

2025 California Mechanical Code Significant Changes

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Summary

Significant Changes Include:

- Addition of OSHPD-6 facility designation
- Updates to Table 4-A to align with ASHRAE 170-2021
- Updates to Table 4-B to use HEPA filters for protected environments.
- Updates to Table 402.1 to include more types of use of occupancies.
- For OSHPD facilities, clarification that the use of corridors as a source of makeup air for exhaust systems is permitted where allowed by the CBC
- Adds requirement that duct leakage testing be performed by an ATT (for nonres)
- Adds new chapter to provide minimum standards for the design of geothermal energy systems and district ambient temperature loop systems



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New	Change	Code Section	Code Topic	Revision and Remarks
Chapter 1				
X		1.10.6	OSHDP Designations	Adds a new OSHDP-6 designation for Chemical Dependency Recovery Hospitals not within a hospital or an acute psychiatric facility.
Chapter 3				
	x	307.3 & 307.4	Equipment Labeling and Identification	Adds clarification that heat pumps, electrical cooling appliances, and absorption units shall bear a nameplate that includes its refrigerant designation.
x		321.3	Cooling equipment	Adds new section to Essential Mechanical Provisions regarding cooling equipment to maintain temperature and humidity listed in Table 4-A within certain operating rooms and other identified spaces.
	x	321.6	Control components	Adds to existing amendment, fire and smoke dampers under all control components and control systems to have essential electrical power.
Chapter 4				
	X	Table 4-A	Pressure Relationship and Ventilation Requirements for General Acute Care Hospitals, Skilled Nursing Facilities, Correctional Treatment Centers, Outpatient Facilities, and Licensed Clinics	Repeals 2022 Table 4-1 and adopts ASHRAE 170-2021 Table 7-1
	X	Table 4-B	Filter Efficiencies for Central Ventilation and Air-Conditioning Systems in General Acute Care Hospitals, Skilled Nursing Facilities, Correctional Treatment Centers, Outpatient Facilities, and Licensed Clinics	Amends table to change from MERV filters to HEPA filters for protective environments.
	X	Table 402.1	Minimum Ventilation Air in Breathing Zone	Adds additional building usages such as animal care facilities, along with requirements for transient occupancies such as hotel bedroom and living spaces to the table for calculating minimum outside air ventilation rates per ASHRAE 62.1 Table 6.2.2.1.
	X	402.1.2	Ventilation in healthcare facilities.	Adds to existing amendment requirement for ventilation for health care facilities to be designed and installed in accordance with the code, Table 4-A, and amended list from ASHRAE 170.

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	X	407.1.1	Air Systems	Changed exception item 2 to allow unoccupied turndown to be permitted in accordance with Section 407.7 Unoccupied turndown. Added a column to Table 4-A to identify which spaces are permitted to use unoccupied turndown to match 2021 ASHRAE 170. Revised amendments to correspond with national standards.
x		407.2.2.1	Hazardous Exhaust Outlets	Adds new section clarifying that hazardous exhaust outlets from airborne infection isolation rooms and other hazardous rooms shall have a laboratory chemical fume hood with added requirements.
	X	407.4.2	Air Circulation	Revised to match CBC Section 1020.6 for air movement in corridors. Amended exception to state that the use of corridors as a source of makeup air for exhaust systems is permitted where allowed by the CBC.
	X	407.4.5	Recirculating Room Units	Revised to clarify requirements for recirculating room units which shall be permitted to provide a portion of total air changes more than the minimum outside air changes per Table 4-A. Adds new section regarding filtration for unoccupied spaces not directly connected to a patient care area.
X		407.5	Variable Air Volume	Adds new section regarding filtration for unoccupied spaces not directly connected to a patient care area. Adds new section to provide return air controls for each system, floor, or area with similar conditions.
	X	407.7	Unoccupied turndown	Relocated to its own section. Identifies the conditions that allow the number of air changes permitted to be reduced.
X		407.8	Building Pressurization	Adds a new section to align with ASHRAE 170 regarding building pressurization to ensure a building does not fall under negative pressure causing nonfiltered air to be brought into the building. Amends to align with the minimum requirement in ASHRAE 170 regarding HEPA filtration for high-risk operating rooms and protective environment rooms. Revised Table 4-B to align with this requirement.
X		408.4	Filters for Outpatient Facilities	Revised to clarify that the air ventilation systems for outpatient facilities shall have filter banks efficiencies as listed in Table 4-B. Adds filtration for recirculating room units. Adds language to confirm that the full filtration required per Table 4-B is needed when Table 4-A is marked "No" for recirculating room units.
	X	414.0	Airborne Infection Isolation Rooms – Exhaust Systems	Amends the 7-foot discharge height for airborne infection isolation rooms exhaust to 10 feet. The national standard requires a minimum of 10 feet.

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New	Change	Code Section	Code Topic	Revision and Remarks
	X	417.0	Airborne Infection Isolation Rooms - Testing and Balancing Airborne Infection Isolation Rooms and Protective Environment Rooms	Modified this section to include air balance testing which shall include a pressure test at all doors serving the isolation, protective environment and ante rooms to provide directional pressure relationships.
Chapter 6				
	X	603.4.1.1	Flexible Air Ducts	Adds clarification that flexible air ducts are not permitted when fire and/or smoke dampers are omitted in corridor construction. Ductwork shall be constructed of steel of not less than 0.019-inch thick.
	X	605.2, 605.3	Insulation of Ducts	Adds room types that are considered sensitive areas and not permitted to have acoustic lining materials: Class 3 imaging, hybrid operating rooms, and protective environment rooms. Adds reference to ASHRAE 170, Section 6.9 for duct lining for nonsensitive areas or rooms. Repeals the MERV 17 rating and changes to a minimum of HEPA filter.
Chapter 11				
	X	Table 1104.1, Table 1102.3	Refrigeration	Repeals requirements throughout Chapter 11 for A2L refrigerants that were widely adopted as California amendments in the 2022 Supplements. Adopted model code. The industry's efforts to address lower Global Warming Potential (GWP) refrigerants led to the development of lower flammability refrigerants – A2Ls. Chapter 11 includes these lower flammability refrigerants in Table 1102.3 and contains specific A2L and B2L provisions to address the precautions necessary to properly use these products.
Chapter 17				
x		1701.0 - 1717.2.3	Geothermal Energy Systems and Ambient Temperature Loops	Adds new chapter to provide minimum standards for the design of geothermal energy systems and district ambient temperature loop systems that circulate ground-ambient-temperature water to be used in buildings as a thermal source or sink via water source heat pump or reversing chiller.