



Town of Portola Valley

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2022 CBC CHAPTER 7A and CRC R337 Materials and Methods for Construction in a Wildland Urban Interface

Frequently Asked Questions

1. When does the new ordinance apply to me?
The ordinance applies to all buildings and accessory structures and took effect January 1, 2023. All building permit applications after this date will need to comply with the new regulations.
2. What type of building and/or structure does the new ordinance apply to?
The ordinance applies to all newly constructed buildings, accessory structures and additions, alterations and additions that include alterations to an existing building for which a building permit(s) has been issued within any 12-month period that cumulatively affects 50% or more of the floor area, wall plane surface or a combination of floor area and wall plane.
3. I noticed the Ordinance uses the terms “buildings” and “structures”. What is the difference?
A building is a structure intended for supporting or sheltering an occupancy. An example of a building is a single-family home. A structure does not shelter an occupancy. An example of a structure is a fence or gazebo.
4. The Ordinance references “applicable buildings”, what are these and how do they differ from structures.
Applicable buildings are all buildings, including accessory buildings on a lot. The term “applicable building” helps define what requirements apply to buildings and what requirements apply to structures.
5. I want to build a shed. Is a shed a building or structure and what are the requirements?
A shed is considered an accessory building (sheds, chicken coops, etc.). The requirements for an accessory building are:

Accessory Building Size	Distance from a Property Line	Requirements
≤ 120 Sq. Ft.	>30 Ft.	No requirements
≤ 120 Sq. Ft.	≤ 30 Ft.	Required to comply with all of the Ordinance and CRC/CBC requirements
> 120 Sq. Ft.	N/A	Required to comply with all of the Ordinance and CRC/CBC requirements

6. My fence is falling down. What are the requirements for a new fence?
The first 10 feet of a fence attached to a building is required to be constructed of noncombustible material such as metal, concrete block or chain link. The fence can be constructed of any material after the first 10 feet. (Zoning regulations also apply.)
7. 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 square footage of the addition combined with the square footage of any remodel of the existing house exceeds 50% or more of the existing square footage of the house (Floor Area Percentage);**
 - **The square footage of the existing interior and exterior wall plane surface (length of wall X height of wall) that will be stripped bare of its covering so that a person can “see through the wall” due to the project exceeds 50% of the existing wall plane surface (Wall Area Percentage); or**
 - **When the combination of the Floor Area Percentage and the Wall Area Percentage exceeds 50%.**
8. 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:
- **The entire house will need to comply only if the remodel affects 50% or more of the Floor Area Percentage, Wall Area Percentage or the Floor Area Percentage and the Wall Area Percentage exceeds 50% (Please see answer to #2): or**
 - **All windows that are replaced or added, are required to be multipane glazing with a minimum of one tempered pane, glass block, or have a fire-resistance rating of 20 minutes.**
9. I am considering re-roofing my existing house. What do I need to know?
- **All roofing shall have a Class A assembly rating. All wood roofing including wood shakes or shingles regardless to their fire rating are prohibited.**
 - **Roof gutters shall be provided with means to prevent the accumulation of leaves and debris in the gutter.**
 - **If valley flashing is used, the valley flashing shall be not less than 0.019-inch (0.48 mm) (No. 26 galvanized sheet gage) corrosion-resistant metal installed over a minimum 36-inch wide underlayment consisting of one layer of No. 72 ASTM cap sheet running the full length of the valley.**
 - **If the roof profile allows a space between the roof covering and roof decking (i.e. barrel tile):**
 - **the spaces shall be constructed to prevent the intrusion of flames and embers (fire-stopped) or constructed to protect the combustible roof deck such as:**
 - **One layer of 72-pound mineral-surfaced cap sheet installed over the decking.**
 - **One inch of mineral wool board or noncombustible material is installed between the roofing material and the wood framing or roof deck;**
 - **A Class A fire rated roof underlayment, tested in accordance with ASTM E108.**

10. Can I have a shake roof?
No, wood roofing is prohibited including wood shakes or shingles regardless to their fire rating.
11. I would like to change my skylights, are there any restrictions?
Yes, a non-operable skylight is required to be multipane glazing with a minimum of one tempered pane or have a fire-resistance rating of 20 minutes. An operable skylight is required to be protected by a noncombustible mesh screen where they dimension of the openings shall not exceed 1/8 inch.
12. I need to replace a portion of my exterior siding. Can I use the same materials?
 - **Nonstructural repairs involving less than 10% of the exterior wall surface may be made of the same materials of which the structure is constructed.**
 - **Structural repairs or repairs of 10% or greater require the siding be replaced with a noncombustible siding.**
13. Can I have wood siding?
New siding is required to be noncombustible such as stucco, metal or fiber-cement based products.
14. I am planning to replace some of my windows. What will I have to do?
Only the windows that you intend to replace need to comply unless, you are planning a major addition/remodel. (See question No. 2.) The new windows need to be:
 - **Multipane glazing with a minimum of one tempered pane;**
 - **Glass block, or**
 - **Have a fire-resistance rating of 20 minutes.**
15. I am planning to replace some of my exterior doors. What will I have to do?
The new doors are required to:
 - **Have exterior surface or cladding with noncombustible material or ignition resistant material;**
 - **Be constructed of solid core wood having stiles and rails not less than 1 3/8 inches thick with interior field panel thickness no less than 1 1/4-inches thick; or**
 - **Have an exterior door assembly (door and door frame) with a fire-resistance rating of not less than 20 minutes; and**
 - **If the door has glazing the glazing must be multipane glazing with a minimum of one tempered pane, glass block, or have a fire-resistance rating of 20 minutes.**
16. I need to repair my existing deck. Will I need to comply with this ordinance?
If the repair to the deck affects less than 50% of the area of the existing deck, the repair can be made like in kind.

If the repair to the deck affects 50% or more of the area of the existing deck the following is required:

- Decks less than four feet above the ground are required to be enclosed from the underside of the deck to grade with solid, noncombustible or ignition resistant materials.
- Decks four or more feet above the ground are not required to be enclosed.
- The walking surfaces of the deck (deck boards) are required to be ignition resistant or noncombustible material including stairs and guardrails.

17. In addition to repairing my existing deck, I am planning to add new square footage. Will I need to comply with this ordinance?

The new deck addition is required to comply. The existing deck and the addition will need to comply if the addition combined with any remodel of the existing deck affects 50% or more of the area of the existing deck. (please see question #16 for decking requirements)

18. I am replacing my deck boards (decking material). Do I need to comply with the new ordinance?

Yes. The walking surfaces of the deck (deck boards) are required to be ignition resistant or noncombustible material including stairs and guardrails.

19. Will decks need to be enclosed?

Yes. Decks less than four feet above the ground are required to be enclosed to grade using noncombustible material or ignition resistant materials.

20. 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 or California Residential Code, Section R337. However, applicants are required to comply with requirements of Woodside Fire Protection District, which may change from time to time.

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 for the Moritz Arboricultural Consultants [Fuel Hazard Assessment Study](#) and [Mapping](#) for assistance with fuel management on your property.