



Window Retrofit/Replacement Requirements in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones

In Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ), California wildfire construction standards require windows to meet specific wildfire-resistant performance requirements intended to reduce ignition from embers, radiant heat, and direct flame contact.

Code Basis

The California Wildland-Urban Interface Code (CWUIC), Title 24, Part 7, consolidates wildfire-resistant construction requirements previously contained in CBC Chapter 7A. These provisions apply to new structures, additions, and alterations located within Local Responsibility Area (LRA) Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, regardless of building size or occupancy type.

Additions and Alterations

Per CWUIC §101.5:

Additions or alterations may be made to an existing building or structure without requiring the entire building to comply with all provisions of the code, provided the addition or alteration complies with the requirements applicable to new construction.

The code further states that additions or alterations may not:

- Create or increase a fire hazard,
- Reduce required fire resistance,
- Create unsafe conditions,
- Obstruct required access or egress, or
- Otherwise create conditions dangerous to human life.

Window Requirements

Under CWUIC Chapter 5 (formerly CBC Chapter 7A), compliant exterior windows and glazed doors are generally required to:

- Be dual-pane glazing,
- Include at least one tempered exterior pane,
- Be installed within a noncombustible or ignition-resistant frame assembly, and

- Comply with applicable wildfire exposure testing standards, including SFM Standard 12-7A-2 where applicable.

Retrofit Considerations

For homes located within a Very High FHSZ, replacement windows installed as part of a remodel, retrofit, or alteration are generally required to comply with current wildfire-resistant construction standards applicable to the scope of work.

Property owners should verify that proposed window products are listed or tested for compliance with California Chapter 7A / CWUIC requirements prior to installation. Common manufacturers offering compliant product lines may include Milgard, Andersen, Pella, Simonton, and others when properly configured and tested.

Inspections include

- Sill pan flashing CRC: R609.1, R703.4
- Flashing Sequence CRC: R703.4, R703.8
- Head Flashing is integrated with WRB CRC: R703.4, R703.8
- No exposed foam or combustible materials. CRC: R703.7, R703.8
- Final finish product

Under Paradise Municipal Code 9.18.160 – Construction or Demolition - Generally, it is unlawful to operate, or cause the operation of, tools or equipment used in construction, drilling, repair, alteration, or demolition during the following times when the noise is clearly audible beyond a residential or commercial property boundary:

- Between 7:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. on weekdays
- At any time on Sundays or holidays

Construction activity is not prohibited entirely on Sundays or holidays. Contractors may continue to work during those days, provided the work does not generate noise beyond the property lines. Examples of allowable low-noise activities include interior work such as hanging light fixtures, finish electrical work, interior painting, or similar tasks.

Violations of the Town's construction noise ordinance may result in administrative citations, associated fees, and fines. The Town encourages contractors and property owners to plan work accordingly to avoid penalties and help maintain positive relationships within the community.