

CITY OF SUNNYVALE

RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS



December 2009

INTRODUCTION

The City of Sunnyvale has an international reputation for our streamlined building permit process and customer service. We were the first city in the country to provide a centralized building permit center for customer convenience. Established in 1984, the One-Stop Permit Center provides a single location where information is available for construction and development projects and where permits can be issued.

The One-Stop Permit Center is located at City Hall, 456 W. Olive Avenue and is generally open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday (except holidays). Following is a list of specific department availability:

| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Building Safety, Planning, and Public Works | 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. |
| Fire Prevention | 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. |
| Structural Engineering | 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. |

This book is designed to assist contractors and homeowners with guidelines and standard requirements for various types of repairs, remodels, additions, and new construction of single family homes. For additional questions or specific project information, please contact the Community Development Department at:

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Telephone | (408) 730-7444 |
| Building Division web site | www.SunnyvaleBuilding.com |
| Planning Division web site | www.SunnyvalePlanning.com |

In 1999, the City of Sunnyvale was also one of the first cities in the nation to offer building permit services on-line at the E-OneStop (www.e-onestop.net). The E-OneStop offers the following services, all available on demand 24/7:

- E-Permits - Obtain 17 various types of residential building permits on-line.
- Permit Histories - Find permit histories for both planning and building permits.
- Plan Check Status - View the status of plan checks and comments.
- Inspection Scheduling - Schedule building inspections on-line.
- Zoning Information - Get zoning, lot size, and flood zone for any property in Sunnyvale.

We continue to look for opportunities to improve our services and welcome suggestions from our customers. If you have any questions or comments, please contact us at (408) 730-7444 or by e-mail at building@ci.sunnyvale.ca.us.



Ali Fatapour, Chief Building Official

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GREEN BUILDING INFORMATION

GREEN BUILDING INFORMATION

The built environment has a profound impact on our natural environment, economy, health, and productivity. In the United States alone, buildings account for:

- 72% of electricity consumption,
- 39% of energy use,
- 38% of all carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions,
- 40% of raw materials use,
- 30% of waste output (136 million tons annually), and
- 14% of potable water consumption.

(Source: US Green Building Council)

What is a Green Building?

Green buildings are sited, designed, constructed, and operated to enhance the well-being of their occupants and support a healthy community and natural environment. In practical terms, green building is a whole-systems-approach to building that includes:

- Designing for livable communities
- Using sun and site to the building's advantage for natural heating, cooling, and daylighting
- Landscaping with native, drought-resistant plants and water-efficient practices
- Building quality, durable structures
- Reducing and recycling construction and demolition waste
- Insulating well and ventilating appropriately
- Incorporating durable, salvaged, recycled, and sustainably harvested materials
- Using healthy products and building practices
- Using energy-efficient and water-saving appliances, fixtures and technologies

When implemented holistically, these strategies serve to preserve our environment for future generations by conserving natural resources and protecting air and water quality. They provide benefits for us today by increasing comfort and well-being and helping to maintain healthy air quality. Finally, green building strategies are good for everyone's pocketbook by reducing maintenance and replacement requirements, reducing utility bills and lowering the cost of home ownership, and increasing property and resale values. *(Source: Build It Green)*

CITY OF SUNNYVALE GREEN BUILDING PROGRAM

On March 24, 2009, the City Council adopted green building standards for new construction, additions, and remodels of buildings. The new requirements will be effective for all projects that submit building permits on or after January 1, 2010. The purpose of these standards is to:

- implement sustainable development and construction practices that use natural resources in a manner that does not eliminate, degrade, or diminish their usefulness for future generations,

- enhance the public health and welfare by promoting the environmental and economic health of the city through the design, construction, maintenance, operation, and deconstruction of buildings and other site development, and
- Incorporate green building practices into all development projects.

BUILD IT GREEN CHECKLIST

The standard for residential building is the Build It Green program checklist. Build It Green (BIG) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote healthy, energy- and resource-efficient building practices in California. Additional information and the checklists are available on-line at www.builditgreen.org, the checklists are also available on <http://GreenBuilding.inSunnyvale.com>.

The BIG checklists provide a variety of green building measures that reduce the environmental impact of demolition, construction, and on-going operation of the building. The following table shows the minimum point level and verification necessary for various types of projects:

| Type of Project | Minimum Standard | Verification/Review Requirement | Voluntary Incentives |
|---|---|---------------------------------|---|
| New Construction | | | |
| ≤ 1,500 sq.ft. | GreenPoint Rated Checklist (no minimum points required) | Verified/Reviewed by City staff | -- |
| > 1,500 sq.ft. | GreenPoint Rated Checklist with 70 points minimum | Verified/Reviewed by City staff | Achieve 100 points, with Green Point Rater verification, and the project can increase lot coverage by 5%. |
| Remodel, Alteration, and Additions | | | |
| ≤ \$100,000 construction valuation* | -- | -- | -- |
| >\$100,000 construction valuation* | GreenPoint Rated Checklist (no minimum points required) | Verified/Reviewed by City staff | -- |

* Valuation per square foot of construction is determined in the annually adopted fee resolution.

The City has developed two “prescriptive” packages for the BIG New Home Construction checklist that are available to use for new home construction and major additions to existing homes. The packages were developed based on the checklist items that are typically incorporated based on standard construction practices, most cost-effective, and easy to accomplish. These prescriptive packages are intended to assist homeowners and architects that may not be familiar with the BIG program. Use of the prescriptive packages is not required, a project architect may select items from

the full BIG checklist to apply to specific projects as long as the point total achieves the minimum required.

REVIEW PROCESS FOR GREEN BUILDING REQUIREMENTS

The review of required green building features will be incorporated into the typical Design Review, building plan check, and building inspections processes. Following describes the green building submittal requirements:

- When submitting plans for the Design Review (see Planning Division section for more information), a preliminary BIG checklist showing the credits that are planned.
- When submitting for the building permit plan check, the finalized BIG checklist should be included and the plans should incorporate the checklist items as appropriate.
- During the building inspections, the green building measures will be verified by the building inspector.

