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Residential Bathroom Remodel Requirements

INTRODUCTION

Bathroom remodels generally require permits, and the following information can be used as a guideline for minimum code compliance:

- 2025 California Residential Code (CRC)
- 2025 California Plumbing Code (CPC)
- 2025 California Mechanical Code (CMC)
- 2025 California Electric Code (CEC)
- 2025 California Energy Code (CEnC)
- 2025 California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen)

Bathroom remodels include, but are not limited to, the removal and replacement and/or relocation of vanity cabinets, toilets, sinks, tubs, showers; replacement/changes to the lighting; and removal and replacement of any wallboard; modifications to the structural elements of the dwelling; and changes to the electrical, mechanical, and plumbing systems. No permit is required for the replacement of the towel bars, mirrors, paint, and floor coverings [CRC R105.2 item 6]
The following includes the minimum requirements of the bathroom electrical, mechanical, and plumbing systems:

ELECTRICAL

- At least one GFCI receptacle outlet shall be installed in bathrooms within 3' of the outside edge of each sink. Outlet shall be located on a wall or partition that is adjacent to the sink or sink countertop, on the countertop, or installed on the side or face of the sink cabinet. In no case shall the receptacle be located more than 12" below the top of the sink or sink countertop. [CEC 210.8 and CEC 210.52(D)]
- Receptacles shall be listed as tamper-resistant. [CEC 406.12]
- One or more 20-amp branch circuits shall be provided to supply bathroom(s) receptacle outlet(s). Such circuits shall have no other outlets. [CEC 210.11(C)(3) & CEC210.52(D)]
- No parts of cord-connected luminaires, chain, cable or cord suspended luminaires, lighting track, pendants or ceiling suspended (paddle) fans with luminaire (light kit) shall be located within a zone measured 3' horizontally and 8' vertically from the top of the bathtub rim or shower stall threshold, including the space directly over the tub or shower stall. [CEC 410.10(D)(1)]
- Hydro-massage tubs (i.e., Jacuzzi tubs) shall have access to the motor, be supplied by a GFCI-protected dedicated circuit, and be listed by a recognized testing agency. All piping, fittings, metal cables, or other metal surfaces within 5 feet of the inside wall of the Hydro-massage tub shall be properly bonded. Hydro-massage tubs shall be bonded with a minimum #8 AWG bare copper wire, and the bonding shall be accessible. [CEC 680.60]
- Luminaries located within the actual outside dimension of the bathtub or shower to a height of 8 feet vertically from the top of the bathtub rim or shower threshold shall be marked as suitable for damp locations or marked suitable for wet locations, and installed such that water cannot enter or accumulate in wiring compartments, lamp holders or other electrical parts. [CEC 410.10 & 410.10(D)]
- Bathroom Lighting is required to meet the energy efficiency standards. Installed luminaires and light sources shall comply with Reference Joint Appendix JA8. [CEnC 150(k)(1)] Lighting controls shall comply with applicable requirements of CEnC 110.9 [CEnC 150.0(k)2C].
- Luminaries recessed into ceilings shall not contain screw-base lamp sockets and shall have a label that certifies the luminaire is airtight with air leakage less than 2.0 cfm at 75 Pascals. [CEnC 150(k)(C)]. Recessed fixtures installed within a one-hour fire-rated floor/ceiling shall be protected to the rating of the separation (1 hour) or be listed for the required protection.
- Lamps and other separable light sources in enclosed or recessed luminaries shall comply with the JA8 elevated temperature requirements, including marking requirements. [CEnC 150.0 (k)(1) (D)]

MECHANICAL

- Bathrooms, water closet compartments, and other similar rooms shall be provided with windows of not less than 3sf, one-half of which shall be openable; or artificial light and local exhaust 50cfm intermittent or 20cfm continuous per CMC Chapter 4 and exhausted directly to the outdoors. [CRC R325.2]
- Bathrooms containing a bathtub and/or shower shall be mechanically ventilated for purposes of humidity control. Window is not a permissible method of providing exhaust for humidity control [CRC R325.2.1]
- Bathroom fan system requires a backdraft damper [CEnC 150.0(m)(7)]. Fans shall be ENERGY STAR compliant and be ducted to terminate outside the threshold. [CalGreen 4.506.1] Exhaust openings terminating to the outdoors shall be covered with a corrosion-

resistant screen having openings not less than ¼" and not more than ½". Air duct exhaust shall terminate not less than 3' from the property line, 10' above the public way, and 3' from openings into the building. [CMC 502.2.1]

PLUMBING

• Glazing in walls adjacent to saunas, steam rooms, bathtubs, and showers where the bottom edge of glazing is less than 60 inches above the standing surface and less than 60 inches measured horizontally shall be considered a hazardous location and shall be safety glazing with a minimum category classification of II using CPSC 16 CFR 1201. [CRC R324.4.5 R324.3 Table R324.3.1(1)]

• Shower and tub/shower shall be provided with individual control valves of the pressure balance, thermostatic, or combination pressure balance/thermostatic mixing valve type that provide scald and thermal shock protection for the rated flow rate of the installed showerhead. [CPC 408.4]

•The maximum hot water temperature discharging from the bathtub and whirlpool bathtub filler shall be limited to 120 degrees F, regulated by either a limiting device conforming to ASSE 1070/ASME A112.1070/CSA B125, 70 or CSA B125.3 or a water heater conforming to ASSE 1084. [CPC 409.4]

• Sink Faucets flow rate shall not exceed 1.2 gpm at 60 psi; Showerheads shall have a maximum flow rate of not more than 1.8gpm at 80 psi; Water Closets flush volume shall not exceed1.28 gallons/flush [CPC 407.2.2, 408.3 & 411.2]

• Shower compartments shall have a finished interior not less than 1024 square inches and be capable of encompassing a 30" circle. [CPC 408.7]

• The floor space within the same room shall as a shower without a threshold shall be considered a wet location and shall comply with the requirements of CBC, CRC, and CEC [CPC 408.6]

• Shower receptors built on-site shall be watertight and shall be constructed from approved-type dense, nonabsorbent and noncorrosive materials and meet all requirements of CPC 408.8.

• Shower door shall open to maintain not less than a 22" unobstructed opening for egress. [CPC 408.6].

• Toilet or Bidet shall be 15" min from center to side wall, and 30" center to center to a similar fixture. Minimum clear space of 24" shall be provided in front of a toilet, lavatory, or bidet. [CPC 402.5]

• A maximum of 6 water closets is allowed on a 3" waste line. [Table 703.2, footnote 4]

• Where two separate handles control the hot and cold water, the left-hand control of the faucet, which was facing the fixture fitting outlet, shall control the hot water. [CPC 417.5]

• Fixtures having concealed slip-joint connections shall be provided with an access panel or utility space not less than 12" in its least dimension and so arranged without obstructions as to make such connections accessible for inspection and repair. [402.10]

• Where a fixture comes into contact with the wall or floor, the joint shall be watertight. [CPC 402.2]

WHIRLPOOL/SPA TUBS

• Whirlpool (spa) bathtubs shall have access openings to permit the removal and replacement of the circulation pump. The circulation pump shall be located above the crown weir of the trap. The pump and the circulation piping shall be self-draining to minimize water retention. [CPC 409.6] Suction fittings on whirlpool bathtubs shall comply with ASME A112.19.7/CSA B45.10. [CPC 409.6.1] Flexible PVC hoses and tubing for whirlpool bathtubs must comply with IAPMO/ANSI Z1033. [409.6.2]

BIDETS

• The water supply to the bidet shall be protected by an air gap or vacuum breaker (Atmospheric (AVB), Pressure (PVB), or Spill-resistant pressure (SVB)). [CPC 410.2]

• The maximum hot water temperature discharging from a bidet is limited to 110 degrees F, regulated by a limiting device conforming to either ASSE 1070/ASME A112.1070/CSA B125.70 or CSA B125.3; or a water heater conforming to ASSE 1084 [CPC 410.3].

PLUMBING FIXTURE REPLACEMENT:

Effective January 1, 2014, Senate Bill (SB) 407 and California Civil Code Section 1101.1-1101.8 require all noncompliant plumbing fixtures to be replaced with water-conserving plumbing fixtures when the building is undergoing additions, alterations or improvements if the residential property was built and available for use on or before January 1, 1994. Please refer to "Plumbing Fixture Replacement (SB407) Requirements and Policy" to determine if the project requires compliance.

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SMOKE ALARMS & CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS:

• Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are required for the dwelling before final inspection of the bathroom remodel per CRC R310 & R311

• Smoke alarms shall be installed in each sleeping room, outside each sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms, on each additional story of the dwelling unit including basements and habitable attics and not including crawl spaces and uninhabitable attics, not less than 3' horizontally from the door or opening of a bathroom that contains a bathtub or shower, in the hallway and in the room open to the hallway where ceiling height of a room open to a hallway serving bedrooms exceeds that of the hallway by 24" or more, within the room to which a sleeping loft is open, in immediate vicinity of the sleeping loft [CRC R310.3]

• Carbon Monoxide alarms shall be provided in dwelling units that contain fuel-burning appliances or fireplaces, and/or dwelling units that have an attached garage with an opening that communicates with the dwelling unit. [CRC 311.2.1]

• When more than one alarm of either type is required to be installed within an individual dwelling unit, the alarm devices shall be interconnected in such a manner that activation of one alarm will activate all the alarms in the unit [CRC 310.4 and R311.5].

• Alarms are permitted to be solely battery-operated in existing areas of renovated buildings that do not result in the removal of interior walls or ceiling finishes exposing the structure, unless there is an attic, crawl space or basement available which could provide access for building wiring without removal of interior finishes. [CRC R310.6 and R311.6]

•Combination smoke and carbon monoxide alarms shall be permitted to be used in place of separate smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and shall comply with all applicable standards of both CRC Sections R310 and R311 and be listed by the Office of the State Fire Marshal. [CRC R310.5 and R311.4]

• Smoke alarms shall be listed in accordance with UL217. Carbon monoxide alarms shall be listed and labeled in accordance with UL 2034. Combination carbon monoxide and smoke alarms shall be listed and labeled in accordance with UL217 and UL2034. [CRC R310.1.1 and R311.1.1]

• Smoke alarms or smoke detectors shall be installed a minimum of 20 feet horizontally from a permanently installed cooking appliance. [R310.3.3