

Chapter 12.10 RESIDENTIAL CODE

12.10.010 Adoption of the California Residential Code.

The 2022 California Residential Code, contained in the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 2.5, published by the California Building Standards Commission and the International Code Council, which incorporates and amends the 2021 International Residential Code 2021 Edition, is hereby adopted. There is one copy of said code on file in the office of the Building Official for use and examination by the public.

12.10.020 Amendments.

The 2022 California Residential Code referred to in Section 12.10.10 is adopted, together with Chapter 1 of the 2022 California Residential Code, with the following amendments to read as follows:

Chapter 3 Section R301.1.3.2 is deleted and replaced to read as follows, based upon the express finding of necessity set forth in section 9.B.1. of this Ordinance.

R301.1.3.2 Wood frame structures. The building official shall require construction documents to be approved and stamped for structural compliance by a California licensed architect or engineer for all dwellings of wood frame construction more than one story in height located in Seismic Design Category D0, D1, D2, or E.

Chapter 3 Section R313.1 and Section R313.2 are deleted and replaced to read as follows, based upon the express finding of necessity set forth in section 9.B.2. of this Ordinance.

Section R313.1 is amended to read as follows:

R313.1 Townhouse automatic fire sprinkler systems. An automatic residential fire sprinkler system shall be installed in accordance with National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) Standard 13D in all new townhouses and in existing townhouses, when additions are made that increase the building area to more than the allowable Fire-Flow Appendix B, Tables B105.1(1) and B105.1(2) of the 2022 California Fire Code, and/or additions exceeding fifty (50) percent of the existing living area (existing square foot calculations shall not include existing basement) and/or additions exceeding seven hundred and fifty (750) square feet. When automatic fire sprinkler systems are required by this section, all associated attached garages shall be included. Additions over fifty (50) percent and/or seven hundred and fifty (750) square feet as referenced above, shall be treated as a new structure regarding installation of fire sprinkler systems. For the purpose of this section, removal of roof framing with associated exterior walls down to, or below the subfloor/slab shall be included in the above calculations. Therefore, the following shall apply:

The obligation to provide compliance with these fire sprinkler regulations may not be evaded by performing a series of small additions undertaken over a three-year period. The permit issuance dates of past additions where these regulations were in effect shall be used for determining compliance.

- a. Any submittal for building permits which exceed fifty (50) percent and/or seven hundred and fifty (750) square feet of existing floor areas (area calculations shall not include existing basement floor areas and any non-habitable floor areas i.e., garages) during the three-year period shall comply with fire sprinkler regulations.

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- b. No waiver shall be granted from compliance with fire sprinklers.

Section R313.2 is amended to read as follows:

R313.2 One and two-family dwellings automatic fire sprinklers systems. An automatic residential fire sprinkler system shall be installed in accordance with National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) Standard 13D in all new one and two-family dwellings and in existing dwellings, when additions are made that increase the building area to more than the allowable Fire-Flow Appendix Tables B105.1(1) and B105.1(2) of the 2022 California Fire Code, and/or additions exceeding fifty (50) percent of the existing living area (existing square foot calculations shall not include existing basement) and/or additions exceeding seven hundred and fifty (750) square feet. When automatic fire sprinkler systems are required by this section, all associated garages shall be included. Additions over fifty (50) percent and/or seven hundred and (750) square feet as referenced above, shall be treated as a new structure regarding installation of fire sprinkler systems. For the purpose of this section, removal of roof framing with associated exterior walls down to, or below the subfloor/slab shall be included in the above calculations. Therefore, the following shall apply:

The obligation to provide compliance with these fire sprinkler regulations may not be evaded by performing a series of small additions undertaken over a three-year period and/or two California Building Standards Code Cycles. The permit issuance date of past additions where these regulations were in effect shall be used for determining compliance.

- a. Any submittal for building permits which exceed fifty (50) percent and/or seven hundred and fifty (750) square feet of existing floor areas (area calculations shall not include existing basement floor areas and any non-habitable floor areas i.e., garages) during the three-year period shall comply with fire sprinkler regulations.
- b. No waiver shall be granted from compliance with fire sprinklers.

Exceptions:

1. Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit, provided that all of the following are met:
 - 1.1. The unit meets the definition of an Accessory Dwelling Unit as defined in the Government Code Section 65852.2.
 - 1.2. The existing primary residence does not have automatic fire sprinklers.
 - 1.3. The accessory detached dwelling unit does not exceed 1,200 square feet in size.
 - 1.4. The unit is on the same lot as the primary residence.
 - 1.5. The unit meets all apparatus access and water supply requirements of Chapter 5 and Appendix B of the 2022 California Fire Code.

Chapter 6 Section R602.10.4.3.1 and Table R602.10.3 (3) footnote "i" are new sections added to read as follows, based upon the express finding of necessity set forth in section 9.B.3. of this Ordinance.

Amend Section R328.7 to read as follows:

R328.7 Fire detection. Rooms and areas within dwelling units, basements and attached garages in which ESS are installed shall be protected by smoke alarms in accordance with Section R314. A heat detector, listed and interconnected to the smoke alarms, shall be installed in locations

within dwelling units and attached garages where smoke alarms cannot be installed based on their listing.

ESS installed in Group R-3 and townhomes shall comply with the following:

1. Rooms and areas within dwellings units, sleeping units, basements and attached garages in which ESS are installed shall be protected by smoke alarms in accordance with Section R314.
2. A listed heat alarm interconnected to the smoke alarms shall be installed in locations within dwelling units, sleeping units, and attached garages where smoke alarms cannot be installed based on their listing.

Exceptions:

1. A listed heat detector may be used in place of a heat alarm, so long as it is interconnected with devices that provide an audible alarm at all sleeping areas.
2. A fire sprinkler associated with an approved automatic sprinkler system that triggers an audible alarm upon activation of the waterflow switch, may be used in place of a heat alarm.

Add a new subsection R602.10.4.3.1 to read as follows:

R602.10.4.3.1 Limits on methods GB and PCP. In Seismic Design Categories D0, D1, and D2, Method GB is not permitted for use as intermittent braced wall panels, but gypsum board is permitted to be installed when required by this Section to be placed on the opposite side of the studs from other types of braced wall panel sheathing. In Seismic Design Categories D0, D1, and D2, the use of Method PCP is limited to accessory structures.

Add a new footnote "i" to the end of CRC Table R602.10.3(3), after the five footnotes (a) - (f) currently shown, to read:

- g. In Seismic Design Categories D0, D1, and D2, Method GB is not permitted, and the use of Method PCP is limited to accessory structures.
- C. Only the following Appendix Chapters from the California Residential Code are adopted:
1. Appendix H, Patio Covers.

12.10.030 Correction of violations.

[Correction of violations shall be pursuant to Chapter 12.08 of the Los Altos Municipal Code.](#)

~~The issuance or granting of a permit or approval of plans under this Title shall not prevent the Administrative Authority from thereafter requiring the correction of errors in such plans and specifications, or from preventing construction operations being carried on thereunder when in violation of this Code or of any other law, or from revoking any certificate of approval when issued in error.~~

~~A. The 2022 California Residential Code referred to in Section 12.10.010 is adopted, together with Chapter 1 of the 2022 California Residential Code, with the following amendments and certain Appendix Chapters as follows:~~

~~Chapter 4, Division II, Section 105.5 is deleted and replaced to read as follows, as an administrative clarification, and does not modify a building standard pursuant to California Health & Safety Code Sections 17958, 17958.7 and/or 18941.5 This amendment establishes administrative standards for the effective enforcement of the building standards in the City of Los Altos:~~

~~**Expiration.** Every permit issued shall become invalid unless the work on the site authorized by such permit is commenced within 12 months after its issuance, or if the work authorized on the site by such permit is suspended or abandoned for a period of 12 months after the time the work is commenced. The building official is authorized to grant, in writing, one or more extensions of time for periods not more than 180 days each.~~

~~Before such work can be recommenced, a new permit shall be first obtained, and the fee therefore shall be one-half (1/2) the amount required for a new permit for such work provided no changes have been made, or will be made, in the original plans and specifications for such work; and provided, further, that such a suspension or abandonment has not exceeded one year. In order to renew action on a permit after one year expiration, the permittee shall be required to pay original full building permit fees.~~

~~For the purpose of this section, failure to progress a project to the next level of required inspection shall be deemed abandonment of the project.~~

~~For those projects that are residential only, the Building Official may modify expired permit fees when the owner can demonstrate that the project has received all required inspections, except for the Building Division final. The fee amount of one hundred dollars (\$100) shall be required within ten (10) working days of notice and the project shall achieve a final inspection within 30 days of payment received, otherwise expired permit fees as noted above shall be required.~~

~~B. Work commencing before permit issuance. Whenever any work for which a permit is required by the California Code of Regulations as adopted in this chapter has been commenced without first obtaining said permit, the building official shall charge a minimum of two times and/or up to four times, for repeat offenders, on all applicable plan review and permit (inspection) fees related to the required permit(s), including, but not limited to, building permits (including, but not limited to electrical, fire, mechanical and plumbing); sign permits and demolition permits. The legal registered owner of said property shall obtain a building permit within 30 days of any violation letter or stop-work notice issued by the City of Los Altos. The payment of the increased fee(s) shall not relieve any person from fully complying with the requirements of this code, other codes adopted by the city, or the requirements of the zoning ordinance. Failure to comply with the provisions of this chapter may also subject the violator to any other penalties, sanctions or remedies provided elsewhere in this code. This provision shall not apply to emergency work when the administration authority determines that such work was urgently necessary and that it was not practical to obtain a permit therefore prior to the commencement of such work. In such cases, a permit shall be obtained as soon as it is practical to do so; and if there is an unreasonable delay (exceeding two working days) in obtaining such permit, a fee as provided in this section shall be charged.~~

~~Once building permits are issued pursuant to work commenced without required permits; it is the responsibility of the permit holder to obtain their first required building inspection within thirty (30) days from permit issuance date and shall receive a project final inspection within a one-year period. Any further delays will require additional building permit fees charged again in the original~~

~~amount with an additional 30-day extension. If the project continues past this deadline to obtain a required building inspection, Administration Citation Fees and/or other legal remedies allowed by local, or state law shall be imposed.~~

~~Failure to contact the Building Division within five business days of receiving the violation notice may result in Administration Citation Fees, Chapter 1.30 of the Los Altos Municipal Code.~~

~~(Ord. No. 2016-426, § 7, 11-8-2016; Ord. No. 2019-464, §§ 7, 8, 12-10-2019; Ord. No. 2022-487, §§ 7, 8, 11-29-2022)~~

~~Editor's note(s)—Ord. No. 2016-426, § 7, adopted November 8, 2016, repealed former § 12.10.030, and enacted a new § 12.10.030 as set out herein. Former § 12.10.030 pertained to definitions and derived from Ord. No. 2013-395, adopted December 10, 2013.~~

12.10.040 Fee refunds.

The building official may authorize refunding of any fee paid hereunder which was erroneously paid or collected.

The building official may authorize refunding of not more than eighty (80) percent of the permit fee paid when no work has been done under a permit issued in accordance with this code.

The building official may authorize refunding of not more than eighty (80) percent of the plan review fee paid when an application for a permit for which a plan review fee has been paid is withdrawn or canceled before any plan reviewing is done.

The building official shall not authorize refunding of any fee paid except on written application filed by the original permittee not later than one hundred eighty (180) days after the date of fee payment.