



INFORMATION BULLETIN / PUBLIC - BUILDING CODE

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DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS

A. PERMITS AND PLANS

1. PERMITS REQUIRED. No person shall demolish any building or structure unless he/she has obtained a permit from the Department of Building and Safety.

EXCEPTIONS:

- 1) A permit is not required where the work is valued at \$300 or less and does not affect public safety.
- 2) A permit is not required for any work accomplished under the auspices of land owned and controlled by the United States of America or by the State of California.

A separate permit shall be obtained for each building or structure. The permit shall show the type of demolition procedure to be used.

EXCEPTION: Dwellings and accessory buildings.

2. TO WHOM ISSUED. Demolition permits must be obtained by a licensed wrecking contractor (Class C-21) or a general engineering contractor (Class A).

EXCEPTIONS:

- 1) One or two story wood frame buildings where the maximum spans do not exceed 25 feet, may be demolished by an owner who owns the building and the lot on which the building is located, or by labor in his/her employment when under the direction and control of said owner.
- 2) Demolition permits may be issued to a licensed general contractor (Class B-1) if he/she is the contractor for a new building to be erected on the site, and if the plans have been filed or a permit has been issued for the building.
- 3) Demolition permits may be issued to a licensed general contractor (Class B-1), if he/she is the contractor for a new building to be erected on the site and plans have not been filed for the new building, only under the following conditions:
 - a) The structure to be demolished is a one story Type II or V building, and
 - b) Documentation in the form of a notarized letter from the owner, or a copy of the contract, which clearly indicates that the contractor will perform both the demolition and new construction, is provided prior to the issuance of the demolition permit.

(Indicate on the demolition permit “Contractor to perform both demo and new construction on site”)

3. PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS REQUIRED. No permit for demolition work will be issued until satisfactory plans and procedures have been submitted to and approved by the Building Department. For one- or two-family dwellings, a dimensioned plot plan on the application showing the location of buildings and distances from property lines will be satisfactory. All other buildings will require a plot plan and such additional plans and procedures as are necessary to show that the demolition work will be conducted without creating a hazardous condition. Some of the features or conditions requiring additional detailed plans and procedures are:

- a) Walls more than 20 feet in height from story to story
- b) A basement within six feet of another building
- c) Footings adjacent to, and extending below, the footings of another building
- d) When the entire structure is not to be demolished
- e) One or more party walls
- f) When, in the opinion of the Superintendent of Building, some unusual feature exists or hazardous condition is created
- g) Any prestressed or post-tensioned concrete structure
- h) Any building with five or more stories
- i) Any building for which a variance is being requested

Plans and specifications must be provided for any of the following which may be involved:

- a) Protection of adjacent property
- b) Method and sequence of demolishing the building
- c) Shoring for high walls
- d) Underpinning of adjacent footings
- e) Required retaining walls

- f) Anchorage and other details for party walls
 - g) Filling of basements
 - h) Thickness of remaining party walls
 - i) Other demolition or structural features
 - j) Required clearances
4. PRE-INSPECTION REQUIRED. A pre-inspection performed by a Building Inspector at the site of the proposed demolition will be required before a demolition permit may be issued.
- EXCEPTION: The pre-inspection may be waived when Building & Safety determines that previous inspections associated with department's abatement programs have been made. The abate order number and date shall be indicated in the work description of the permit. Section 91.107.3.
5. LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Each application must contain the correct and complete legal description to assure all pertinent information is not overlooked including the requirement that customers be referred to other city departments for clearances.
6. CLEARANCES REQUIRED:
- a) Zoning Information Numbers (ZI's)
 - b) Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)
 - c) Coastal Zone Construction Authority (CZCA) and/or Mello Bill
 - d) Historical Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ), Section 91.106.4.5 and 91.12.20.3 (Zoning)
 - e) Historical Monuments
 - f) Rent Stabilization - applies to the demolition of apartments, condominiums, two-family dwellings, two or more single family dwellings on the same lot, mobile home pads, and any project resulting in a reduction of rooms in a hotel, motel, rooming house or boarding house occupied by the same tenant for 60 or more consecutive days
 - g) OSHA clearance required for structures over 35 feet in height
 - h) An affidavit is required to be recorded when demolishing 2 or more rental units unless a tentative map for condominiums has been approved. The affidavit waives the right to construct a condominium, stock cooperative, or stock community apartment project for ten years

7. SPECIAL PERMITS. In all cases where a protection fence or canopy must be constructed in the public way or where barricading a street or portion thereof is necessary to comply with the instructions set forth herein, a "Street Use Permit" shall be obtained from the Department of Public Works. This permit shall be obtained prior to issuance of a demolition permit. The Department of Public Works shall be notified of all demolition permits issued for buildings located in the C and M Zones.

Approval by the Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering, shall be obtained prior to the issuance of a permit for any demolition work which removes the lateral support from a public way. Section 91.3301.2.3.1 of the Building Code defines lateral support. The lateral support of a public way shall be considered to have been removed when a wall providing lateral support of a public way or any building elements that stabilize the wall are demolished.

A permit for the removal of any underground tank used for storage of flammable liquids shall be obtained from the Fire Department.

Prior to the issuance of a permit to demolish a building which has a sewer line, the applicant shall obtain a sewer capping permit (plumbing permit).

8. IMMINENT HAZARDS: Demolition permits shall be issued without delay when an application is accompanied by a letter signed by the Superintendent of Building declaring a structure a present, imminent, extreme, and immediate hazard. The number of the abate order and the date of the letter shall be included in the work description of the permit. Section 91.8905.1

B. INSPECTION

1. CALL FOR INSPECTION. A call for inspection must be made at least 24 hours before work is to be started.

2. PROTECTION DEVICE INSPECTION. All required protection devices must be in place and inspected and approved by the Building Inspector prior to starting any work.

3. FIELD CARD. The "Demolition Inspection Record" Form No. B&S B-8b must be posted on the job site. This card must be signed by the inspector approving the method of demolition to be used before work is started. A separate approval signature is required for each demolition method used. If the method of demolition is to be changed during the course of the job, the inspector must be called and a new approval signature obtained before the new method is started.

4. SEWER CAP INSPECTION. When the sewer has been capped, it shall not be covered until

an inspection has been made by the Department. The inspection should be requested at least 24 hours before the inspection is needed.

C. DEMOLITION PROCEDURES

1. PROTECTION DEVICES. Barricades, protection fences, and protection canopies shall be provided and constructed in accordance with the requirements of Section 91.3303 of the Building Code.

EXCEPTIONS:

1) For single family dwellings, only a barrier will be required

2) A protection canopy or protection fence will not be required where the adjoining public way is partially closed and properly barricaded so as to prohibit all pedestrian and vehicular traffic within the required clearance during the entire demolition operation. See Paragraph A-7 above for Department of Public Works permit requirements.

2. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS. No structural member in any story shall be demolished or removed until the story next above is completely removed.

EXCEPTIONS:

1) Two story Type V buildings of wood-frame construction

2) Two story buildings of any type, provided no first story structural member is removed before all of its supported load is removed

The storage and handling of material and the prevention of dust shall be in accordance with the requirements of Section 91.108.13 of the Building Code.

Free-fall dumping over the exterior wall of a building will not be permitted from a height greater than 25 feet.

3. HAND WRECKING. Hand wrecking methods may be used on any type of building, provided the required protection devices are installed and approved. Hand wrecking may include the use of any type of hand held tools. The use of small wheel mounted pneumatic tools will be permitted if first approved by the Building Inspector.

4. DOZER OR LOADER WRECKING. Dozer or loader wrecking shall not be used except on one or two story buildings with a maximum wall height of 24 feet.

The building must be located a minimum distance from the public way and adjoining property at

least equal to the maximum wall height of the building.

EXCEPTION: For wood frame residential buildings, the required clearance may be reduced, provided reasonable safety precautions are taken.

5. CLAM SHELL WRECKING. Clam shell wrecking shall not be used unless the building is located a distance from the public way and adjoining property at least equal to one-half the maximum height of the building. The separation need not, however, exceed twice the maximum story height of the building.

6. CABLE WRECKING. "Cable wrecking" shall include all wrecking methods using a cable, whether applied to a single wall or to an entire building.

Cable wrecking will be allowed only in those cases where the building is located a distance from the public way and adjoining property greater than one and one-half times the maximum height of the building. Where cable wrecking is to be used on a single wall, the clear distanced required need not exceed twice the height of the wall being demolished.

Prior to the issuance of a permit for cable wrecking, a detailed description of the method and sequence for demolishing the building and the safety precautions to be taken shall be submitted to the Building Department for approval.

7. BALL WRECKING. Ball wrecking shall not be used unless the building is located a distance from the public way and adjoining property at least equal to one and one-half times the maximum height of the building. The separation need not, however, exceed 50 ft.

Prior to the issuance of a permit for ball wrecking, the demolition contractor shall submit for approval to the Building Department a detailed description of the method and sequence for demolishing the building and the safety precautions to be taken.

8. USE OF EXPLOSIVES. Explosives shall not be used in the demolition of a building without the specific written approval of the Department of Building and Safety. No approval will be granted for the use of explosives in a manner which would violate Information Bulletin P/BC 2002-020 (formerly MGD #105).

All necessary permits and procedure approvals must be obtained from the Fire Department prior to the use of explosives.

D. DEVIATIONS PERMITTED

1. EQUIVALENT PROTECTION. Deviations from the requirements specified above for the demolition of buildings or structures may be requested where conditions warrant and provided equivalent protection is furnished. This modification of requirements must be well detailed and

requires an approval in writing from the Department of Building and Safety prior to commencing any demolition work.

2. APPLICATION FOR MODIFICATION. Before any request for deviations can be acted upon, an application for modification shall be filed with the Department of Building and Safety. The application shall be on a "Request for Modification of Building Ordinances" Form No. B&S COM 31. The application must be accompanied by an adequately detailed demolition plan and procedure of demolition.

E. DANGEROUS CONDITIONS DURING DEMOLITION

1. Should a dangerous condition develop during the demolition of a structure, the demolition contractor shall immediately barricade the dangerous area, notify the Department of Building and Safety and take immediate steps to minimize the hazard. No further demolition work shall be done until approval to proceed is given by the Department of Building and Safety.