

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Environment Code - Green Building Requirements for City Buildings]

Ordinance amending the San Francisco Environment Code, Chapter 7, Sections 700 through 713, to update the green building requirements for the design, construction and operation of City buildings.

Municipal Green Building Task Force

Existing law establishes a "Resource Efficient Building Task Force," comprised of representatives from ten City departments, to "oversee and assist in making City buildings resource efficient."

The proposal would re-name this group the "Municipal Green Building Task Force," and would add representatives from the Bureaus of Engineering and Project Management within the Department of Public Works, the Department of Public Health, and the Real Estate Division within the Department of Administrative Services. The Task Force would coordinate implementation of the Chapter among City departments and advise the Department of Environment on green building policy. The Task Force would advise departments regarding compliance with the Chapter during the design and construction of City buildings. The Task Force would also provide a forum for sharing green building best practices and lessons learned among City Departments and project teams.

LEED Requirements

Existing law requires all City building projects over 5,000 square feet to achieve LEED ("Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design") Silver certification.

The proposal would raise the requirement to LEED Gold certification for City building projects over 5,000 square feet, where the initial appropriation request was submitted to the Board of Supervisors after September 1, 2011. The proposal would require City building projects under 5,000 square feet to identify and implement the maximum practicable number of LEED strategies. (For purposes of comparison, San Francisco Building Code Chapter 13C requires all San Francisco private-sector construction projects over 25,000 square feet to earn a LEED Silver rating in 2011 and a LEED Gold rating in 2012 and after.)

LEED certification may be broken down and scored according to several subcategories. Existing law does not specify in which of those subcategories a City building project must obtain a satisfactory score as part of its certification.

The proposal would require City building projects to earn LEED points in several specified areas as part of achieving an overall LEED Gold certification, including stormwater management, indoor water use reduction, energy use reduction, construction waste management, low-emitting materials, and others.

Water Conservation Retrofits

Existing law requires that toilets in City-owned facilities and City leaseholds that use more than 1.6 gallons per flush be replaced with toilets using a maximum of 1.6 gallons per flush, and all showerheads be replaced with showerheads using a maximum of 1.5 gallons per minute. The deadline for compliance was June 30, 2005.

The proposal would require all City-owned facilities to replace toilets using more than 1.6 gallons per flush and urinals using more than 1.0 gallons per flush with high-efficiency units using no more than 1.28 and 0.5 gallons per flush, respectively; and to replace all showerheads using more than 2.5 gallons per minute and faucets using over 2.2 gallons per minute with high-efficiency units using no more than 1.5 and 0.5 gallons per minute, respectively. The deadline for compliance would be January 1, 2017.

Indoor Environmental Quality

Existing law requires the Department of the Environment to provide City departments engaged in specified City building projects with informational guidelines for development of indoor air quality maintenance plans. Existing law also requires City departments engaged in specified City building projects to include provisions in their construction contracts requiring: prevention of moisture contamination; removal of building materials contaminated by moisture; and, elimination of encapsulation of fibrous insulation materials.

The proposal would replace those provisions with a requirement that the Department of Public Health track Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ) problems, including indoor air pollution, fumes, odors, humidity problems, and thermal and acoustical comfort issues in all City-owned buildings and City leaseholds through the Department of Public Works and the Real Estate Division's Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS). City Departments not using the CMMS would be allowed to complete a voluntary annual survey of IEQ information. The proposal would further require DPH to compile annual analyses of complaints, and coordinate interventions and further research.

Waiver Provisions

Existing law allows the Director of the Department of the Environment to issue waivers from the requirements of the Chapter if compliance would be cost-prohibitive, or otherwise impose an unreasonable burden on a department.

The proposal would bar the Director from waiving the new requirements for recycling and composting, and for construction and demolition debris management, except in cases of emergency. The proposal would also allow the General Manager of the SFPUC to issue waivers for stormwater management requirements.

Other Changes

The proposal would clarify and expand upon the requirements for providing space in City buildings for the collection and storage of recyclable and compostable refuse, and for the management of construction and demolition debris. The proposal would also make additional technical, organizational and editorial changes in remaining provisions of Chapter 7.