



14717 BURIN AVENUE • LAWNDALE, CALIFORNIA 90260 • (310) 973-3230

Dear Applicant:

The State of California has adopted the 2007 California Building Codes. These codes go into effect on January 1, 2008, and affect all cities, counties and local jurisdictions in the State. In addition, these new codes may directly affect the project that you currently have on file with the Planning Department in the City of Lawndale unless you have applied for a building permit prior to January 1, 2008.

By state law, all building codes adopted by the state will be effective on the local level on January 1, 2008. On this date the City of Lawndale will have to enforce the state adopted codes which have been incorporated with local amendments into the 2008 Los Angeles County Building, Mechanical, Plumbing, Electrical and Fire Codes. Copies of these codes are available for review at City Hall in the City Clerk's office.

The Building Code changes **can significantly affect your project**. For example, one such change in the code includes required one-hour fire walls on habitable residential structures less than 5 feet from a property line, and the requirement that no windows be installed on that wall.

If your project has already been approved through the site plan review process and/or by discretionary approval of the Planning Commission, **you are strongly advised to submit plans for Planning approval and Building Permit application before January 1, 2008 if you would like to be able to apply under the current codes and not be subject to the 2008 changes**. If you do not apply before this date, your project could be subject to significant revisions which may require your proposal being re-evaluated by Planning Staff and/or the Planning Commission.

If your submittal has not yet been scheduled or approved, begin a discussion between designer/architect and owner to review how these changes will impact your project. If you are a designer or architect you are encouraged to receive training in this new code if you have not already done so. Details of training resources are included at the conclusion of this letter. Please start changes to your design which will reflect the changes in the Building Code. Planning will continue to seek design articulation in walls at the 3-foot side-yard setback, including architectural details and even reflective faux windows.

You are invited to visit the counter and receive advice from our Plan Check Engineer, his hours in the City of Lawndale are Tuesdays between 8-11 AM. However, in the week of December 24, 2007-January 1, 2008 both Tuesdays are

holidays (Christmas and the New Year) so City Hall will be closed on those Tuesdays. As an alternative, for that particular week you can call the Lomita office at (310)534-3760 to ask the plan checker any questions you may have about your project. HOWEVER, THE Lomita Office will NOT accept any plans for submittal. All plan submittals WILL HAVE TO BE made at the City of Lawndale, building and safety department. We will be accepting plans for plan check except the days we are closed. The plan check engineer will be at the City of Lawndale on January 3rd, 2008 from 8:00a.m. thru 11:00a.m ONLY.

A summary of standards can be obtained from the Planning Department. Our summary is not intended to replace review of the Building Code changes.

If you have questions regarding your project, please contact Planning staff at the above phone number. Staff strongly suggests that you contact us if your project has been approved or you are preparing to submit plans for building permit processing.

Thank you for your time.



Otis Ginoza
Community Development Director
City of Lawndale

Resources to understanding the new codes:

A number of vendors on the internet are available to you to buy the new codes. You can also buy from ICC's bookstore at www.ICCSAFE.org

A number of resources are available to you for training venues. Check the training calendars of ICC, www.ICCSAFE.org and CALBO, www.CALBO.org.

In addition, many professional organizations, such as AIA, local ICC chapters and community colleges are offering training classes throughout the state.

For practical and up-to-date technical questions, interpretations, checklists and code-related topics dealing with the new codes, visit the "Building Code Discussions Group" (BCDG) at: <http://bcodes.infopop.cc/eve>

Additional resources for training information:
<http://www.icbolabc.org/seminars.htm>
<http://www.naffainc.com/>
http://www.ladbs.org/about_us/about_us.htm

**BRIEF SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO THE 2007
CALIFORNIA BUILDING CODE
(RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES)**

One and Two Family Dwellings

- 1) **Rise and run of stairs** – Maximum allowable rise is 7¾ inches, minimum allowable run is 10 inches – existing stairs can be replaced in kind in some circumstances. (The current code allows 8” maximum rise, 9” minimum run.) (Sec. 1009.3)
- 2) **Projections into required stairway** are allowed up to 4 ½”, below the handrail. (Current code allows only 2½ inches.) (Sec. 1012.7)
- 3) **Guards (formerly guardrails)** are required to be 42” high in all occupancies. On the open side of stairs, a 34-38” high guard is allowed when the top rail also serves as a handrail. (The current code allows 36” high guardrails.) (Sec. 1013.1)
- 4) **Spiral stairs** may be used as a second exit within dwelling units without limitation to size of floor area served. (Existing code limited floor area served to 400 square feet.) (Sec 1009.80)
- 5) **Light and ventilation** requirements are reduced – Required light is now based on 8% of the floor area; required ventilation is based on 4% of floor area. Mechanical ventilation is permitted in lieu of natural ventilation. (The current code requirement is 10% for natural light and 5% for natural ventilation.) (Sec. 1205.2 and 1203.4)
- 6) **Minimum heating requirement** is now 68 degrees at a point 3’ above the floor. (Current code is 70 degrees). (Sec. 1204.1)
- 7) **Required minimum distance for un-rated walls and unprotected openings from property line is now 5 feet or more.** If closer than 3’, walls are required to be one hour and no openings are permitted. When the wall is located between 3’ - 5’ to the property line, protected and unprotected openings of up to 25% of the area of the wall are allowed.

Openings are required to be protected with a ¾ hour rated assembly.

Openings less than 1296 square inches, and height and width less than 54" respectively, may be protected with steel frames with ¼ inch wired glass. (Current code allows unprotected openings more than 3' from property lines). (Tables 704.8 and 715.5)

- 8) **Emergency Egress and rescue window** - Minimum required square footage for the window is reduced from 5.7 square feet to 5.0 square feet for grade floor openings. All other required dimensions are the same as current code. (Sec. 1026.2)
- 9) **Doors** – The minimum clear width for required egress doors is 32" with a height of 80". (Clarifies current code requirement.) (Sec. 1008.1.1)
- 10) **Required wall rating between the garage and living space** may be protected with ½" Type X drywall. (Current code requires 5/8" type X drywall.) (Sec. 406.1.4)
- 11) **Minimum kitchen gross floor area** is now 50 sq. ft. with a minimum clearance of 3' between counters and appliances or counters and walls. (Current code has no minimum floor area or clearance). (Sec. 1208.3 and 1208.1)
- 12) **Attic access opening** – Minimum dimensions reduced to 20" x 30" net clear opening. (Current code requires 22" x 30" opening.) (Sec. 1209.2)
- 13) **Exit from 3rd story no longer required (R-3 only)** – Only one exit required regardless of the number of stories or how many square feet per story. (Current code requires 2nd exit for 3rd story over 500 sq. ft.) (Sec. 1019.2 #2)
- 14) **Minimum ceiling heights** for storage and laundry rooms have been established at 7'0", the same as for kitchens and bathrooms. Ceiling heights for occupiable and habitable spaces remains at 7'6". (Current code is silent on storage and laundry rooms). (Sec. 1208.2)