

Residential Kitchen Remodel Requirements



INTRODUCTION

Kitchen additions, alterations, or renovations require Building 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)

Kitchen renovations include, but are not limited to, the removal and/or relocation of base cabinets, countertops, sinks, dishwasher, garbage disposal, installed appliances, changes to the lighting, removal and replacement of any wallboard, modifications to the structural elements of the dwelling, and changes to the electrical, mechanical, and plumbing systems. Removal and replacement of the base cabinets and countertop require compliance with the electrical code for outlet location.

The following includes minimum requirements for the kitchen electrical, mechanical, and plumbing systems:

ELECTRICAL

- Kitchen receptacle outlets shall be GFCI-protected. [CEC 210.8(A)(6)]
- Receptacles shall be listed as tamper-resistant. [CEC 406.12]
- Countertops 12" or wider shall be provided with a receptacle outlet. [CEC 210.52(C)]
- Receptacle outlet shall be provided so no point along the wall line is more than 24" horizontally from an outlet. [CEC 210.52(C)(1)]
- Receptacle outlets not readily accessible by fastened-in-place sinks, appliance garages, or range tops shall not be considered required outlets. [CEC 210.52 (C)(3)]
- Receptacle outlets shall be located on or 20" maximum above the countertop. [CEC 210.52(C)(3)]
- Receptacle outlets shall be located at kitchen islands, peninsulas, desktops, wet bars, and serving bars. Outlets located on a countertop shall be listed for use on a countertop. [CEC 210.52(C)(3)]
- Two or more 20-amp small-appliance branch circuits shall be provided for all receptacle outlets at the wall, floor, countertop and refrigeration equipment. These branch circuits shall have no other outlets. [CEC 210.11(C)(1) and CEC 210.52(B)(1), (2)]
- Individual branch circuits supplying appliances shall have an ampacity not less than the marked rating [CEC422.62] of the appliance or the marked rating of an appliance having combined loads. [CEC 422.10 (A) & 210.23]
- Flexible cord length for in-sink waste disposers shall be not less than 18" and not exceeding 36" [CEC 422.16(B)(1)]
- Flexible cord length for dishwashers shall not be less than 3' and not exceed 6.5'. [CEC 422.16(B)(2)(2)]
- Minimum 15-amp circuit for the dishwasher and a 15-amp circuit for the disposal [CEC 210.23(A) & (B)]
- If two or more branch circuits supply devices on the same yoke (i.e., split outlet for dishwasher/disposal), a means to simultaneously disconnect the ungrounded supply conductors shall be provided where branch circuits originate. [CEC 210.7]
- Residential Kitchen 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)]
- Luminaires 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.
- AFCI protection is required for all 120-volt, single-phase, 10, 15, and 20-amp branch circuits supplying outlets or devices in the kitchen and shall be protected by any of the means described in 210.12(A)(1) through (A)(6). [CEC 210.12 (A)].
- All 125V to 250V receptacles in the laundry area must be protected by a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI). [CEC 210.8 (A)(11)]
- GFCI shall be provided for the branch circuit or outlet supplying the dishwasher, rated 150 volts or less to ground and 60amps or less, single or 3-phase. [CEC 210.8(D)].

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MECHANICAL

- A mechanical exhaust system that discharges directly to the outdoors shall be provided in each kitchen. [CMC405.4]
- Kitchen exhaust ducts used in conjunction with domestic range or cooktop hoods shall be constructed of metal and shall have smooth interior surfaces, fastened and sealed with duct mastic or metal tapes that meet UL181A. Aluminum flex duct not approved. Provide back draft damper [504.3]
- Cooking appliances shall have a vertical clearance above the cooking top of not less than 30" to combustible material or metal cabinets [CMC 919.4.2]
- A local mechanical exhaust system shall be installed in each kitchen. Systems shall be rated for airflow per ASHRAE 62.2 section 7.1 [CEnC 150.0 (o) exception (1) (G)]
- 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. Discharge of dryer exhaust ducts shall not terminate over a public way. [CMC 502.2.1]

PLUMBING

- A gas piping pressure test is required for new branches, major repairs, and additions. The gas piping shall withstand a pressure of not less than 10 psi gauge pressure for not less than 15 minutes. [CPC 1213.3]
- Where gas piping is installed underground beneath buildings, the piping shall be either encased in approved conduit designed to withstand the imposed loads and installed per 1210.1.6.1 and 1210.1.6.2 or shall be a piping/encasement system listed for installation beneath buildings [CPC1210.1.6]. Gas lines that run under a slab shall run through an approved, vented, gas-tight conduit.
- An accessible gas shutoff valve shall be provided upstream of each gas pressure regulator. [CPC 1210.9]
- Provide a maximum 6-ft-long listed gas flexible connector and shut-off to the freestanding range. [CPC 1212.5 and 1212.6]
- Provide an approved listed dishwasher air gap fitting on the discharge side of the dishwashing machine. [CPC 807.3]
- Kitchen faucets shall have a maximum flow rate not more than 1.8 gpm at 60 psi and may temporarily increase the flow above the maximum rate, but not to exceed 2.2 gpm at 60 psi, and must default to a maximum flow rate of 1.8 gpm at 60 psi. [CPC 420.2.1]

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 a property 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.

SMOKE ALARMS & CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS:

- Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are required for the dwelling before final inspection of the kitchen renovation 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].



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- 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 at a minimum of 20 feet horizontal distance from a permanently installed cooking appliance. [R310.3.3]

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