



18-04 Exterior Wildfire Exposure Protection

Background

The City of Carmel-by-the-Sea, like most of California, is subject to wildland/urban interface fires that may threaten structures throughout the City. The State Fire Marshal's Office, and City of Carmel, have adopted regulations for protection of structures built in areas susceptible to wildland fires under CA Building Code Chapter 7A. Within the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea, wildfire exposure protection requirements have been adopted for both the general city area, as well as the area along the north and east sides of the City which have been classified as "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone". This SOG provides guidance on requirements for exterior wildfire exposure protection for structures built in the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea.

Citations

Carmel Municipal Code (CMC) Title 15, Buildings and Construction
2019 CA Fire Code (CFC) Chapter 5, 6, 7, and 9
2019 CA Building Code (CBC) Chapter 7A, Materials and Construction Methods for Exterior Wildfire Exposure.

Guidance

Exterior wildfire exposure protection within the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea is prescribed in Municipal Code Title 15, Buildings and Construction. Protective features include such active measures as combustible vegetation management and sprinkler systems; and passive protection features such as fire resistive roofing and building opening protection. The extent of protection is determined by the location of the property.

Throughout the City, the following wildfire exposure protection features are generally required:

- A Class A roofing assembly is required for all new roofs, and re-roofing projects involving the replacement of 25% or more of any existing roof (CMC 15.08.120)
- Spark arresters are required for all chimneys, incinerators, smokestacks or similar devices for conveying smoke or hot gasses to the outer air. (CBC 2801, CFC 603.6.6 - Carmel Muni. Code 15.55.100.18)
- Fire sprinkler systems are, with a few exceptions, required for all new construction, including both commercial and residential uses. (CFC 903.2; 903.2.8 as amended by CMC 15.55.100)
- Fire sprinkler systems are required to be incorporated in all existing structures to which additions, alterations or repairs are made that involve the addition, removal or replacement of fifty (50%) or greater of the linear length of the walls of the existing

building (exterior plus interior) within a five-year period; where repairs or alterations are made that exceed 25% of the current market value of buildings where the floor area exceeds 5000 sf or which are 40 or more feet or three or more stories in height; or where additions, alterations or repairs are made that involve the removal or replacement of 50 percent or greater of the linear length of walls of the building (exterior plus interior) within a one-year period shall meet the requirements for new construction of this code.

- Existing Group R, Division 3 buildings to which additions, alterations, or repairs are made that involve the removal or replacement of 50 percent or greater of the linear length of walls of the building (exterior plus interior) within a one-year period shall meet the requirements of new construction of this code.
- Maintenance of weeds, grass, vines, or other growth that is capable of being ignited and providing a path for fire to extend from the vegetation to structures.

Within the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, additional construction features are mandated. These typically include ignition resistant materials, spark protection for ventilation openings, and exterior window and door protection. Detailed requirements are contained in CBC Ch. 7A (2019 ed.) and in Carmel Municipal Code Titles 8 and 15.

