



BUILDING DIVISION MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

A permit is required for kitchen remodels that include the replacement of kitchen cabinets. A permit is not required for kitchen countertop replacement or re-facing of existing cabinets. If a permit is required, it shall be obtained prior to the start of the remodel.

BEFORE YOU START CONSTRUCTION: Take a photo of all four walls of the kitchen and have it available at the first inspection.

Following is a listing of the general requirements based on the 2022 California Building Code (CBC), 2022 California Residential Code (CRC), 2022 California Electrical Code (CEC), 2022 California Green Building Standards (CalGreen), and 2022 California Energy Efficiency Standards (CEES). Contact the Building Safety Division for any questions or additional information, including requirements for new/altered plumbing or mechanical (exhaust hood).

Electrical Requirements

Receptacles shall meet all of the following requirements: (CEC 210.8, 210.12, 210.19(A)(3), 210.23, 210.52, 210.52(C)(a) and (b), 406.12, 422.5, and 422.16(B)(4)).

- GFCI protection shall be provided for all countertop receptacles, receptacles within 6 feet of a sink (including below counter and behind an appliance), and for receptacles supplying dishwashers. The reset button for GFCI receptacles shall be installed in an accessible location (i.e. not behind an appliance).
- All outlets and devices (i.e. receptacles, lighting, hoods, etc.) in the kitchen shall be AFCI protected and tamper-resistant (TR).
- Receptacles shall be provided at all countertop areas with a minimum dimension of 12 inches.
- Countertop receptacles shall be located so that no point along the wall is more than 24 inches from a receptacle.
- Countertop receptacles shall be located no more than 20 inches above the countertop.
- Islands/peninsulas shall have at least one receptacle if the area of the countertop has a minimum of 9 square feet. A receptacle shall be provided for every additional 18 square feet.
- At least one receptacle shall be located within 2 feet of the outer end of the peninsula countertop.
- If outlets are to be installed below countertops, they shall be installed within 12 inches below the countertop surface.
- Electric stoves and ovens shall be supplied with a 40- or 50-amp branch circuit.
- Range hoods shall be permitted to be cord-and-plug-connected with a flexible cord identified as suitable for use on range hoods in the installation instructions of the appliance manufacturer, where all the following conditions are met:
 - The length of the cord is 18 inches to 4 feet.
 - Receptacles are located to protect against physical damage to the flexible cord.

- The receptacle is accessible.
- The receptacle is supplied by an individual branch circuit.
- The flexible cord is terminated with a grounding-type attachment plug.

Kitchen receptacles shall be supplied by circuits meeting all of the following requirements: (CEC 210.11(C)(1), 210.52(B)(1,2 and 3), 422.16).

- Countertop receptacles shall be supplied by a minimum of two 20-amp branch circuits.
- A dedicated circuit is required for cord and plug connected range exhaust hoods. Separate circuit may be required for the garbage disposal, dishwasher, and built-in microwave based on the manufacturer's requirements and the motor rating.
- Any new receptacles added in the dining area, breakfast room, pantry, or similar area shall be supplied by a 20-amp circuit, the countertop circuits may be used to supply these areas.
- The existing electrical panel may need to be upgraded, or a sub-panel added, if the requirements above cannot be accommodated.

Cabinet Requirements

- If installing a cabinet next to an existing fire rated wall/walls (i.e. between attached ADU, apartment units or townhomes, etc.) the integrity of the fire rated wall/walls construction shall be maintained (i.e., fire-blocking shall be installed in the wall/walls per R302.11 and R302.11.1 of the CRC and shall be constructed per CRC 302 Fire-Resistant Construction. Continuity of such fire-resistance-rated wall/walls shall be per R302.3 of the CRC. [i.e., Fire-resistance rated floor/ceiling and wall assemblies shall extend to and be tight against the exterior wall, and wall assemblies shall extend from the foundation to the underside of the roof sheathing]).
- A Fire Permit shall be required when remodeling structures that have existing fire sprinklers. A fire inspection shall be required prior to a building rough inspection all trades and a fire final inspection shall be required before a building final can be signed-off. Fire inspectors shall sign-off all fire inspections on the building permit.

Lighting Efficiency (CEES 150.0(k), CEES 150.0(k)(1)(A), CEES 150.0(k)(1)(C), (CEES 150.0(k)(2)(G))

- All installed lighting fixtures except for integral device lighting such as for exhaust hoods and cabinet lighting shall be high efficacy installed in accordance with CEES Table 150.0-A and 150.0(k).
- Kitchens shall have readily accessible wall mounted dimming controls that allow the lighting to be manually adjusted up and down.
- Screw base lamps shall contain lamps that comply with Reference Joint Appendix JA8.
- Recessed lighting shall be installed (air tight), be sealed/caulked between the fixture housing and ceiling, shall not contain a screw base socket, and meet the clearance and installation requirements of CEC 410.116.
- Under cabinet lighting shall be on a separate switch from any other lighting.

Water Efficient Plumbing Fixtures (CalGreen 301.1.1, 4.303)

All existing non-compliant plumbing fixtures (based on water efficiency) throughout the house shall be upgraded whenever a building permit is issued for an addition, alteration, or improvement. The following table shows the fixtures that are considered to be non-complaint and the type of water-conserving plumbing fixture that shall be installed in place of non-compliant fixtures:

Plumbing Fixture	Non-Complaint Plumbing Fixture	Required Water-Conserving Plumbing Fixture (maximum flow-rates)
Water Closet (Toilet)	Greater than 1.6 gallons/flush	1.28 gallons/flush
Showerhead	Greater than 2.5 gallons/minute	1.8 gallons/minute at 80 psi
Faucet -Bathroom	Greater than 2.2 gallons/minute	1.2 gallons/minute at 60 psi
Faucet - Kitchen	Greater than 2.2 gallons/minute	1.8 gallons/minute at 60 psi (average)

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms (CBC 907.2.10, CRC 314 and 315)

Smoke alarms shall be installed on the ceiling or wall (between 4 inches and 12 inches of the ceiling) in all sleeping rooms, each area/hallway adjacent to sleeping rooms, each story of the building, and in any basement. Smoke alarms shall be replaced 10 years after the date of manufacture listed on the alarm (if no date is listed the alarm shall be replaced). Newly installed smoke alarms shall have a 10-year battery.

Carbon monoxide (CO) alarms shall be installed on the ceiling or wall (above the door header) in each area/hallway adjacent to sleeping rooms, each occupiable story, and within a bedroom if the bedroom or attached bathroom contains a fuel-burning appliance. CO alarms are not required if there is no fuel-burning appliance or fireplace in the house and where the garage is detached from the house.

Additional Scope (CRC 310.2)

When the scope of work exceeds a bathroom remodel, such as removing sheetrock throughout the house and bringing the interior down to the studs, bedroom windows are to be lowered to meet the requirements for emergency escape and rescue openings. Non-compliant windows will need to be replaced and meet Title 24 requirements. Note that any added scope shall be submitted to the Building Department for review and approval.

PERMIT PROCESS

Building Permit Review

1. Upload plans for kitchen remodels at [E-OneStop Online Services](#).
2. To schedule an over-the-counter appointment, please email pcappointment@sunnyvale.ca.gov after you have uploaded your plans.

Inspections

3. Provide photos (all 4 walls) of the original kitchen to the inspector at the first inspection.
4. A rough electrical inspection is required after the electrical boxes are installed and before any devices are connected.
5. Any other structural, mechanical, or plumbing alterations should be scheduled for a rough inspection (including top-out).
6. Fire inspections shall be completed prior to rough inspection and final inspection.
7. The final inspection is required after all work is complete.

Building Permit Application Requirements

- A completed Building and Fire Permit Application (available at the One-Stop Permit Center or online at [the Permit Center](#))
- A floor plan showing the existing and proposed walls indicating if any existing load bearing walls will be removed (additional plans may be required if bearing wall will be removed or relocated) and the use of all adjoining rooms/areas. Also include the size and location of existing windows and note if they will be replaced.