

# RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION IN SONOMA COUNTY

## INTRODUCTION

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### **A Building and Development Handbook for conventional Residential construction in the County of Sonoma** (Tenth Edition - February 2009)

A special Thanks and Acknowledgment to the Residential Construction Manual Team :

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CODE DEVELOPMENT IS AN EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS. BUILDING CODES AND OTHER LAWS AND ORDINANCES REGULATING CONSTRUCTION ARE CONTINUOUSLY REVISED AND UPDATED AT THE LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL LEVELS.

As a result of the process, the Permit and Resource Management Department cannot guarantee that the material presented herein will be accurate and applicable to future construction projects. **Information provided is intended to be informative and beneficial and shall be used at the permittee's risk.** Department staff should be consulted if questions arise.

The Permit and Resource Management Department contains the consolidated functions from the former Departments of Planning and Building Inspection; along with the Land Development, Environmental and Surveyor functions (previously a part of the Department of Transportation and Public Works), Fire Safe Standards compliance, Plan Checking, Land Use and the Enforcement components of the Environmental Health Division of Public Health, and the Drainage Review function from the Sonoma County Water Agency - providing "one-stop shopping" for County development applications.

The department performs the following services:

- Regulates model construction codes and a variety of State regulations including: energy, conservation, disabled access, sound attenuation, historical building code, fault zone and geotechnical reports, and flood plain management provisions.
- Evaluates and processes applications for development projects involving plan amendments, zone changes, subdivisions, use permits, zoning permits and recognition of older, historic subdivisions and parcelizations.
- Reviews plans and related documents, issues permits, and provides construction inspection services in the unincorporated area of the County of Sonoma and for County-owned buildings within the incorporated cities.
- Provides environmental review and documentation services, including EIR preparation on public projects and contract administration on private projects.
- Reviews plans and issues permits for connections to County operated water and sewer systems and for encroachments onto public roadways or County right-of-ways.
- Evaluates all public agency and private projects for consistency with the adopted General Plan and ensures compliance with State law regarding housing, noise, open space preservation, coastal protection, airport protection areas and surface mining and reclamation.
- Provides many special services such as the County Surveyor function, geothermal energy industry assistance, agricultural and farm labor housing assistance, census interpretation, and growth management.
- Provides staff support for the Planning Commission, the Board of Zoning Adjustment, the Landmarks Commission, the Airport Land Use Commission, and numerous public committees which advised these commissions or the Board of Supervisors on various land use issues.
- Provides the contract staffing services for the Sonoma County Abandoned Vehicle Abatement Service Authority.
- Enforces the various provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Map Act, and the Public Health Code where it applies to Land Use issues such as Well and Septic systems.
- Works with the public-based Director's Advisory Group (DAG), Land Use Advisory Panel (LUAP), and the Aggregate Resources Advisory Panels to help streamline permitting, improve customer service, and provide recommendations on aggregate resource management and departmental issues.

Questions, suggested additions or errors found within the manual should be addressed to the Customer Service Manager, PRMD, (707) 565-1900.

## Acknowledgments

We wish to express thanks to the many manufacturers, firms, trades associations, building inspection offices, model code groups, building material organizations and suppliers, and the United States government for valuable information and the detailed drawings they have provided. Permission to reproduce copyright material must be secured from the appropriate authors and/or publishers.

PRMD Staff  
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