

## CHAPTER 49

# REQUIREMENTS FOR WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE FIRE AREAS

### SECTION 4901 GENERAL

**4901.1 Scope.** *The mitigation of conditions where a wildfire burning in vegetative fuels may readily transmit fire to buildings and threaten to destroy life, overwhelm fire suppression capabilities, or result in large property losses shall comply with this chapter.*

**4901.2 Purpose.** *The purpose of this code is to provide minimum standards to increase the ability of a building to resist the intrusion of flame or burning embers being projected by a vegetation fire and contributes to a systematic reduction in conflagration losses through the use of performance and prescriptive requirements.*

### SECTION 4902 DEFINITIONS

**4902.1 General.** *For the purpose of this chapter, certain terms are defined as follows:*

**CDF DIRECTOR.** *The Director of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.*

**FIRE PROTECTION PLAN** *is a document prepared for a specific project or development proposed for a Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area. It describes ways to minimize and mitigate potential for loss from wildfire exposure.*

*The Fire Protection Plan shall be in accordance with this chapter. When required by the enforcing agency for the purposes of granting modifications, a fire protection plan shall be submitted. Only locally adopted ordinances that have been filed with the California Building Standards Commission in accordance with Section 101.14 or the Department of Housing and Community Development in accordance with Section 101.15 shall apply.*

**FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES** *are geographical areas designated pursuant to California Public Resources Code Sections 4201 through 4204 and classified as Very High, High, or Moderate in State Responsibility Areas or as Local Agency Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones designated pursuant to California Government Code Sections 51175 through 51189.*

*The California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 1280 entitles the maps of these geographical areas as "Maps of the Fire Hazard Severity Zones in the State Responsibility Area of California."*

**LOCAL AGENCY VERY-HIGH FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONE** *means an area designated by a local agency upon the recommendation of the CDF Director pursuant to Government Code Sections 51177(c), 51178 and 51189 that is not a state responsibility area and where a local agency, city, county, city and county, or district is responsible for fire protection.*

**STATE RESPONSIBILITY AREA** *means lands that are classified by the Board of Forestry pursuant to Public Resources*

*Code Section 4125 where the financial responsibility of preventing and suppressing forest fires is primarily the responsibility of the state.*

**WILDFIRE** *is any uncontrolled fire spreading through vegetative fuels that threatens to destroy life, property, or resources as defined in Public Resources Code Sections 4103 and 4104.*

**WILDFIRE EXPOSURE** *is one or a combination of radiant heat, convective heat, direct flame contact and burning embers being projected by vegetation fire to a structure and its immediate environment.*

**WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE FIRE AREA** *is a geographical area identified by the state as a "Fire Hazard Severity Zone" in accordance with the Public Resources Code Sections 4201 through 4204 and Government Code Sections 51175 through 51189, or other areas designated by the enforcing agency to be at a significant risk from wildfires. See Article 86B for the applicable referenced sections of the Government Code and the Public Resources Code.*

### SECTION 4903 PLANS [RESERVED]

### SECTION 4904 FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES

**4904.1 General.** *Lands in the state are classified by the CDF Director in accordance with the severity of wildfire hazard expected to prevail in those areas and the responsibility for fire protection, so that measures may be identified which will reduce the potential for losses to life, property and resources from wildfire.*

**4904.2 Classifications.** *The CDF Director classifies lands into fire hazard severity zones in accordance with California Public Resources Code Sections 4201 through 4204 for State Responsibility Areas and in accordance with Government Code Sections 51175 through 51189 for areas where a local agency is responsible for fire protection.*

### SECTION 4905 WILDFIRE PROTECTION BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

**4905.1 General.** *Materials and construction methods for exterior wildfire exposure protection shall be applied within geographical areas where a wildfire burning in vegetative fuels may readily transmit fire to buildings and threaten to destroy life, overwhelm fire suppression capabilities, or result in large property losses.*

**4905.2 Construction methods and requirements within established limits.** *Within the limits established by law, construction methods intended to mitigate wildfire exposure shall comply with the wildfire protection building construction requirements*

## REQUIREMENTS FOR WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE FIRE AREAS

contained in the California Building Standards Code including the following:

1. California Building Code Chapter 7A,
2. California Residential Code Section R327,
3. California Reference Standards Code Chapter 12-7A
4. and this chapter.

**4905.3 Establishment of limits.** The establishment of limits for the Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area's required construction methods shall be designated pursuant to the California Public Resources Code for State Responsibility areas or by a local agency following a finding supported by substantial evidence in the record that the requirements of this section are necessary for effective fire protection within the area.

Buildings and structures within the Very-High Fire Hazard Severity Zones of a Local Responsibility Areas (LRA) shall maintain defensible space as outlined in Government Code 51175 – 51189 and any local ordinance of the authority having jurisdiction.

### SECTION 4906 HAZARDOUS VEGETATION AND FUEL MANAGEMENT

**4906.1 General.** Hazardous vegetation and fuels shall be managed to reduce the severity of potential exterior wildfire exposure to buildings and to reduce the risk of fire spreading to buildings as required by applicable laws and regulations.

**4906.2 Application.** Buildings and structures located in the following areas shall maintain the required hazardous vegetation and fuel management:

1. All unincorporated lands designated by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection as State Responsibility Area (SRA) including:
  - 1.1. Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zones
  - 1.2. High Fire Hazard Severity Zones
  - 1.3. Very-High Fire Hazard Severity Zones
2. Land designated as Very-High Fire Hazard Severity Zone by cities and other local agencies.

**4906.3 Requirements.** Hazardous vegetation and fuels around all applicable buildings and structures shall be maintained in accordance with the following laws and regulations:

1. Public Resources Code Section 4291
2. California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 1.5, Chapter 7, Subchapter 3, Section 1299 (see guidance for implementation "General Guideline to Create Defensible Space")
3. California Government Code Section 51182
4. California Code of Regulations, Title 19, Division 1, Chapter 7, Subchapter 1, Section 3.07

### SECTION 4907 DEFENSIBLE SPACE

**4907.1 General.** Defensible space will be maintained around all buildings and structures in State Responsibility Area (SRA) as required in Public Resources Code 4290 and "SRA Fire Safe Regulations" California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 1.5, Chapter 7, Subchapter 2, Section 1270.