

REVISED LEGISLATIVE DIGEST
(Amended in Committee, 12/9/2019)

[Green Building Code - Energy Performance in Newly Constructed Buildings]

Ordinance amending the Green Building Code to establish energy performance requirements for certain new building construction; adopting environmental findings, and findings of local conditions under the California Health and Safety Code and the California Public Resources Code; and directing the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors to forward the ordinance to state agencies as required by state law

Existing Law

The Green Building Code currently does not provide definitions or energy performance standards for new all-electric buildings or mixed-fuel buildings.

Amendments to Current Law

The proposed legislation would define all-electric buildings as buildings relying solely on electricity for all uses and which do not contain any natural gas or propane plumbing or connections. The proposed legislation would define mixed-fuel buildings as buildings that include plumbing and connections for natural gas and/or propane. The legislation affirms existing California Energy Standards requirements that new all-electric buildings and mixed-fuel buildings achieve energy performance that equal or are better (lower) than the standard design building. The standard design building is the modeled energy design rating or energy budget that would be achieved by utilizing the prescriptive energy efficiency requirements of the California Energy Code.

This legislation would impose no new or additional requirements on all-electric buildings beyond the existing California Energy Standards.

This legislation would require new mixed-fuel low-rise residential buildings to establish that their energy efficiency design ratings are equal to or lower than the energy efficiency design rating of a standard design building, and that their total energy design rating is no greater than 14. New mixed-fuel high-rise residential buildings would need to establish that their energy budgets are 90% or less than a standard design building's energy budget. Similarly, new mixed-fuel non-residential buildings, regardless of height, would need to establish that their energy budgets are 90% or less than a standard design building's energy budget.

Background

California Code of Regulations Title 24 Part 6 allows all-electric and mixed-fuel buildings to forego prescriptive requirements and receive credit for solar energy generation and demand response, as long as the energy performance of these measures would be equal to or better than what would be achieved by the prescriptive requirements. The legislation defines a building's total energy design rating as the proposed building's energy efficiency design rating (the higher the less efficient) minus the proposed building's solar electric generation and demand flexibility design rating.

Under California law, a new building must establish that its total energy design rating equals or is lower than the standard design building, either by fulfilling all applicable prescriptive requirements, or by calculating a total energy design rating per the methods specified by the California Energy Commission.

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