

APPENDIX 5

WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE REQUIREMENTS (WUI)

On January 1, 2008 Chapter 7A of the California Building Code became effective. These regulations are variously referred to as SRA (State Responsibility Area), WUI, or exterior wildfire exposure. The code section referenced in each case is CBC Chapter 7A.

These requirements apply to new single family dwellings, guest houses, and second units. New buildings include newly constructed buildings and replacement buildings when the entire structure is replaced, including the foundation. The requirements do not apply to accessory structures such as detached garages, pool houses, storage buildings, barns, etc. At this time manufactured homes are exempt.

WUI requirements went into effect in two phases with the first phase becoming effective on December 1, 2005.

Phase one included:

Roof coverings, valleys and gutters
Attic and rafter bay ventilation

Phase two (Jan 2008) included the items in phase one and the following:

Eave and soffit protection
Exterior wall and opening protection
Decking
Appendage and underfloor protection

Roof coverings, valley and gutters. Roof coverings shall be Class 'A' per Sonoma County Code. Valley flashings when provided shall be minimum 26 gauge galvanized sheet metal installed over 36" wide underlayment of #72 cap sheet running the full length of the valley. Gutters shall be provided with screens to prevent accumulation of leaves and debris.

Attic and rafter bay ventilation. Roof and attic vents shall resist the intrusion of flame and embers into the attic area or shall be protected by corrosion-resistant, noncombustible wire mesh with ¼" or smaller mesh. Note: building code does not allow mesh smaller than ⅛".

Vents shall not be installed in eaves and soffits unless it can be demonstrated that they are capable of resisting the intrusion of flame and embers.

Eave and soffit protection. Eaves and soffits shall be protected by ignition-resistant or noncombustible construction on the exposed underside.

Exterior wall and opening protection. Exterior walls shall be approved noncombustible or ignition-resistant material, heavy timber, or log wall construction. Exterior wall coverings shall extend from the top of the foundation to the roof, and terminate at 2" nominal solid wood blocking between rafters at all roof overhangs or eave enclosures.

Exterior wall vent openings shall be protected by corrosion-resistant, noncombustible wire mesh with openings of 1/8" to 1/4".

Exterior glazing and glazed openings in exterior doors shall have a minimum of one tempered pane, or have a fire resistive rating of 20 minutes, or be of glass block.

Exterior doors shall be of approved noncombustible construction, or solid core wood having stiles and rails not less than 1 3/8" thick with interior field panel thickness not less than 1 1/4" thick, or have a minimum 20 minute fire resistive rating.

Garage vehicle doors may be noncombustible or fire-retardant treated wood.

Decking. Decking surfaces, stair treads, risers, and landings of decks, porches, and balconies where any portion of such surface is within 10' of the dwelling unit shall be constructed of: heavy timber, exterior fire-retardant-treated wood or approved noncombustible materials. Alternatively decking materials shall pass the performance requirements listed in CBC Chapter 7A.

Appendage and underfloor protection. The underside of cantilevered and overhanging appendages and floor projections shall maintain the ignition-resistant integrity of exterior walls, or the projection shall be enclosed to grade.

Buildings shall have all underfloor areas enclosed to grade with exterior walls that comply with this code. The complete enclosure of underfloor areas may be omitted where the underside of exposed floors, structural columns, beams and supporting walls are protected as required with exterior ignition-resistant material construction or be of heavy timber.

PERFORMANCE METHODS

The materials and methods listed above are not the complete list of options. For each category there are performance tested materials and methods that may be substituted. For additional information see CBC Chapter 7A or visit the Cal-Fire website at: <http://www.fire.ca.gov/>

For information on approved products Cal-Fire has a booklet entitled Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Products, available at:

<http://www.osfm.fire.ca.gov/strucfireengineer/pdf/bml/wuiproducts.pdf>