of Administrative Law for the sole purpose of inclusion in the California Regulatory Notice Register. The Office of Administrative Law shall publish only those notices of proposed building standards which have been approved by, and submitted to, the office by the California Building Standards Commission.
- (b) In order to ensure an absence of conflict between hearings and a maximum opportunity for interested parties to be heard, no hearings by adopting agencies shall be conducted unless the time and place thereof has been approved in writing by the commission prior to public notices of the hearing being given by the adopting agencies.
- (c) If, after building standards are submitted to the commission for approval, the commission requires changes therein as a condition for approval, and the changes are made, no additional hearing by the affected state agency shall be required in connection with making the changes when the commission determines the changes are nonsubstantial, solely grammatical in nature, or are sufficiently related to the text submitted to the commission for approval that the public was adequately placed on notice that the change could result from the originally proposed building standards.

### **18936. Notices of meetings**

The commission shall mail notices of meetings with respect to its proposed action on any building standards to any design profession organizations, chambers of commerce, consumer groups, building and construction industry organizations, governmental agencies, and other parties and organizations that have submitted a written request therefor at least 15 days prior to

any meeting thereon, provided that the failure to do so shall not invalidate any commission action.

### **18937. Emergency standards**

- (a) Emergency standards shall be acted on by the commission within 30 days and only when the adopting agency or state agency that proposes the building standards has made the finding of emergency required by Sections 11346.1 and 11346.5 of the Government Code and the adopting agencies have adopted the emergency standard in compliance with Section 11346.1 of the Government Code, and the commission concurs with that finding. Both the concurrence and the approval of the emergency building standards require an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of the commission attending a meeting, or not less than six affirmative votes, whichever is greater.
- (b) Emergency standards approved by the commission pursuant to subdivision (a) shall be filed by the commission pursuant to Section 11346.1 of the Government Code and shall be subject to that section.

### **18938. Filing and codification; publication, effective date; emergency standards; application of section**

- (a) Building standards shall be filed with the Secretary of State and codified only after they have been approved by the commission and shall not be published in any other title of the California Code of Regulations. Emergency building standards shall be filed with the Secretary of State and shall take effect only after they have been approved by the commission as required by Section 18937. The filing of building standards adopted or approved pursuant to this part, or any certification with respect thereto, with the Secretary of State, or elsewhere as required by law, shall be done solely by the commission.
- (b) The building standards contained in the model codes described in Section 18916 and adopted by reference into the California Building Standards Code and any other building standards adopted into the California Building Standards Code shall apply to all occupancies throughout the state and shall become effective 180 days after publication in the California Building Standards Code by the California Building Standards Commission or at a later date after publication established by the commission.
- (c) Except as otherwise provided in this subdivision, an adoption, amendment, or repeal of a building standard shall become effective 180 days after its publication in the triennial edition of the California Building Standards Code or one of its supplements, or at any later date as approved by the California Building Standards Commission, with the exceptions of standards adopted pursuant to Section 25402 of the Public Resources Code and those regulations that implement or enforce building standards. Regulations that implement or enforce building standards shall become effective 30 days after filing by the commission with the Secretary of State. This subdivision shall not apply to emergency building standards. An amendment or a repeal of a building standard in the California Building Standards Code that, as determined by the commission, would result in a less restrictive regulation, shall become effective 30 days after filing of the amendment or repeal by the commission with the Secretary of State.
- (d) Emergency standards defined in subdivision (a) of Section 18913 shall become effective when approved by the commission, and filed with the Secretary of State, or upon any later date specified therein, and remain in effect as provided by Section 11346.1 of the Government Code and Section 18937 of this code. Emergency standards shall be distributed as soon as practicable after publication to all interested and affected parties. Notice of repeal, pursuant to Section 11346.1 of the Government Code, of emergency standards defined in subdivision (a) of Section 18913 within the period specified by that

section, shall also be given to the parties by the affected agencies promptly after the termination of the statutory period pursuant to Section 11346.1 of the Government Code.

- (e) This section shall not be applicable to the time limits set forth in Sections 17922 and 17958 for approval of uniform codes and for changes by local agencies in the California Building Standards Code.

### **18938.3. Model codes; basis of the California Building Standards Code**

With respect to the model codes that are designated in Sections 17922 and 18938 to serve as the basis for the California Building Standards Code but are no longer published, the building standards adopted and approved by the commission shall be those contained in the most recent editions of the model codes adopted or approved by the commission to serve as the basis for the 2007 triennial edition of the California Building Standards Code. Those model codes designated in Sections 17922 and 18938 that continue to be published and updated shall continue to serve as the basis for the California Building Standards Code. With respect to Section 17922, other model codes may be considered for use, proposal, approval, or adoption, or any combination thereof, provided they do not duplicate building standards, as proposed by the Department of Housing and Community Development and adopted by the commission, the subject matter of the model codes which serve as the basis for the 2007 triennial edition of the California Building Standards Code.

### **18938.5. Application of standards; local ordinances; and model codes**

- (a) Only those building standards approved by the commission, and that are effective at the local level at the time an application for a building permit is submitted, shall apply to the plans and specifications for, and to the construction performed under, that building permit.
- (b)
  - (1) A local ordinance adding or modifying building standards for residential occupancies, which are published in the California Building Standards Code, shall apply only to an application for a building permit submitted after the effective date of the ordinance and to the plans and specifications for, and the construction performed under, that permit.
  - (2) Paragraph (1) shall not apply to any of the following:
    - (A) A city or county that has been subject to an emergency proclaimed pursuant to the California Emergency Services Act (Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 8550) of Division 1 of Title 2 of the Government Code).
    - (B) A permit that is subsequently deemed expired because the building or work authorized by the permit is not commenced within 12 months from the date of the permit, or the permittee abandoned the work authorized by the permit.
    - (C) A permit that is subsequently deemed suspended or revoked because the building official has, in writing, suspended or revoked the permit due to its issuance in error or on the basis of incorrect information supplied.
- (c) No model code made applicable to any additional occupancy shall apply to any project that has been submitted for a building permit prior to the effective date of that model code.
- (d) **Notwithstanding subdivisions (a) to (c), inclusive, 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.**

#### **18938.6. Validity of permit; 12 month time period; extension**

- (a) Every permit shall remain valid for purposes of this part if the work on the site authorized by that permit is commenced within 12 months after its issuance, unless the permittee has abandoned the work authorized by the permit.
- (b) A permittee may request an extension of a permit. The building official may grant, in writing, one or more extensions of time for periods of not more than 180 days per extension. The permittee shall request an extension pursuant to this subdivision in writing and demonstrate justifiable cause for the extension.

#### **18940. Codification of standards**

Codification of building standards approved by the commission shall be incorporated into the code and shall not be incorporated into other individual titles of state agencies in the California Code of Regulations.

#### **18940.5. Update of California Building Standards Code; green building standards**

As part of the next triennial update of the California Building Standards Code (Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations) adopted after January 1, 2014, agencies that propose green building standards for inclusion in Part 11 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations shall, to the extent that it is feasible, reference or reprint the green building standards in other relevant portions of Part 2, 2.5, 3, 4, 5, or 6 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations. For purposes of compliance with this section, the republication of the provisions of Part 11 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations in other parts of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations shall not be considered duplication in violation of paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Section 18930.

#### **18940.6. Development of mandatory green building standards; recycled water systems**

- (a) For purposes of this section, “recycled water” has the same meaning as that term is defined in subdivision (n) of Section 13050 of the Water Code, and is consistent with the recycled water use criteria specified in Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 60301.100) of Division 4 of Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations.
- (b)
  - (1) The California Building Standards Commission shall conduct research to assist in the development of mandatory green building standards for the installation of recycled water systems for newly constructed commercial and public buildings, in consultation with the State Water Resources Control Board and other interested parties, including, but not limited to, public water systems, recycled water producers, product manufacturers, local building officials, apartment and other rental property owners, California-licensed contractors, and the building industry.
  - (2) In researching, developing, and proposing mandatory building standards under this section, the commission is authorized to expend funds from the Building Standards Administration Special Revolving Fund, upon appropriation pursuant to Section 18931.7.
  - (3) Research conducted in order to propose building standards pursuant to this section shall include, but is not limited to, the following:
    - (A) Potential outdoor applications for recycled water, consistent with the recycled water use criteria specified in Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 60301.100) of Division 4 of Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations.
    - (B) Potential indoor applications for recycled water, consistent with the recycled water use criteria specified in Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 60301.100) of Division 4 of Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations. With respect to indoor applications, the

commission shall consider whether to adopt or recommend measures in addition to the current standards adopted in the California Plumbing Code in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, to ensure the safe installation of indoor recycled water piping or systems, including, but not limited to, requiring purple pipe or special markings on recycled water piping or systems that states clearly whether it is approved for indoor use, or recommending restrictions on who may purchase or install recycled water piping for indoor use.

- (C) The cost of various recycled water systems.
  - (D) The estimated quantity of water savings under varying levels of application of recycled water in commercial and public buildings and building site landscaped areas.
  - (4) The commission may research standards for different types of water recycling systems, including noncentralized systems, but shall only mandate systems to the extent that they meet all of the health and safety standards specified in this section.
- (c)
- (1) The commission shall adopt mandatory building standards for the installation of recycled water systems for newly constructed commercial and public buildings. The commission shall consider the proposed mandatory building standards during the 2016 Intervening Code Adoption Cycle and may amend these mandatory standards as necessary in future code adoption cycles, consistent with the recycled water use criteria specified in Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 60301.100) of Division 4 of Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations.
  - (2) When developing the application provisions for the mandatory building standards, the commission shall limit the mandate to install recycled water systems within commercial and public buildings and building site landscaped areas to only those areas within a local jurisdiction that have feasible and cost-efficient access to a water recycling facility, or that have been identified by the local jurisdiction within a planned service area for the provision of recycled water for which a specific implementation timeline has been identified by the public water system in its most recent urban water management plan.
  - (3) The mandate to install recycled water piping shall not apply to service areas in which the only recycled water use is for potable purposes, or in which net nonpotable deliveries are anticipated to remain level or decrease as a result of the potable reuse project.
  - (4) The commission shall develop the application provisions for the mandatory building standards required under paragraph (1) in consultation with the State Water Resources Control Board, public water systems, recycled water producers, and water research associations.
  - (5) A city, county, or city and county, in consultation with the public water system and recycled water producer, may further reduce the area for which the mandate to install recycled water piping applies, if the local public water system or recycled water producer finds that providing recycled water to an area is not feasible or cost effective.

#### **18940.7. Water reuse system definition; reduce nonpotable water use**

- (a) For purposes of this section, "water reuse system" includes both of the following:
  - (1) A system approved for installation under the California Building Standards Code that uses recycled water, graywater, rainwater, or other nonpotable water sources for nonpotable indoor or outdoor building use, including landscaping, toilet and urinal flushing, floor trap priming, or cooling towers.
  - (2) A system approved for installation under the California Building Standards Code that captures graywater, rainwater, building foundation water drainage, or other

onsite alternative water sources for nonpotable reuse onsite or as part of a multibuilding, district, or campuswide treatment system.

- (b) The commission shall, commencing with the next triennial edition of the California Building Standards Code (Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations), research, develop, and propose building standards, including voluntary Tier 1 or Tier 2 standards of the California Green Building Standards Code (Part 11 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations), to reduce potable water use in new nonresidential buildings, including consideration of requiring installation of water reuse systems and consideration of requiring preplumbing of buildings to allow future use of recycled water, onsite treated graywater, or other alternative water sources. In developing these standards, the commission may limit or exempt the application of standards based on occupancy, building type, building size, development size, availability or planned availability of recycled water, or as otherwise determined appropriate.
- (c) The commission shall perform a review of water efficiency and water reuse standards in the California Buildings Standards Code every three years thereafter and update as needed.
- (d) In developing and proposing building standards under this section, the commission is authorized to expend funds from the Building Standards Administration Special Revolving Fund, upon appropriation pursuant to Section 18931.7.

#### **18941. Standards; administration and enforcement; performance basis**

All building standards shall be administered and enforced and, whenever practicable, written on a performance basis consistent with state and nationally recognized standards for building construction in view of the use and occupancy of each structure to preserve and protect the public health and safety.

#### **18941.5. Amendments, additions, deletions to standards; effective date; publication date; more restrictive standards**

- (a)
  - (1) Amendments, additions, and deletions to the California Building Standards Code, including, but not limited to, green building standards, adopted by a city, county, or city and county pursuant to Section 18941.5 or pursuant to Section 17958.7, together with all applicable portions of the California Building Standards Code, shall become effective 180 days after publication of the California Building Standards Code by the commission, or at a later date after publication established by the commission.
  - (2) The publication date established by the commission shall be no earlier than the date the California Building Standards Code is available for purchase by the public.
- (b) Neither the State Building Standards Law contained in this part, nor the application of building standards contained in this section, shall limit the authority of a city, county, or city and county to establish more restrictive building standards, including, but not limited to, green building standards, reasonably necessary because of local climatic, geological, or topographical conditions. The governing body shall make the finding required by Section 17958.7 and the other requirements imposed by Section 17958.7 shall apply to that finding. Nothing in this section shall limit the authority of fire protection districts pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 13869.7. Further, nothing in this section shall

require findings required by Section 17958.7 beyond those currently required for more restrictive building standards related to housing.

- (c) **Notwithstanding subdivision (b), and commencing October 1, 2025, to June 1, 2031, inclusive, a city or county shall not establish more restrictive building standards, including, but not limited to, green building standards, 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.**
  - (2) **The commission deems those changes or modifications necessary as emergency standards to protect health and safety.**
  - (3) **The changes or modifications relate to home hardening.**
  - (4) **The building standards relate to home hardening and are proposed for adoption by a fire protection district pursuant to Section 13869.7.**
  - (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.**

#### **18941.6. Hazardous building ordinances and programs; building standards; local conditions; exceptions; study**

- (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, ordinances and programs adopted on or before January 1, 1993, that contain standards to strengthen potentially hazardous buildings pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 8875.2 of the Government Code, shall incorporate the building standards in Appendix Chapter 1 of the Uniform Code for Building Conservation of the International Conference of Building Officials published in the California Building Standards Code, except for standards found by local ordinance to be inapplicable based on local conditions, as defined in subdivision (b), or based on an approved study pursuant to subdivision (c), or both. Ordinances and programs shall be updated in a timely manner to reflect changes in the model code, and more frequently if deemed necessary by local jurisdictions.
- (b) For the purpose of subdivision (a), and notwithstanding the meaning of "local conditions" as used elsewhere in this part and Part 2.5 (commencing with Section 18901), the term "local conditions" shall be limited to those conditions that affect the implementation of seismic strengthening standards on the following only:
- (1) The preservation of qualified historic structures as governed by the State Historical Building Code (Part 2.7 (commencing with Section 18950)).
  - (2) Historic preservation programs, including, but not limited to, the California Mainstreet Program.
  - (3) The preservation of affordable housing.
- (c) Any ordinance or program adopted on or before January 1, 1993, may include exceptions for local conditions not defined in subdivision (b) if the jurisdiction has approved a study on or before January 1, 1993, describing the effects of the exceptions. The study shall include a seismic hazards assessment, seismic retrofit cost comparisons, and earthquake damage estimates for a major earthquake, including the differences in costs, deaths, and injuries between full compliance with Appendix Chapter 1 of the Uniform Code for Building Conservation and the ordinance or program. No study shall be required pursuant to this subdivision if the exceptions for local conditions not



defined in subdivision (b) result in standards or requirements that are more stringent than those in Appendix Chapter 1 of the Uniform Code for Building Conservation.

- (d) Ordinances and programs adopted pursuant to this section shall be conclusively presumed to comply with the requirements of Chapter 173 of the Statutes of 1991.

#### **18941.7. Use of graywater; adoption of building standards**

Subject to Section 14877.3 of the Water Code, a city, county, or other local agency may adopt, after a public hearing and enactment of an ordinance or resolution, building standards that are more restrictive than the graywater building standards adopted by the Department of Housing and Community Development under Section 17922.12 and published in the California Building Standards Code.

#### **18941.8. "Graywater" defined; adoption of building standards for construction, installation, and alteration of graywater systems in nonresidential occupancies; considerations; effect on authority of Department of Water Resources**

- (a) As used in this section, "graywater" has the same meaning as defined in Section 17922.12.
- (b) Notwithstanding Chapter 22 (commencing with Section 14875) of Division 7 of the Water Code, as a part of the next triennial edition of the California Building Standards Code (Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations) adopted after January 1, 2011, the commission shall adopt building standards for the construction, installation, and alteration of graywater systems for indoor and outdoor uses in nonresidential occupancies.
- (c) In adopting building standards under this section, the commission shall do all of the following:
- (1) Ensure protection of water quality in accordance with applicable provisions of state and federal water quality law.
  - (2) Consider the adopted building standards for the construction, installation, and alteration of graywater systems for indoor and outdoor uses in residential buildings.
  - (3) Consider existing research available on the environmental consequences to soil and groundwater of short-term and long-term graywater use for irrigation purposes.
  - (4) Consider graywater use impacts on human health.
  - (5) Consider the circumstances under which the use of graywater treatment systems in nonresidential occupancies is recommended.
  - (6) Consider the use and regulation of graywater in other jurisdictions.
  - (7) Use Chapter 16 of the Uniform Plumbing Code, adopted by the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials, as the starting point for the building standards and amend those standards as necessary.
- (d) The commission may revise and update the standards adopted under this section at any time.
- (e) The commission's adoption of building standards for graywater systems pursuant to this section shall terminate the authority of the Department of Water Resources to adopt and update standards for the installation, construction, and alteration of graywater systems in nonresidential buildings pursuant to Chapter 22 (commencing with Section 14875) of Division 7 of the Water Code.

#### **18941.9. Heat island effect; hardscape alternatives; standard specification**

The commission shall, in the next triennial adoption process for the code adopted after the development of a standard specification by the Department of Transportation pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 71400 of the Public Resources Code, consider incorporating that specification as an additional strategy for Heat Island Effect: Hardscape Alternatives in the California Green Building Standards Code (Section A5.106.11.1 of Appendix 5 of Part 11 (commencing with Section 101.1) of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations).

**18941.10. Installation of future electric vehicle charging infrastructure for parking spaces in multifamily dwellings and nonresidential development; adoption of mandatory standards; consultation with interested parties**

(a)

- (1) The commission shall, commencing with the next triennial edition of the California Building Standards Code (Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations) adopted after January 1, 2014, adopt, approve, codify, and publish mandatory building standards for the installation of future electric vehicle charging infrastructure for parking spaces in multifamily dwellings and nonresidential development.
- (2) For purposes of paragraph (1), the Department of Housing and Community Development shall propose mandatory building standards for the installation of future electric vehicle charging infrastructure for parking spaces in multifamily dwellings and submit the proposed mandatory building standards to the commission for consideration.

(b)

- (1) In proposing and adopting mandatory building standards under this section, the Department of Housing and Community Development and the commission shall use Sections A4.106.6, A4.106.6.1, A4.106.6.2, A5.106.5.1, and A5.106.5.3 of the California Green Building Standards Code (Part 11 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations) as the starting point for the mandatory building standards and amend those standards as necessary.
- (2) In proposing and adopting mandatory building standards under this section, the Department of Housing and Community Development and the commission shall actively consult with interested parties, including, but not limited to, the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission, investor-owned utilities, municipal utilities, manufacturers, local building officials, commercial building and apartment owners, and the building industry.

**18941.11. Mandatory building standards for installation of electric vehicle charging stations in existing multifamily dwellings, hotels, motels, and nonresidential developments; research, development, and proposal of mandatory building standards; periodic review of standards; duration of section**

(a)

- (1) Commencing with the next triennial edition of the California Building Standards Code (Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations), the commission and the Department of Housing and Community Development shall research and develop, and may propose for adoption by the commission, mandatory building standards for the installation of electric vehicle charging stations in existing multifamily dwellings, hotels, motels, and nonresidential developments during specified retrofits, additions, and alterations to existing parking facilities for which a permit application is submitted on and after the effective date of those building standards.
- (2) For purposes of paragraph (1), notwithstanding subdivision (d) of Section 17922, Section 17912, or 17958.8, the Department of Housing and Development shall

research, develop, and propose for adoption mandatory building standards for the installation of electric vehicle charging stations with low power level 2 or higher electric vehicle chargers in existing parking facilities serving multifamily dwellings, hotels, and motels. The department shall submit the proposed mandatory building standards to the commission for consideration.

- (3) For purposes of paragraph (1), the commission shall research, develop, and propose for adoption mandatory building standards for the installation of electric vehicle charging stations with low power level 2 or higher electrical vehicle chargers, including direct current fast chargers, in parking facilities serving existing nonresidential buildings.
- (b) In researching, developing, and proposing for adoption mandatory building standards under this section, the commission and the Department of Housing and Community Development shall do all the following:
  - (1) Consult with interested parties, including, but not limited to, the State Air Resources Board, the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission, investor-owned utilities, municipal utilities, vehicle and electric vehicle supply equipment manufacturers, local building officials, commercial building and apartment owners, and the building industry.
  - (2) Invite the participation of the public at large in the development of those building standards.
  - (3) Propose standards that only apply to certain additions and alterations of existing parking facilities when a building permit is required and other significant construction or repair, as determined by the agencies, is taking place.
- (c) The commission and the Department of Housing and Community Development shall review the building standards proposed and adopted pursuant to this section every triennial code cycle pursuant to Section 18942, and, if needed, update those building standards to ensure that the building standards support statewide needs for electric vehicle charging stations that align with the state's zero-emission vehicle targets until both of the following goals are met:
  - (1) There is adequate availability of charging given near-term electric vehicle charging needs.
  - (2) There is sufficient charging capacity to support the long-term goal of achieving 100 percent electric vehicles statewide.
- (d) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2033, and as of that date is repealed.

#### **18941.12. Proposed residential development plans; conditions for use of template floor plans**

- (a) Notwithstanding any subsequent updates to building standards approved by the commission pursuant to this chapter, an individual submitting a proposed development plan for a residential development may utilize, and a local agency shall allow the utilization of, a template floor plan if all of the following conditions are met:
  - (1) For use of a template floor plan on or after January 1, 2023, and before July 1, 2024, all of the following conditions:
    - (A) The template floor plan was approved, between January 1, 2020, and December 31, 2022, by the local agency that oversees development approvals where the proposed residential development is located and the plan complied with all building standards in effect at the time.
    - (B) The proposed new development is located on the same parcel that contained a residential building that was damaged or destroyed, prior to January 1, 2020, as a

- result of a disaster in an area for which a state of emergency was proclaimed by the Governor pursuant to the California Emergency Services Act (Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 8550) of Division 1 of Title 2 of the Government Code).
- (C) The owner of the destroyed or damaged residential building did not have code upgrade insurance at the time the building was damaged or destroyed.
  - (D) The proposed new residential development will be used for owner-occupancy and is not intended to be used as a rental or vacation property.
  - (E) The template floor plan is being used no more than six years after the date it was approved.
- (2) For use of a template floor plan on or after July 1, 2024, both of the following conditions:
- (A) All of the conditions in paragraph (1).
  - (B) The local agency has approved, following every issuance of new state building standards, a resolution that includes findings that the continued use of the template floor plan without regard to subsequent changes to building standards does not pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the building occupants or the community.
- (b) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2029, and as of that date is repealed.

#### **18941.15. Triennial building standards cycle; approval clarifications in building code and residential code; construction of live/work units**

At the next triennial building standards rulemaking cycle that commences on or after January 1, 2019, the Department of Housing and Community Development shall develop and submit for approval clarifications in the California Building Code and the California Residential Code pertaining to the requirements for the construction of live/work units.

#### **18941.17. Triennial building standards rulemaking cycle; workshop or other collaborative process on electric vehicle charging infrastructure standards**

- (a) As part of each triennial California Building Standards Code rulemaking cycle that commences on or after January 1, 2023, the commission shall convene a workshop or other collaborative process on electric vehicle charging infrastructure standards.
- (b) The workshop or other collaborative process shall include the commission, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Division of the State Architect, the State Air Resources Board, the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission, and other relevant stakeholders.
- (c) The workshop or other collaborative process shall consider, among other things, projected demand for electric vehicle charging infrastructure based on the state's goals.
- (d) As part of the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission's participation in the workshop or other collaborative process, the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission shall incorporate the most recent update to the statewide assessment of ~~the~~ electric vehicle charging infrastructure prepared pursuant to Section 25229 of the Public Resources Code, any relevant electric load forecasts, and the statewide transportation electrification goals.
- (e) If the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission recommends any electric vehicle charging infrastructure standard as part of the workshop or other collaborative process, the recommended standard shall be cost effective when taken in its entirety and when amortized over the economic life of the

infrastructure compared with historic practice. When determining cost effectiveness, the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission shall consider other relevant factors, as required by Sections 18930 and 18935, including, but not limited to, the impact on housing costs, the total statewide costs and benefits of the standard over its lifetime, the economic impact on California businesses, and any alternative approaches and their associated costs.

## **18942. Publication of code; supplements; other notes and materials; inspection and sale**

(a)

**(1)** The commission shall publish, or cause to be published, editions of the code in its entirety once in every three years. In the intervening period the commission shall publish, or cause to be published, supplements as necessary. For emergency building standards defined in subdivision (a) of Section 18913, an emergency building standards supplement shall be published whenever the commission determines it is necessary.

**(2) Changes adopted during the interviewing period described in paragraph (1) shall be limited to only the following:**

**(A) Technical updates to existing code requirements only to the extent necessary to effectuate support or facilitate the incorporation or implementation of those existing code requirements. The updates shall be limited to clarifying, conforming, or coordinating changes that do not materially alter the substance or intent of the existing code provisions.**

**(B) Emergency building standards.**

**(C) Amendments by the State Fire Marshal to building standards within the California Wildland-Urban Interface Code (Part 7 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations).**

**(D) The building standards are necessary to incorporate errata or emergency updates to the national model codes specified in Section 18916, along with any necessary and related state amendments supporting or facilitating the incorporation of errata or emergency updates to the model codes.**

**(E) Changes or modifications made pursuant to paragraph (6) of subdivision (b) of Section 17958, paragraph (6) of subdivision (c) of Section 17958.5, or paragraph (6) of subdivision (c) of Section 17958.7.**

**(F) Building standards necessary to incorporate updates to accessibility requirements that align with minimum federal accessibility laws, standards, and regulations.**

**(b)** The commission shall publish the text of Article 2.5 (commencing with Section 115920) of Chapter 5 of Part 10 of Division 104, within the requirements for single-family residential occupancies contained in Part 2.5 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, with the following note: "NOTE: These regulations are subject to local government modification. You should verify the applicable local government requirements at the time of application for a building permit."

**(c)** The commission shall publish the text of Section 116064.2 within Part 2 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations.

**(d)** The commission may publish, stockpile, and sell at a reasonable price the code and materials incorporated therein by reference if it deems the latter is insufficiently available to the public, or unavailable at a reasonable price. Each state department concerned and

each city, county, or city and county shall have an up-to-date copy of the code available for public inspection.

(e)

- (1) Each city, county, and city and county, including charter cities, shall obtain and maintain with all revisions on a current basis, at least one copy of the building standards and other state regulations relating to buildings published in Titles 8, 19, 20, 24, and 25 of the California Code of Regulations. These codes shall be maintained in the office of the building official responsible for the administration and enforcement of this part.
- (2) This subdivision shall not apply to a city or county that contracts for the administration and enforcement of the provisions of this part with another local government agency that complies with this section.

#### **18942.1. Filing of regulations or orders of repeal; transmittal**

- (a) If a regulation or order of repeal is filed with the Office of Administrative Law, and if it appears to be a building standard, as defined by Section 18909, which has not been approved by the commission, the Office of Administrative Law shall consult with the commission or the commission's staff to determine the character and status of the filed regulation or order. Any building standard improperly transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law, as determined according to this section, shall not be then filed with the Secretary of State, but, instead, the Office of Administrative Law shall transmit the building standard to the commission and notify the adopting agency of this action.
- (b) If an administrative regulation or order of repeal is filed with the commission and it does not directly apply to the implementation or enforcement of a building standard, it shall not be submitted to the commission for action, but, instead, the commission shall transmit the regulations to the Office of Administrative Law and notify the submitting agency of this action.

#### **18943. Effect of standards in individual titles**

Building standards in individual titles of the California Code of Regulations other than the California Building Standards Code shall have no force or effect after January 1, 1985.

#### **18944. References to code in agency regulations**

State agencies shall adopt regulations for publication in the titles of the California Code of Regulations containing other regulations of the agency to identify, by reference, the appropriate sections of the California Building Standards Code containing those building standards for which that agency has enforcement responsibility.

#### **18944.5. Agencies bound by code**

The code shall be binding on the state and other public agencies, including federal agencies to the extent permitted by federal law, in the same manner as it binds private parties or entities.

#### **18944.7. State historical building code; alternative regulations and standards; maintenance as separate and distinct part or portion**

The alternative building regulations and building standards authorized under the State Historical Building Code (Part 2.7 (commencing with Section 18950) of Division 13) which have been published in Part 8 of the California Building Standards Code shall be maintained as a separate and distinct part or portion of the California Building Standards Code pursuant to that title.

#### **18944.11. State agency considerations for use of nonwater-supplied urinals**

On or before July 1, 2009, any state agency that adopts or proposes building standards for plumbing systems shall consider developing building standards that would govern the use of nonwater-supplied urinals for submission to the California Building Standards Commission in accordance with Sections 17921.4 and 18930.

**18944.18. Authority to repeal Section 1226.7 of the 2013 Triennial Edition of the California Building Standards Code; repeal of regulations relating to abortion services in primary care clinics**

- (a) The California Building Standards Commission, in conjunction with the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, shall repeal Section 1226.7 of the 2013 Triennial Edition of the California Building Standards Code, including all cross-references to that section, as soon as possible. The Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development is granted emergency regulatory authority to implement this subdivision. Notwithstanding the Administrative Procedure Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code), the regulations adopted under this subdivision shall become permanent without further regulatory action.
- (b) The State Department of Public Health shall, no later than July 1, 2014, repeal the regulations relating to abortion services in primary care clinics contained in Article 5 (commencing with Section 75040) of Chapter 7 of Division 5 of Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations.

**18944.19. Building standards for short-term and long-term bicycle parking in multifamily residential buildings, hotels, and motels and nonresidential buildings**

- (a) Upon the next triennial update of the California Green Building Standards Code (Part 11 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations) that occurs on or after January 1, 2023:
  - (1) The Department of Housing and Community Development shall research and develop, and may propose for adoption, mandatory building standards for short-term and long-term bicycle parking in multifamily residential buildings, hotels, and motels.
  - (2) The commission shall research and develop, and may adopt, revised mandatory building standards for short-term and long-term bicycle parking in nonresidential buildings.
- (b) In developing the standards pursuant to paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (a), the Department of Housing and Community Development and the commission shall develop minimum mandatory bicycle parking standards using a method that is independent of the number of vehicle parking spaces.

**18944.21. Consideration of adoption of specified consensus safety standards; refrigerant**

- (a) Not later than July 1, 2023, the commission shall consider whether to adopt the most recent versions of the following consensus safety standards, to be codified and published in the California Building Standards Code: American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) Standard 15-2019; ASHRAE Standard 34-2019; Underwriters Laboratories (UL) 60335-2-89 2nd edition; and UL 60335-2-40 3rd edition.
- (b) If the commission does not adopt all of the consensus safety standards listed in subdivision (a), then effective July 1, 2024, no state or local building code provision shall prohibit the use of a refrigerant listed as acceptable under Section 7671k of the federal Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 7401 et seq.), provided each use is installed in accordance with the most recent version of ASHRAE Standard 15 and the applicable listing standard, such as UL 60335-2-89 or UL 60335-2-40.

### **18944.30. Low-cost, energy-efficient housing; legislative findings and declarations**

The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

- (a) There is an urgent need for low-cost, energy-efficient housing in California.
- (b) The cost of conventional lumber-framed housing has risen due to a shortage of construction-grade lumber.
- (c) Straw is an annually renewable source of cellulose that can be used as an energy-efficient substitute for stud-framed wall construction.
- (d) The state has mandated that the burning of rice straw be greatly reduced.
- (e) As a result of the mandated burning reduction, growers are experimenting with alternative straw management practices. Various methods of straw incorporation into the soil are the most widely used alternatives. The two most common methods are nonflood incorporation and winter flood incorporation. Economically viable off-farm uses for rice straw are not yet available.
- (f) Winter flooding of rice fields encourages the natural decomposition of rice straw and provides valuable waterfowl habitat. According to the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture component of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, in California's Central Valley, over 400,000 acres of enhanced agricultural lands are needed to restore the depleted migratory waterfowl populations of the Pacific flyway. Flooded rice fields are a key and integral part of the successful restoration of historic waterfowl and shorebird populations.
- (g) Winter flooding of rice fields provides significant waterfowl habitat benefits and should be especially encouraged in areas where there is minimal potential to impact salmon as a result of surface water diversions.
- (h) An economically viable market for rice straw bales could result from the use of rice straw bales in housing construction.
- (i) Practicing architects and engineers have determined that the statutory guidelines established by Chapter 941 of the Statutes of 1995 contain specific requirements that they believe are either unnecessary or detrimental. Some of the requirements are considered costly and severely restrict the development of straw-bale housing.
- (j) Statutory guidelines for the use of straw-bale housing would significantly benefit energy conservation, natural resources, low-cost housing, agriculture, and fisheries in California.
- (k) Tests and experience with straw-bale construction demonstrate that it is a strong, durable, and thermally superior building system that deserves a larger role in modern construction.

### **18944.31. Operation of guidelines within city or county; changes or modifications**

- (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the guidelines established by this chapter shall apply to the construction of all structures that use baled straw as a loadbearing or nonloadbearing material within any city or county that adopted the guidelines established by Chapter 941 of the Statutes of 1995 prior to January 1, 2002. This requirement shall not preclude the city or county from making changes or modifications to the guidelines pursuant to subdivision (b). Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the guidelines established by this chapter shall not become operative in a city or county that has not adopted the guidelines prior to January 1, 2002, unless and until the legislative body of the city or county makes an express finding that the application of these guidelines within the city or county is reasonably necessary because of local conditions and the city or county files a copy of that finding with the department.
- (b) A city or county may, by ordinance or regulation, make any changes or modifications in the guidelines contained in this chapter as it determines are reasonably necessary because of



local conditions, provided the city or county files a copy of the changes or modifications and the express findings for the changes or modifications with the department. No change or modification of that type shall become effective or operative for any purpose until the finding and the change or modification has been filed with the department.

- (c) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as increasing or decreasing the authority to approve or disapprove of alternative construction methods pursuant to the State Housing Law, Part 1.5 (commencing with Section 17910) or the California Building Standards Code, Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations.
- (d) It is the intent of the Legislature that the statutory guidelines of this chapter serve as an interim measure pending the evaluation of straw bales as a construction material through the normal processes used for the testing and listing of building materials, the determination of construction standards, and the adoption of those materials and construction standards into the California Building Standards Code.

### **18944.32. Structures deviating from conventional framing requirements; supervision by licensed architect or civil engineer**

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as an exemption from Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 5500) of, or Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 6700) of, Division 3 of the Business and Professions Code relative to preparation of plans, drawings, specifications, or calculations under the direct supervision of a licensed architect or civil engineer, for the construction of structures that deviate from the conventional framing requirements for wood-frame construction.

### **18944.33. Definitions**

For the purposes of this chapter, the following terms are defined as follows:

- (a) "Bales" means rectangular compressed blocks of straw, bound by strings or wire.
- (b) "Department" means the Department of Housing and Community Development.
- (c) "Flakes" means slabs of straw removed from an untied bale. Flakes are used to fill small gaps between the ends of stacked bales.
- (d) "Laid flat" refers to stacking bales so that the sides with the largest cross-sectional area are horizontal and the longest dimension of this area is parallel with the wall plane.
- (e) "Laid on edge" refers to stacking bales so that the sides with the largest cross-sectional area are vertical and the longest dimension of this area is horizontal and parallel with the wall plane.
- (f) "Loadbearing" refers to plastered straw-bale walls that bear the dead and live loads of the roof and any upper floor.
- (g) "Nonloadbearing" refers to plastered straw-bale walls that bear only their own weight, such as infill panels within some type of post and beam structure.
- (h) "Plaster" means lime, gypsum, lime cement, or cement plasters, as defined by the California Building Standards Code, or earthen plaster with fiber reinforcing.
- (i) "Straw" means the dry stems of cereal grains left after the seed heads have been substantially removed.

### **18944.35. Bales**

- (a) Bales shall be rectangular in shape.
- (b) Bales used within a continuous wall shall be of consistent height and width to ensure even distribution of loads within wall systems.
- (c) Bales shall be bound with ties of either polypropylene string or baling wire. Bales with broken or loose ties shall not be used unless the broken or loose ties are replaced with ties which restore the original degree of compaction of the bale.

- (d) The moisture content of bales, at the time of installation, shall not exceed 20 percent of the total weight of the bale. Moisture content of bales shall be determined through the use of a suitable moisture meter, designed for use with baled rice straw or hay, equipped with a probe of sufficient length to reach the center of the bale, and used to determine the average moisture content of five bales randomly selected from the bales to be used.
- (e) Bales in loadbearing walls shall have a minimum calculated dry density of 7.0 pounds per cubic foot. The calculated dry density shall be determined after reducing the actual bale weight by the weight of the moisture content.
- (f) Where custom-made partial bales are used, they shall be of the same density, same string or wire tension, and, where possible, use the same number of ties as the standard size bales.
- (g) Bales of various types of straw, including wheat, rice, rye, barley, oats, and similar plants, shall be acceptable if they meet the minimum requirements of this chapter for density, shape, moisture content, and ties.

#### **18944.40. Bale walls**

- (a) Straw-bale walls, when covered with plaster, drywall, or stucco, shall be deemed to have the equivalent fire resistive rating as wood-frame construction with the same wall-finishing system.
- (b) Minimum bale wall thickness shall be 13 inches.
- (c) Buildings with loadbearing bale walls shall not exceed one story in height without substantiating calculations and design by a civil engineer or architect licensed by the state, and the bale portion of the loadbearing walls shall not exceed a height-to-width ratio of 5.6:1 (for example, the maximum height for a wall that is 23 inches thick would be 10 feet 8 inches).
- (d) The ratio of unsupported wall length to thickness, for loadbearing walls, shall not exceed 15.7:1 (for example, for a wall that is 23 inches thick, the maximum unsupported length allowed is 30 feet).
- (e) The allowable vertical load (live and dead load) on top of loadbearing bale walls plastered with cement or lime cement plaster on both sides shall not exceed 800 pounds per linear foot, and the resultant load shall act at the center of the wall. Straw-bale structures shall be designed to withstand all vertical and horizontal loads, and the resulting overturning and base shear, as specified in the latest edition of the California Building Standards Code. Straw-bale walls plastered with cement or lime cement plaster on both sides shall be capable of resisting in-plane lateral forces from wind or earthquake of 360 pounds per linear foot.
- (f) Foundations shall be designed in accordance with the California Building Standards Code to accommodate the load created by the bale wall plus superimposed live and dead loads. Supports for bale walls shall extend to an elevation of at least six inches above adjacent ground at all points, and at least one inch above floor surfaces.
- (g)
  - (1) Bale walls shall be anchored to supports to resist lateral forces, as approved by the civil engineer or architect. This may be accomplished with one-half inch reinforcing bars embedded in the foundation and penetrating the bales by at least 12 inches, located along the center line of the bale wall, spaced not more than two feet apart. Other methods as determined by the engineer or architect may also be used.
  - (2) Nonbale walls abutting bale walls shall be attached by means of one or more of the following methods or by means of an acceptable equivalent:

- (A) Wooden dowels of 5/8 inch minimum diameter and of sufficient length to provide 12 inches of penetration into the bale, driven through holes bored in the abutting wall stud, and spaced to provide one dowel connection per bale.
  - (B) Pointed wooden stakes, a minimum of 12 inches in length and 1 1/2 inches by 3 1/2 inches at the exposed end, fully driven into each course of bales, as anchorage points.
  - (C) Bolted or threaded rod connection of the abutting wall, through the bale wall, to a steel nut and steel or plywood plate washer, a minimum of 6 inches square and a minimum thickness of 3/16 of an inch for steel and 1/2 inch for plywood, in a minimum of three locations.
- (3)
- (A) Bale walls and roof bearing assemblies shall be anchored to the foundation where necessary, as determined by the civil engineer or architect, by means of methods that are adequate to resist uplift forces resulting from the design wind load. There shall be a minimum of two points of anchorage per wall, spaced not more than 6 feet apart, with one located within 36 inches of each end of each wall.
  - (B) With loadbearing bale walls, the dead load of the roof and ceiling systems will produce vertical compression of the walls. Regardless of the anchoring system used to attach the roof bearing assembly to the foundation, prior to installation of wall finish materials, the nuts, straps, or cables shall be retightened to compensate for this compression.
- (h)
- (1) A moisture barrier shall be used between the top of the foundation and the bottom of the bale wall to prevent moisture from migrating through the foundation so as to come into contact with the bottom course of bales. This barrier shall consist of one of the following:
    - (A) Cementitious waterproof coating.
    - (B) Type 30 asphalt felt over an asphalt emulsion.
    - (C) Sheet metal flashing, sealed at joints.
    - (D) Another building moisture barrier, as approved by the building official.
  - (2) All penetrations through the moisture barrier, as well as all joints in the barrier, shall be sealed with asphalt, caulking, or an approved sealant.
  - (3) There shall also be a drainage plane between the straw and the top of the foundation, such as a one inch layer of pea gravel.
- (i)
- (1) For nonloadbearing walls, bales may be laid either flat or on edge. Bales in loadbearing bale walls shall be laid flat and be stacked in a running bond, where possible, with each bale overlapping the two bales beneath it. Overlaps shall be a minimum of 12 inches. Gaps between the ends of bales which are less than 6 inches in width may be filled by an untied flake inserted snugly into the gap.
  - (2) Bale wall assemblies shall be held securely together by rebar pins driven through bale centers as described in this chapter, or equivalent methods as approved by the civil engineer or architect.
  - (3) The first course of bales shall be laid by impaling the bales on the rebar verticals and threaded rods, if any, extending from the foundation. When the fourth course has been laid, vertical #4 rebar pins, or an acceptable equivalent long enough to extend through all four courses, shall be driven down through the bales, two in each bale, located so that they do not pass through the space between the ends of any two bales. The layout of these rebar pins shall approximate the layout of the rebar pins extending from the foundation. As each subsequent course is laid, two pins, long enough to extend through that course and the three courses immediately below it, shall be driven down through

each bale. This pinning method shall be continued to the top of the wall. In walls seven or eight courses high, pinning at the fifth course may be eliminated.

- (4) Alternative pinning method to the method described in paragraph (3): when the third course has been laid, vertical #4 rebar pins, or an acceptable equivalent, long enough to extend through all three courses, shall be driven down through the bales, two in each bale, located so that they do not pass through the space between the ends of any two bales. The layout of these rebar pins shall approximate the layout of the rebar pins extending from the foundation. As each subsequent course is laid, two pins, long enough to extend through that course and the two courses immediately below it, shall be driven down through each bale. This pinning method shall be continued to the top of the wall.
  - (5) Only full-length bales shall be used at corners of loadbearing bale walls.
  - (6) Vertical #4 rebar pins, or an acceptable alternative, shall be located within one foot of all corners or door openings.
  - (7) Staples, made of #3 or larger rebar formed into a "U" shape, a minimum of 18 inches long with two 6-inch legs, shall be used at all corners of every course, driven with one leg into the top of each abutting corner bale.
- (j)
- (1) All loadbearing bale walls shall have a roof bearing assembly at the top of the walls to bear the roof load and to provide the means of connecting the roof structure to the foundation. The roof bearing assembly shall be continuous along the tops of loadbearing bale walls.
  - (2) An acceptable roof bearing assembly option shall consist of two double 2-inch by 6-inch, or larger, horizontal top plates, one located at the inner edge of the wall and the other at the outer edge. Connecting the two doubled top plates, and located horizontally and perpendicular to the length of the wall, shall be 2-inch by 6-inch cross members, spaced no more than 72 inches center to center, and as required to align with the threaded rods extending from the anchor bolts in the foundation. The double 2-inch by 6-inch top plates shall be face-nailed with 16d nails staggered at 16-inch o.c., with laps and intersections face-nailed with four 16d nails. The crossmembers shall be face-nailed to the top plates with four 16d nails at each end. Corner connections shall include overlaps nailed as above or an acceptable equivalent, such as plywood gussets or metal plates. Alternatives to this roof bearing assembly option shall provide equal or greater vertical rigidity and provide horizontal rigidity equivalent to a continuous double 2 by 4 top plate.
  - (3) The connection of roof framing members to the roof plate shall comply with the appropriate sections of the California Building Standards Code.
- (k) All openings in loadbearing bale walls shall be a minimum of one full bale length from any outside corner, unless exceptions are approved by an engineer or architect licensed by the state to practice. Wall or roof load present above any opening shall be carried, or transferred, to the bales below by one of the following:
- (1) A frame, such as a structural window or door frame.
  - (2) A lintel, such as an angle-iron cradle, wooden beam, or wooden box beam. Lintels shall be at least twice as long as the opening is wide and extend a minimum of 24 inches beyond either side of the opening. Lintels shall be centered over openings.
  - (3) A roof bearing assembly designed to act as a rigid beam over the opening.
- (l)
- (1) All weather-exposed bale walls shall be protected from water damage. No vapor impermeable barrier may be used on bale walls, and the civil engineer or architect may design the bale walls without any membrane barriers between straw and plaster, except as specified in this section, in order to allow natural transpiration of moisture from the bales and to secure a structural bond between plaster and straw.

- (2) Bale walls shall have special moisture protection provided at all horizontal surfaces exposed to the weather. This moisture protection shall be installed in a manner that will prevent water from entering the wall system.

(m)

- (1) Interior and exterior surfaces of bale walls shall be protected from mechanical damage, flame, animals, and prolonged exposure to water. Bale walls adjacent to bath and shower enclosures shall be protected by a moisture barrier.
- (2) Cement stucco shall be reinforced with galvanized woven wire stucco netting or an equivalent, as approved by the building official. The reinforcement shall be secured by attachment through the wall at a maximum spacing of 24 inches horizontally and 16 inches vertically, unless substantiated otherwise by a civil engineer or architect.
- (3) Where bales abut other materials, the plaster or stucco shall be reinforced with galvanized expanded metal lath, or an acceptable equivalent, extending a minimum of 6 inches onto the bales.
- (4) Earthen and lime-based plasters may be applied directly onto bale walls without reinforcement, except where applied over materials other than straw.

(n)

- (1) All wiring within or on bale walls shall meet all provisions of the California Electrical Code. Type "NM" or "UF" cable may be used, or wiring may be run in metallic or nonmetallic conduit systems.
- (2) Electrical boxes shall be securely attached to wooden stakes driven a minimum of 12 inches into the bales, or an acceptable equivalent.
- (o) Water or gas pipes within bale walls shall be encased in a continuous pipe sleeve to prevent leakage within the wall. Where pipes are mounted on bale walls, they shall be isolated from the bales by a moisture barrier.
- (p) Bales shall be protected from rain and other moisture infiltration at all times until protected by the roof of the structure.

#### **18944.41. Sections inoperative when building standards become effective after approval by California Building Standards Commission with respect to baled straw**

Sections 18944.30, 18944.31, 18944.33, 18944.35, and 18944.40 shall become inoperative when building standards become effective after approval by the California Building Standards Commission pursuant to Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 18935) that permit the construction of structures that use baled straw as a loadbearing or nonloadbearing material and that are safe to the public.

#### **18945. Right to appeal**

- (a) Any person adversely affected by any regulation, rules, omission, interpretation, decision, or practice of any state agency respecting the administration of any building standard may appeal the issue for resolution to the commission.
- (b) If any local agency having authority to enforce a state building standard and any person adversely affected by any regulation, rule, omission, interpretation, decision, or practice of such agency respecting such building standard both wish to appeal the issue for resolution to the commission, then both parties may appeal to the commission. The commission may accept such appeal only if the commission determines that the issues involved in such appeal have statewide significance.

**18946. Hearing; reference; decision**

Except as provided in Section 18947, the commission may hear the appeal itself, or by designating a member of the commission to be a hearing officer, or may refer the appealing parties to an advisory panel, a committee, or to a hearing officer appointed by the Office of Administrative Hearings, wherein the hearing officer designated by the commission or appointed by the Office of Administrative Hearings, should, where possible, possess some expertise in the technical aspects of the appeal. If a referral is made, the panel, committee, or hearing officer may make an investigation and conduct hearings as they deem appropriate, provided that all interested agencies or parties shall have a full and fair opportunity to be heard. A proposed written decision shall be submitted to the commission which the commission may adopt, adopt as modified, or reject. The commission shall render its decision or interpretation in writing.

**18947. Appeal to occupational safety and health appeals board**

Where the appeal issue results from the enforcement of a standard for occupational safety and health by an inspector of the Division of Occupational Safety and Health of the Department of Industrial Relations, the employer shall appeal directly to the Occupational Safety and Health Appeals Board, and the appeal shall be conducted pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 6600) of Part 1 of Division 5 of the Labor Code. Such an appeal, if sent to the commission in error, shall be forwarded immediately to the Occupational Safety and Health Appeals Board. The date of receipt of any such appeal by the commission shall be considered the date of filing for purposes of meeting the filing time requirements of Section 6600 of the Labor Code.

**18948. Responsibility for enforcement and administration**

The responsibility for the enforcement and administration of building standards shall remain in the state or local agency specified by other provisions of law.

**18948.1. Availability of rules and regulations**

- (a) Written rules and regulations by a local enforcement agency to clarify the application of the California Building Standards Code shall be made available to the public upon request.
- (b) A local enforcement agency may charge a fee to cover the costs of making copies of the written rules and regulations described in subdivision (a).

**18949. Fee schedule**

The commission shall establish a schedule of fees for appeals in an amount sufficient to pay its costs of administration and hearing appeals.

**18949.1. State Architect; transfer of responsibilities to commission**

Any responsibilities of the State Architect to adopt regulations relating to building standards are hereby transferred to the commission.

**18949.2. State Fire Marshal; formal rule making process; transfer of duties to commission; fire and life safety standards; development; review; modification**

- (a) Any responsibilities of the State Fire Marshal to adopt, through a formal rulemaking process as provided in Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code, relating to building standards, including, but not limited to, Sections 13108, 13143, 13143.6, and 13211, are hereby transferred to the commission.

- (b) The State Fire Marshal shall remain the state agency responsible for developing building standards to implement the state's fire and life safety policy. In its role as the fire and life safety standard developing agency, the State Fire Marshal shall continue its existing activities and forums designed to facilitate compromise and consensus among the various individuals and groups involved in development of the state's codes related to fire and life safety.
- (c) The state's fire and life safety building standards, as developed by the State Fire Marshal and as adopted by the commission, shall continue to be based on the state's fire and life safety policy goals and mandates as they existed prior to the enactment of this chapter and as they are amended.
- (d) The role of the commission in reviewing and adopting fire and life safety building standards shall be strictly limited to a technical review of those standards, through a process integrated with the technical review of all other state building standards, and a determination as to whether those standards conform to the requirements of Section 18930 commonly known as the "nine point criteria."
- (e) The commission may not rewrite or modify any fire or life safety building standard without the express mutual agreement of the State Fire Marshal. If the State Fire Marshal does not agree with the modification of a fire or life safety building standard as proposed by the commission, the authority of the commission shall be limited to disapproval of the standard, pursuant to the "nine point criteria" in Section 18930.

#### **18949.3. Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development; transfer of duties to commission**

Any responsibilities of the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development to adopt regulations relating to building standards, including, but not limited to, responsibilities specified in Division 12.5 (commencing with Section 15000), are hereby transferred to the commission.

#### **18949.4. State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission; submissions of standards for review and approval; time schedule**

The State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission shall submit building standards to the commission for review and approval pursuant to Section 18930 in accordance with the time schedule established by the California Building Standards Commission.

#### **18949.5. Department of Housing and Community Development; transfer of duties to commission**

Any responsibilities of the Department of Housing and Community Development to adopt regulations relating to buildings standards are hereby transferred to the commission.

#### **18949.6. Procedure for adoption of standards and administrative regulations**

- (a) The commission shall adopt regulations setting forth the procedure for the adoption of building standards and administrative regulations that apply directly to the implementation or enforcement of building standards.
- (b) Regulatory adoption shall be accomplished so as to facilitate the triennial adoption of the specified model codes pursuant to Section 18928.
- (c) The regulations shall allow for the distribution of proposed building standards and regulatory changes to the public for review in compliance with the requirements of the rulemaking provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code) and for the acceptance of responses from the public.

**18949.7. State Department of Public Health; transfer of duties to commission; exception; health facilities**

Any responsibilities of the State Department of Public Health to adopt regulations relating to building standards are hereby transferred to the commission, except that the commission shall not adopt any regulation without the concurrence of the State Department of Public Health. Nothing in this section shall be construed to change the current process for adopting regulations relating to building standards of health facilities, as defined in Section 1250.

**18949.25. Construction inspector**

For purposes of this chapter, "construction inspector" means any person who is hired or contracted by a local agency in a temporary or permanent capacity for the purpose of inspecting construction for structural, seismic safety, fire and life safety, or building system requirements of adopted uniform codes or standards, as applied to residential, commercial, or industrial buildings.

**18949.26. Plans examiner**

For purposes of this chapter, "plans examiner" means any person who is hired or contracted by a local agency in a temporary or permanent capacity for the purpose of performing construction plan review for structural, seismic safety, fire and life safety, or building system requirements of adopted uniform codes or standards, as applied to residential, commercial, or industrial buildings.

**18949.27. Building official**

For purposes of this chapter, "building official" means the individual invested with the responsibility for overseeing local code enforcement activities, including administration of the building department, interpretation of code requirements, and direction of the code adoption process.

**18949.28. Experience and certification requirements; exemptions**

- (a) All construction inspectors, plans examiners and building officials who are not exempt from the requirements of this chapter pursuant to subdivision (b), or previously certified, shall complete one year of verifiable experience in the appropriate field, and shall, within one year thereafter, obtain certification from a recognized state, national, or international association, as determined by the local agency. The area of certification shall be closely related to the primary job function, as determined by the local agency.
- (b) Any person who is currently and has continuously been employed as a construction inspector, plans examiner, or building official for not less than two years prior to the effective date of this section shall be exempt from the certification provisions of this section, unless and until that person obtains employment as a construction inspector, plans examiner, or building official with a different employer.
- (c) Nothing in this article is intended to prohibit a local agency from prescribing additional criteria for the certification of construction inspectors, plans examiners, or building officials.
- (d) Nothing in this chapter, as it relates to construction inspectors, plans examiners, or building officials, shall be construed to alter the requirements for licensure, or the jurisdiction, authority, or scope of practice, of architects pursuant to Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 5500) of Division 3 of the Business and Professions Code, professional engineers pursuant to Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 6700) of Division



3 of the Business and Professions Code, or land surveyors pursuant to Chapter 15 (commencing with Section 8700) of Division 3 of the Business and Professions Code.

#### **18949.29. Continuing education**

- (a) All construction inspectors, plans examiners, and building officials shall complete a minimum of 45 hours of continuing education for every three-year period, with at least eight hours regarding disability access requirements pursuant to subdivision (d). A local government may charge or increase inspection fees to the extent necessary to offset any added costs incurred in complying with this section.
- (b) Providers of continuing education may include any organizations affiliated with the code enforcement profession, community colleges, or other providers of similar quality, as determined by the local agency.
- (c) For purposes of this section, "continuing education" is defined as that education relating to the enforcement of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, and any other locally enforced building and construction standards, including, but not limited to, the model uniform codes adopted by the state. When a local agency selects a model code organization as a provider of continuing education or certification programs regarding the enforcement of a model code adopted by the state, the local agency shall give preference to the organization responsible for promulgating or drafting that model code.
- (d) Continuing education regarding disability access requirements shall include information and practical guidance concerning requirements imposed by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336; 42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 et seq.), state laws that govern access to public facilities, and federal and state regulations adopted pursuant to those laws. Continuing education provided pursuant to this subdivision shall be presented by trainers or educators with knowledge and expertise in these requirements.

#### **18949.30. Application of chapter**

This chapter does not apply to a registered professional engineer, licensed land surveyor, or licensed architect rendering construction inspection services, plan examination services, or building official services within the scope of his or her registration or licensure, except that this chapter applies to a registered professional engineer, licensed land surveyor, or licensed architect who is an employee of a local agency. This chapter does not apply to a construction inspector or plans examiner employed by any city or county fire department or district providing fire protection services.

#### **18949.31. Local agencies; costs and fees**

The local agency shall bear the costs of certification, certification renewal, and continuing education, as mandated by this chapter. The local agency may impose fees, including, but not limited to, fees for construction inspection and plan checks, which may be used to cover the costs of compliance with this chapter. A local agency's actual costs of compliance with this chapter may include, but are not limited to, training and certification courses, certification exam and renewal fees, employee salary during training and certification courses, and mileage and other reimbursable costs incurred by the employee. The fees imposed to cover the costs of compliance with this chapter shall reflect these actual costs, and are not limited by Chapter 5 of Division 1 of Title 7.