

1 [Building Code - Gas Infrastructure for EPCA Appliances in New Construction]

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3 **Ordinance amending the Building Code to allow new construction that complies with**
4 **the Design Guidelines for Electric-Ready Buildings to install gas infrastructure to serve**
5 **appliances covered by the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA); adopting**
6 **findings of local conditions under the California Health and Safety Code; affirming the**
7 **Planning Department’s determination under the California Environmental Quality Act;**
8 **and directing the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors to forward this Ordinance to the**
9 **California Building Standards Commission upon final passage.**

10 NOTE: **Unchanged Code text and uncodified text** are in plain Arial font.
11 **Additions to Codes** are in *single-underline italics Times New Roman font*.
12 **Deletions to Codes** are in *strikethrough italics Times New Roman font*.
13 **Board amendment additions** are in double-underlined Arial font.
14 **Board amendment deletions** are in ~~strikethrough Arial font~~.
15 **Asterisks (* * * *)** indicate the omission of unchanged Code
16 subsections or parts of tables.

17 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

18

19 Section 1. General Findings.

20 (a) The Planning Department has determined that the actions contemplated in this
21 ordinance comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public Resources
22 Code Sections 21000 et seq.). Said determination is on file with the Clerk of the Board of
23 Supervisors in File No. 240845 and is incorporated herein by reference. The Board affirms
24 this determination.

25 (b) On September 18, 2024, the Building Inspection Commission considered this
ordinance at a duly noticed public hearing pursuant to Charter Section 4.121 and Building
Code Section 104A.2.11.1.1.

1 Section 2. Findings Regarding Local Conditions.

2 (a) California Health and Safety Code Sections 17958.7 and 18941.5 provide that local
3 jurisdictions may enact more restrictive building standards than those contained in the
4 California Building Code, provided that the local jurisdictions make express findings that each
5 change or modification is reasonably necessary because of local climate, geologic, or
6 topographical conditions and that the local jurisdictions file the local amendments and
7 required findings with the California Building Standards Commission before the local changes
8 or modifications can go into effect.

9 (b) The Board of Supervisors hereby finds and declares that the following
10 amendments to the San Francisco Building Code are reasonably necessary because of local
11 climatic, topological, and geological conditions as discussed below.

12 (1) The topography of San Francisco creates increased risk of fire due to
13 high density of buildings on very small lots and high population density. It is necessary and
14 appropriate to limit and impose safety measures on new natural gas infrastructure that
15 otherwise increases acute and cumulative fire risk across the City.

16 (2) San Francisco's geologic and topographic conditions produce increased
17 risk for earthquake-induced failure and consequent fire due to local hazardous seismic
18 microzones, slide areas, and local liquefaction hazards. Natural gas infrastructure may
19 rupture, fail, and/or explode due to earthquake-induced structural failure. After seismic
20 events, natural gas infrastructure will take significantly longer to resume service compared to
21 electrical infrastructure. It is necessary and appropriate to reduce fire risk and increase
22 resiliency by limiting the construction of new natural gas infrastructure, requiring essential
23 building systems be Electric Ready to run on electricity during natural gas service disruptions,
24 and imposing safety requirements for any natural gas infrastructure.

1 (3) San Francisco’s climate and topography create wind patterns and
2 periodic seasonal high temperatures that produce smog and ozone that exacerbate the
3 respiratory ailments of residents. Natural gas combustion is a major source of indoor air
4 pollution that further exacerbates the effects of regional pollution for the City’s residents and
5 can be particularly acute given the City’s dense population and smaller dwelling units.
6 Studies have shown children living in homes with natural gas stoves have a 42% increased
7 risk of experiencing asthma symptoms and those impacts may be exacerbated in a compact
8 city such as San Francisco where low-income households are more likely to have more
9 people living in smaller spaces with less ventilation. It is reasonable and appropriate to
10 decrease pollution exposure and resulting human health impacts by utilizing All-Electric
11 construction, and ensuring proper ventilation for any new natural gas infrastructure.

12 (4) The United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit determined in
13 *California Restaurant Ass’n v. City of Berkeley*, 89 F.4th 1094 (9th Cir. Jan. 2, 2024), that the
14 Federal Energy Policy and Conservation Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 6201 et. seq. (“EPCA”), preempts
15 local laws that do not provide a pathway for installation of appliances covered by EPCA. The
16 Board of Supervisors hereby finds that buildings for which permit applicants seek to install gas
17 infrastructure solely to service EPCA-covered appliances in new construction shall be
18 considered All-Electric Buildings, and not Mixed-Fuel Buildings, provided the new construction
19 will be Electric Ready and will minimize building safety issues associated with natural gas
20 infrastructure.

21
22 Section 3. Chapter 1A of the San Francisco Building Code is hereby amended by
23 revising Section 106A (specifically Section 106A.1.17), to read as follows:

24 **SECTION 106A – PERMITS**

25 * * * *

1 **106A.1.17 Mixed-Fuel Buildings.** The Building Official shall not issue permits for
2 construction of any new Mixed-Fuel Building that submitted an initial application on or after
3 June 1, 2021. Permits for new construction, ~~the that submit~~ initial applications for which were
4 submitted on or after that date, may only be obtained for All-Electric Buildings or Projects. New
5 construction that includes natural gas infrastructure solely to serve appliances covered by the Federal
6 Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. §§ 6201 et seq.) and that complies with the Design
7 Guidelines for Electric-Ready Buildings published by the Department of Building Inspection shall be
8 considered an All-Electric Building or Project for purposes of this subsection 106A.1.17. For
9 purposes of this subsection, the initial application shall be the first site or building permit
10 application associated with the project.

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13 Section 4. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective 30 days after
14 enactment. Enactment occurs when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor returns the
15 ordinance unsigned or does not sign the ordinance within ten days of receiving it, or the Board
16 of Supervisors overrides the Mayor’s veto of the ordinance.

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18 Section 5. Scope of Ordinance. In enacting this ordinance, the Board of Supervisors
19 intends to amend only those words, phrases, paragraphs, subsections, sections, articles,
20 numbers, punctuation marks, charts, diagrams, or any other constituent parts of the Municipal
21 Code that are explicitly shown in this ordinance as additions, deletions, Board amendment
22 additions, and Board amendment deletions in accordance with the “Note” that appears under
23 the official title of the ordinance.

1 Section 6. Severability. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this
2 ordinance, or any application thereof, is held to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction,
3 such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions or applications of the
4 ordinance. The Board of Supervisors hereby declares that it would have passed this
5 ordinance, and each section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance,
6 irrespective of whether any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, or
7 phrases of the ordinance, or applications thereof, be declared invalid.

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9 Section 7. Directions to Clerk. Upon final passage of this ordinance, the Clerk of the
10 Board of Supervisors is hereby directed to transmit this ordinance to the California Building
11 Standards Commission pursuant to the applicable provisions of State law.

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13 APPROVED AS TO FORM:
14 DAVID CHIU, City Attorney

15 By: /s/ Robb Kapla
16 ROBB KAPLA
17 Deputy City Attorney

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