

ORDINANCE 2025-0031

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

December 2, 2025

An Ordinance Deleting Chapter 15.38 and Amending Various Provisions of Title 15 of the Sacramento City Code, Relating to the Adoption of Local Amendments to the California Building Standards Code

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:

SECTION 1.

In connection with the local amendments to the 2025 California Building Code, 2025 California Plumbing Code, 2025 California Residential Code, 2025 California Existing Building Code, and California Green Building Standards Code set forth below, and pursuant to California Health and Safety Code sections 17958, 17958.5, 17958.7, and 18941.5, the City Council finds and determines that:

- A. The amendments are reasonably necessary because of local climatic, geological, or topographical conditions.
- B. Under this adopting ordinance, specific amendments are established that are more restrictive than those adopted by the State of California under the State Buildings Standards Code, Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations.
- C. Express finding number 1: Climatic

Climate is one of the greatest contributors to fire behavior and other major emergency events because it cannot be controlled. In the summer, dry vegetation creates fire hazards.

The construction of homes within weed-covered rural areas and the presence of combustible weeds on vacant urban lots, coupled with windy conditions, create additional fire hazards. Sacramento has four distinct seasons: summer, winter, fall, and spring. The distinctions of these seasons are an attraction to the area and one reason why significant population growth has occurred. The population growth has impacted emergency service levels, causing a strain on emergency services, and the result is increased response times.

Sacramento has significant variations in weather patterns. Summers are arid and warm; winters are cool to freezing; fall and spring can bring any combination of weather

patterns together. It is this cyclical uncertainty that allows weather events such as the rapid melting of the Sierra snowpack to cause flooding in the low-lying valley areas of Sacramento. As rivers rise and fall with mountain runoff, access to common areas of recreation and boating is affected. The doubling of annual average rainfall called an "El Nino" event has occurred from time to time and causes the grass to mature and grow in excess of six feet high before it dries out. Ten square feet of land with this type of fuel exhibits an explosive force equivalent to one gallon of gasoline. Although rapid melting of the Sierra snowpack may cause flooding in low-lying valley areas, direct snowfall is rare and light in Sacramento.

Average yearly rainfall is approximately 19 inches. This rainfall normally occurs from October to April. Low-level fog is present throughout the winter months, which brings visibility to almost zero feet. The fog can also cause freezing and slick roadways and is a contributing factor to serious vehicle accidents.

During the summer months, there is generally no measurable precipitation. Temperatures for this dry period range from 70 to 112 degrees Fahrenheit and are frequently accompanied by light to gusty winds. The relative humidity during summer months ranges from 2% to 30%, which is arid. The city contains many acres of grasslands, which, in conjunction with the dry and windy conditions, create a hazardous situation that has led to extensive grass and brush fires in recent years. More development is extending from the urban core into the grass-covered areas. Wind-driven fires can lead to serious consequences as occurred in similar areas of the state.

Based on this express finding, the following building standards in the 2025 California Building Standards Code are amended or added:

2025 California Plumbing Code section 312.4, Table 312.4, and section 1101.12.3; 2022 California Building Code, Appendix I; and 2025 California Residential Code, Appendix BF.

2025 Plumbing Code section 312.4 requires certain types of buried piping to be covered with a protective coating. Table 312.4 provides the allowable length of coated and wrapped buried ferrous gas or water pipes. 2025 California Plumbing Code section 1101.12.3 requires the rainfall rate for purposes of sizing roof drains, conductors, leaders, gutters, and storm sewers. 2025 California Building Code Appendix I and 2025 California Residential Code, Appendix BF address structural designs for patio covers.

D. Express finding number 2: Geological

Sacramento is subject to ground tremors from seismic events as the city is located in a Seismic Design Category D as determined by the American Society of Civil Engineers

Standard 7-22, which equates to a high risk of earthquakes. The high-risk seismic zone is defined based on the proximity to known fault lines, soil type, and known mapped spectral accelerations. Large portions of Sacramento have very poor soil conditions, including liquefiable soil. Additionally, the very low elevations are subject to a very high-water table.

The agricultural history for many parts of Sacramento has resulted in many areas having caustic or “hot” soil conditions due to the heavy use of fertilizers, pesticides, insecticides, etc. Unprotected metal pipe, when buried in these areas, is subject to corrosion and premature failure.

Based on this express finding, the following building standards in the 2025 California Building Standards Code are amended or added:

2025 California Plumbing Code section 312.4, Table 312.4 and 2025 California Existing Building Code section 304.3, Appendix A Chapter A1 and Appendix A Chapter A3.

2025 Plumbing Code section 312.4 requires certain types of buried piping to be covered with a protective coating. Table 312.4 provides the allowable length of coated and wrapped buried ferrous gas or water pipes.

2025 California Existing Building Code section 304.3 establishes criteria and compliance methods for the earthquake evaluation and design for retrofit of existing buildings.

2025 California Existing Building Code Appendix A Chapter A1 and Appendix A Chapter A3 provide seismic strengthening provisions for existing buildings.

E. Express finding number 3: Topographical

Sacramento is impacted by several topographical features, including major rivers, minor rivers and creeks, aqueducts, lakes, sloughs, natural parkways, open space, bridges and overpasses, freeways, railroad tracks including light rail, drainage canals, sprawling industrial facilities such as Proctor and Gamble, and a former Armed Services Depot. Traffic has to be channeled around several of these topographical features and limitations, which creates traffic congestion and delays emergency response.

Heavy traffic congestion on the city’s major streets is a barrier to timely response for fire and emergency vehicles. Some roadways are expected to double their traffic flow within the next ten years. In the event of an accident or other emergency at one of the key points of intersection between a road and river or freeway, sections of the city could be isolated or response time could be sufficiently slowed so as to increase the risk of injury

or damage.

Preservation of wetland areas, natural parkways, riparian corridors along rivers and streams, vernal pools, open space and endangered species habitat all have contributed to access problems as well as exemption from vegetation abatement programs. These situations, though environmentally important, increase the demands on the fire service due to the extreme fire hazard created by fuel loading and limited access.

Sacramento contains agricultural areas at the outlying city boundaries. Specific requirements are necessary because of the location of these agricultural buildings. Sacramento contains a significant inventory of existing buildings and structures. Maintaining a minimum sound transmission class rating between tenant walls and floors is desirable.

Based on this express finding, the following building standards in the 2025 California Building Standards Code are amended or added:

2025 California Building Code section 502.1.1; 2025 California Residential Code section R308.1.2; 2025 California Building Code, Appendix C as modified in section 15.20.030; 2025 California Residential Code, Appendix BO; and 2025 California Residential Code, Appendix BG.

Both 2025 California Building Code section 502.1.1 and California Residential Code section R319.1.2 concern address illumination. 2025 California Building Code, Appendix C addresses agricultural buildings; 2025 California Residential Code, Appendix BO addresses existing buildings and structures. 2025 California Residential Code, Appendix BG addresses sound transmission.

- F. The City Council finds and determines that strict compliance with state and local standards and laws in existence as of the effective date of this ordinance would prevent, hinder, or delay the mitigation of the effects of a declared shelter crisis. Accordingly, the city is adopting California Building Code Appendix Q and California Residential Code Appendix CJ to address the needs created by the shelter crisis.
- G. As provided in California Health and Safety Code sections 17958, 17958.5, 17958.7, and 18941.5, the City Council finds and determines that the changes or modifications to state building standards affecting residential units in this ordinance are substantially equivalent to changes or modifications that were previously filed by the city with the California Building Standards Commission and were in effect as of September 30, 2025.

SECTION 2.

Section 15.04.040 of the Sacramento City Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

15.04.040 Definitions.

When used in this code, the following terms shall be construed as defined in this section:

“Building official,” “administrative authority,” “director,” “enforcing authority,” and “manager” mean the chief building official.

“CBC” means the California Building Code, 2025 Edition, Volumes 1 and 2.

“CEBC” means the California Existing Building Code, 2025 Edition.

“CEC” means the California Electrical Code, 2025 Edition.

“CEnC” means the California Energy Code, 2025 Edition.

“CGC” means the California Green Building Standards Code, 2025 Edition.

“CHBC” means the California Historical Building Code, 2025 Edition.

“Chief building official” means the manager of the building division or authorized representatives.

“CMC” means the California Mechanical Code, 2025 Edition.

“CPC” means the California Plumbing Code, 2025 Edition.

“CRC” means the California Residential Code, 2025 Edition.

“CRSC” means the California Referenced Standards Code, 2025 Edition.

“CWUIC” means the California Wildland-Urban Interface Code, 2025 Edition.

“Electric vehicle charging station” or “charging station” means any level of electric vehicle supply equipment station that is designed and built in compliance with Article 625 of the CEC and delivers electricity from a source outside an electric vehicle into a plug-in electric vehicle.

“Permit” means a permit required by this code or required by any other code or ordinance enforced by the manager.

“Responsible party” means any person, business, company or entity, and the parent or legal guardian of any person under the age of 18 years, who has done any act for which an administrative penalty may be imposed.

“Shell building” means any building or structure consisting only of floors (or slab), walls and a roof, the interior of which is to be completed at a later date.

“Small residential rooftop solar energy system” means a solar energy system that is no larger than 10 kilowatts alternating current nameplate rating or 30 kilowatts thermal; conforms to all applicable state fire, structural, electrical, and other building codes as adopted or amended by the city; conforms to the requirements of California Civil Code section 714, subdivision (c)(3); is installed on a single-unit dwelling or duplex dwelling; and does not exceed the maximum legal building height.

SECTION 3.

Section 15.04.050 of the Sacramento City Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

15.04.050 Adoption of the 2025 California Building Standards Code.

The building standards included in the following parts of the 2025 California Building Standards Code, Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, are adopted by reference and incorporated in this code, except as expressly amended or superseded by the provisions of this code:

- A. The CBC, including Appendices C, I, and Q, which is based on and which amends the provisions of the 2024 International Building Code, as published by the International Code Council.
- B. The CRC, including Appendices BF, BO, BG, and CJ, which is based on and which amends the provisions of the 2024 International Residential Code, as published by the International Code Council.
- C. The CEC, which is based on and which amends the provisions of the 2023 National Electrical Code, as published by the National Fire Protection Association.
- D. The CMC, which is based on and which amends the provisions of the 2024 Uniform Mechanical Code, as published by the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials.
- E. The CPC, which is based on and which amends the provisions of the 2024 Uniform Plumbing Code, as published by the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials.
- F. The CEnC.

- G. The CWUIC.
- H. The CHBC.
- I. The CEBC, including Appendix A Chapter A-1 and Appendix A Chapter A-3, which amends the provisions of the 2024 International Existing Building Code, as published by the International Code Council.
- J. The CGC.
- K. The CRSC.

SECTION 4.

Section 15.08.010 of the Sacramento City Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

15.08.010 Permits—Permit procedures.

Except as provided in this code, all permits shall be obtained as required by and in accordance with the 2025 California Building Standards Code as adopted in this title 15.

SECTION 5.

Section 15.08.040 of the Sacramento City Code is amended to read as follows:

15.08.040 Permits—Exemptions.

No permit is required for work that is exempt from the requirement to obtain a permit as provided for in the 2025 California Building Standards Code as adopted herein.

SECTION 6.

Section 15.08.060 of the Sacramento City Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

15.08.060 Permits—Applications.

In addition to the requirements of the 2025 California Building Standards Code as adopted in this title 15, the following shall be included with an application for a permit:

- A. All declarations, authorizations, and notices required by this code or state law including the licensed contractor declaration, the owner-builder declaration, the workers' compensation declaration, the declaration regarding construction lending agency, and the authorization to act on property owner's behalf, as

applicable and fully executed; and

- B. A plan review fee, where plans are required, unless a plan review fee is paid at the time of pre-application plan review; provided, that
 - 1. If the plan review fee is to be based on an hourly rate and not the estimated value of the work to be done, a deposit shall be paid at the time of application submittal and the balance shall be billed as plan review is conducted. The plan review fee shall be paid in full prior to issuance of the building permit; and
 - 2. If the plans submitted are incomplete or are changed so as to require additional plan review, an additional plan review fee shall be charged.

SECTION 7.

Section 15.08.070 of the Sacramento City Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

15.08.070 Permits—Permit issuance.

In addition to the requirements of the 2025 California Building Standards Code as adopted in this title 15, the following provisions shall apply to the issuance of a permit:

- A. When an owner-builder declaration has been executed with a permit application, no permit shall be issued until the notice to the property owner required under California Health and Safety Code section 19825 has been completed and signed by the owner of the property on which the proposed work is to be located and submitted to the chief building official.
- B. No permit shall be issued until the applicant has paid the building permit fee (inspection) and all other required fees (including the plan review fee), taxes, and other charges; provided, that if the building permit fee (inspection) is to be based on an hourly rate and not the estimated value of the work to be done, a deposit shall be paid at the time of permit issuance, and the balance shall be billed as inspections are conducted. The building permit fee (inspection) shall be paid in full prior to final inspection approval.
- C. Issuance of a building permit shall not entitle the permit holder to commence the work authorized by the permit unless and until the permit holder has obtained all other approvals required by, and has complied with, all other applicable laws, rules, and regulations relating to the proposed work.

SECTION 8.

Chapter 15.20 of the Sacramento City Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

Chapter 15.20 AMENDMENTS TO THE CALIFORNIA BUILDING CODE

15.20.010 Amendments to the CBC.

The CBC is amended as set forth in this chapter.

15.20.020 Catchlines of sections.

For the purposes of this chapter, and notwithstanding the provisions of section 1.04.060, the catchlines (or titles) of sections in this chapter shall be deemed to be part of such sections.

15.20.030 Local amendments to the CBC.

- A. Subsection 502.1.1 is added to the end of the CBC section 502.1 to read as follows:

502.1.1 Address Illumination. Addressing shall be illuminated at night in all new buildings. Address signs shall be internally or externally illuminated. When the luminance or the face of a sign is from an external source, it shall have an intensity of not less than 5.0 foot-candles. Internally illuminated signs shall provide equivalent luminance.

- B. CBC section 1208.5 is amended to read as follows:

1208.5 Efficiency dwelling units. Efficiency dwelling units shall comply with the following:

1. The unit's habitable space shall comply with sections 1208.1 through 1208.4. Notwithstanding section 1208.3, the unit shall be occupied by no more than two persons and have a minimum floor area of not less than 150 square feet (13.9 m²) of floor area.
2. The unit shall be provided with a separate closet.
3. For other than Accessible, adaptable dwelling units, the unit shall be provided with a kitchen sink, cooking appliance and refrigerator, each having a clear working space of not less than 30 inches (762 mm) in front. Light and ventilation conforming to this code shall be provided.

4. The unit shall be provided with a separate bathroom containing a water closet, lavatory and bathtub or shower.
- C. CBC Appendix C (agricultural buildings) section 104.1 is amended to read as follows:

C104.1 Exit facilities: Exits shall be provided in accordance with Chapter 10 and Chapter 11A or 11B as applicable.

SECTION 9.

Chapter 15.24 of the Sacramento City Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

Chapter 15.24 AMENDMENTS TO THE CALIFORNIA PLUMBING CODE

15.24.010 Amendments to the CPC.

The CPC is amended as set forth in this chapter.

15.24.020 Catchlines of sections.

For the purposes of this chapter, and notwithstanding the provisions of section 1.04.060, the catchlines (or titles) of sections in this chapter shall be deemed to be part of such sections.

15.24.030 Local amendments to the CPC.

- A. CPC section 312.4 is amended to read as follows:

Corrosion, Erosion, and Mechanical Damage. Each system of buried ferrous piping used for either potable water or gas supply shall have a protective coating of an approved type, machine applied and conforming to recognized standards. Field wrapping shall provide equivalent protection and is restricted to those short sections and fittings necessarily stripped for threading.

All buried ferrous piping shall be installed with cathodic protection. Private gas mains and laterals coming within the scope of the Federal Regulations for Pipeline Safety shall be designed and the installation supervised for compliance by a person qualified by experience and training in pipeline corrosion control methods. Supply piping for buildings shall be installed according to the same standards or by the use of Table 312.4 of this code.

When Table 312.4 is used, the piping system shall be installed according to the following requirements:

1. Galvanic anodes for cathodic protection of ferrous piping shall be buried not less than three feet below grade, and below the bottom of the pipe to be protected. They shall be not less than four feet horizontally from any buried metallic pipe. Before backfilling, the anode shall be flooded with a minimum of five gallons of water.

Connecting of the anode to the pipe, when made less than six inches above grade, shall be with a thermite weld. Connections six inches or more above grade may be made by the use of an approved electrical service grounding clamp.

2. Water supply piping shall be isolated at the connection of the utility or private tap from the water main and at each building foundation line adjacent to the full way shut- off valve.
3. Gas supply piping shall be isolated adjacent to each building foundation line or at the appliance when located outside the building and from the serving gas supplier's service equipment.
4. Approved isolation fittings shall be located a minimum of six inches above grade, except at the water tap.
5. Any piping laid in the same trench with pipe requiring cathodic protection shall be separated laterally a minimum of 12 inches, and piping installed diagonally above pipe requiring cathodic protection shall be separated vertically a minimum of six inches. All separations shall be maintained with clean earth in accordance with CPC section 314.

All piping regulated by this code and subject to undue corrosion, erosion or mechanical damage shall be protected in an approved manner.

- B. Table 312.4 is added to Chapter 3 of the CPC to read as follows:

Table 312.4. Anode Selection Chart

Allowable Length of Coated and Wrapped Buried Ferrous Gas or Water Pipe						
Pipe Size						
Anode Size	1/2"	3/4" & 1"	1-1/4" & 1-1/2"	2"	3"	4"
1 lb. anode	50 ft	-	-	-	-	-
3 lb. anode	150 ft	100 ft	50 ft	50 ft	-	-
9 lb. anode	500 ft	200 ft	200 ft	150 ft	100 ft	100 ft
17 lb. anode	-	500 ft	350 ft	300 ft	250 ft	150 ft
32 lb. anode	-	-	500 ft	500 ft	450 ft	350ft

C. Subsection 1101.12.3 is added to CPC section 1101.12 to read as follows:

For the purpose of sizing roof drains, conductors, leaders, gutters, and storm sewers, the rainfall rate used for calculations shall be 3 inches per hour.

SECTION 10.

Chapter 15.32 of the Sacramento City Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

Chapter 15.32 AMENDMENTS TO THE CALIFORNIA RESIDENTIAL CODE

15.32.010 Amendments to the CRC.

The CRC is amended as set forth in this chapter.

15.32.020 Catchlines of sections.

For the purposes of this chapter, and notwithstanding the provisions of section 1.04.060, the catchlines (or titles) of sections in this chapter shall be deemed to be part of such sections.

15.32.030 Local amendments to the CRC.

Subsection R308.1.2 is added to the end of the CRC Section R308.1 to read as follows:

R308.1.2 Address Illumination. Addressing shall be illuminated at night in all new buildings. Address signs shall be internally or externally illuminated. When the luminance or the face of a sign is from an external source, it shall have an intensity of not less than 5.0 foot-candles. Internally illuminated signs shall provide equivalent luminance.

SECTION 11.

Chapter 15.34 of the Sacramento City Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

Chapter 15.34 AMENDMENTS TO THE CALIFORNIA EXISTING BUILDING CODE

15.34.010 Amendments to the CEBC.

The CEBC is amended as set forth in this chapter.

15.34.020 Catchlines of sections.

For the purposes of this chapter, and notwithstanding the provisions of section 1.04.060, the catchlines (or titles) of sections in this chapter shall be deemed to be part of such sections.

15.34.030 Local amendments to the CEBC.

The following is added to the end of CEBC section 304.3:

A seismic evaluation of the building or structure shall be required where the total construction cost, not including cost of furnishings, fixtures and equipment, or normal maintenance for the building exceed 25 percent of the construction cost for the replacement of the existing building. The construction cost include the cost for prior building modifications that occurred after adoption of the 1995 California Building Code and that did not require seismic retrofit.

SECTION 12.

Chapter 15.38 of the Sacramento City Code is hereby deleted.


Adopted by the City of Sacramento City Council on December 2, 2025, by the following vote:

Ayes: Members Dickinson, Guerra, Jennings, Kaplan, Maple, Pluckebaum, Talamantes, Vang, and Mayor McCarty

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

Attest:  12/09/2025
Mindy Cuppy, City Clerk

The presence of an electronic signature certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy as approved by the Sacramento City Council.

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