

CHAPTER 7A (CRC 327)
Ignition Resistant Materials and Construction Methods

Frequently Asked Questions

1. When does the new ordinance apply to me?

The ordinance takes effect June 27, 2009. All building permit applications after this date will need to comply with the new regulations. Only if you have already received approval from the ASCC on a proposed project before June 27, 2009, then you are exempt from this ordinance.

2. I am proposing to add a family room to my existing house, does the whole house need to comply with the new ordinance?

No. Only the new family room would need to comply. The whole house would need to comply only if the addition combined with any remodel of the existing house affected 50% or more of the floor area or exterior wall plane surface. (See following diagram on floor area determination)

3. I am proposing to undertake a kitchen and bath remodel with no additional square footage, how will the new ordinance impact my project?

The ordinance would require that if any windows were replaced or added, that the window be insulated glass with the exterior pane tempered, or be glass block, or have a fire-resistance rating of 20 minutes.

4. I am considering re-roofing my existing house, what do I need to know?

All roofing shall have a Class A assembly rating. (This has been the standard of care in town since 2003.) In addition, if the roof profile allows a space between the roof covering and roof decking (i.e. barrel tile), the spaces shall be fire-stopped or have one layer of 72-pound mineral-surfaced cap sheet installed over the decking.

Roof gutters shall be provided with means to prevent the accumulation of leaves and debris in the gutter.

5. Can I have a shake roof?

Yes. A wood shake roof can be installed to meet the Class A assembly requirement. This will require that a layer of *Dens-deck* (a non-combustible sheathing material) or, a layer of 72-pound mineral-surfaced cap sheet be installed over the decking. The individual shakes would have a class B fire-treatment.

6. I need to replace a portion of my exterior siding, can I use the same materials?

It depends. Nonstructural repairs involving less than 10% of the exterior wall surface may be made of the same materials of which the structure is constructed.

7. Can I have wood siding?

Yes. But the siding would need to provide protection from the intrusion of flames and embers in accordance with the State Fire Marshal standard SFM 12-7A-1, or be fire-retardant wood.

8. I am planning to replace some of my windows, what will I have to do?

The windows need to be insulated glass with the exterior pane tempered, or be glass block, or have a fire-resistance rating of 20 minutes.

Only the windows that you intend to replace need to comply unless, you are planning a major addition/remodel. (See question No. 2.)

9. I need to repair my existing deck, will I need to comply with this ordinance?

Yes. Any replacement of the structural frame, (post, girder, beam, joist), needs to be fire-retardant-treated wood, heavy timber, or noncombustible. The nominal 2x decking boards may be cedar, redwood, iron-wood, *trex*, ... etc. The use of paints, coatings, stains, or other surface treatments are not an approved method of protection as required by this ordinance.

10. In addition to repairing my existing deck, I am planning to add 200 square feet, will I need to comply with this ordinance?

Yes. The deck and the addition will need to comply. (See questions No. 2 and 9.)

11. I am replacing my deck board-for-board, do I need to comply with the new ordinance?

Yes. (See question No. 9.)

12. Will decks need to be enclosed?

No.

13. Do I need to comply with the vegetation requirements of Chapter 7A?

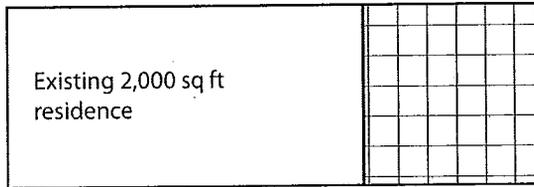
No. The Town Council did not adopt the vegetation clearance requirements of California Building Code, Chapter 7A. Chapter 7A requires that prior to building permit final approval, the property shall be in compliance with the vegetation clearance requirements prescribed in Public Resources Code 4291 and Government Code 51182.

The Town and Woodside Fire Protection District do ask that property owners maintain defensible space and provide fuel breaks and fuel reduction zones on their properties. Check the Town's website, www.portolavalley.net for the Moritz Arboricultural Consultants Fuel Hazard Assessment Study and Mapping for assistance with fuel management on your property.

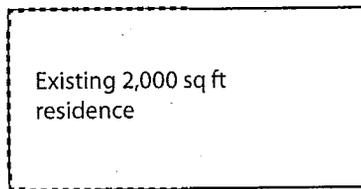
14. Can I plant small vegetation under existing decks to help screen the AC units?

Shrubs under decks are like a lit match under a fuse, there is no safe way to do such a thing. All plants under decks should be low ground covers. Safer shrubs are the ones with larger stem sizes, larger green leaves and no oils. Consider Toyon, coffee berry, silk tassel and holly leaf cherry. These should be kept a bit more on the green side with a little extra water in the summer and a green ground cover such as yerba buena and creeping snowberry that will keep the leaf litter moist and rotting.

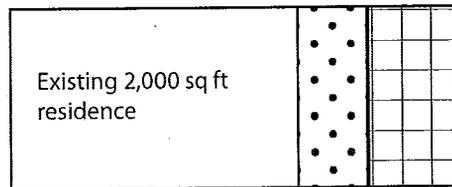
Examples of Projects That Require Compliance



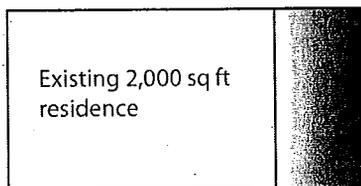
Scenario 1:
1,000 sq ft addition
Yes, 50% of floor area



Scenario 2:
50% of wall plane surface removed
Yes, 50% of wall plane surface



Scenario 3:
400 sq ft remodel and
500 sq ft addition
No, because it is 20% floor area of existing
and 25% of new sq ft



Scenario 4:
500 sq ft addition as second story
Yes, because of the structural changes
necessary on the first floor

Note: An existing 2,000 sq ft residence that is removed to its foundation and sub-floor would be captured under these provisions.

Definition of a New Building

A *new building* shall be defined as: A new structure or a substantial addition/remodel to an existing structure where the remodel combined with any additions to the structure affects 50% or more of the exterior wall plane surface or affects 50% or more of the floor area.

1. Where no studs remain, or, if some studs remain, the wall except for the studs has been stripped bare such that one can see through the wall, the wall affected by such changes shall be included in computing the amount of affected exterior wall plans surface for the purpose of applying this definition.
2. Where any structural changes are made in the building, such as walls, columns, beams, or girders, floor or ceiling joists and covering, roof rafters, roof diaphragms, foundations, piles or retaining walls or similar components, the floor area of all rooms affected by such changes shall be included in computing affected floor areas for purposes of applying this definition.