



CAL FIRE State Fire Marshal Monthly Report to the California Fire Prevention Officers



**Kate Dargan
State Fire Marshal**

The **Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps** continue to be a major focus of our office. We have distributed guest editorials and feature articles to media and trade publications, and will continue to do so for the next several months. Recently, I sent out the following update to staff and stakeholders on this very important project:

“The rollout of new Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps is now halfway through the process. Public hearings for the State Responsibility Area maps were held in 56 counties and we are now processing those public comments and revised maps toward their full adoption this fall. A 15-Day Notice of Modifications to Proposed Regulation was issued last week detailing the changes to the state responsibility area maps CAL FIRE made based on comments received during the hearing phase.

Drafts of the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps for Local Responsibility Areas are currently being posted on the CAL FIRE Web site in GIS format. The drafts will be used as working documents in coordinating with the local agencies through November. Formal recommendations are anticipated for next winter and spring 2008. Local government agencies will seek comment from the communities they serve through their local ordinance process. Information on the Local Responsibility Area part of our effort will be posted to at www.fire.ca.gov/wildland.php.

Implementation of the **Wildland-Urban Interface Building Standards** is now scheduled for January 1, 2008 in the State Responsibility Area, and July 1, 2008 in the Local Responsibility Area. A series of training courses has been developed to provide detailed information on the new Wildland-Urban Interface Building Standards to building officials, fire officials, planners, building materials manufacturers, developers, architects, engineers and other building professionals. (There is more information on these classes later in this report).

Overall, we are moving rapidly toward a more comprehensive way of addressing our wildfire threat in California. Please continue to watch the CAL FIRE Wildland Hazard & Building Codes Web page for updates and information.”

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CAL FIRE the Video

State Fire Marshal staff is contributing to a video which will be used to **promote CAL FIRE services** to local governments. Local fire districts can select a full-service “all risk” contract or a tailor-made contract including only those response and code enforcement services needed in the district. The video is scheduled for distribution by fall of 2008.



WUIBS Training

When Steve Quarles talks, people listen, at least when he is talking about the upcoming Wildland Urban Interface Building Standards (WUIBS). As of January 2008 new fire safety amendments apply to Chapter 7A of the California Building Code. Wildland-Urban Interface building standards will soon be more stringent. People involved with building, planning, architecture, and code enforcement are getting ready now.



Class Topics:

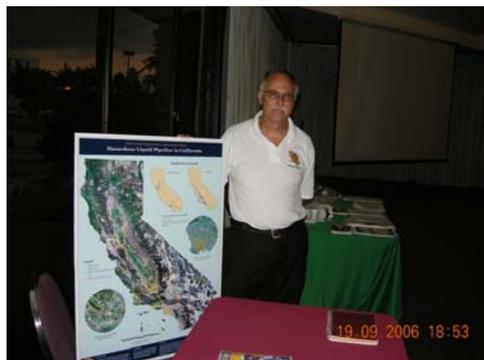
- How buildings are exposed to wildfire
- Applicability and Implementation
- Roof Coverings and Assemblies
- Gutters
- Vents
- Related test procedures
- Eaves
- Exterior Walls
- Windows
- Decking
- Doors
- Projections
- Other buildings on the parcel

For more information, or to register, please contact Steve Quarles
Email: stephen.quarles@fire.ca.gov
Telephone: (415) 233-1141

Pipeline Safety

Environmental Issues Workshop

Division Chief Robert Gorham and Supervising Pipeline Safety Engineer Chuck McDonald staffed a booth at the "Environmental Issues Workshop" on September 19, presented by the City of Carson. The L.A. Fire Department, South Coast Air Quality Management, Dept. of Toxic Substances, and L.A. County Health Department also participated.



Fire and Life Safety

Life Saving Information to Our Most Vulnerable

Ernie Paez, Chief of SFM Southern Division spoke to the California Association for Adult Day Services on September 27 in Newport Beach. He presented the key elements of emergency planning and management, and a fire prevention plan. Chief Paez also explained how the newly adopted codes will apply to adult day services.



On September 28 Chief Paez spoke to the Community Residential Care Association of California in Fresno about bedridden patients in residential care facilities and the laws and regulations that pertain to keeping them safe. The pros and cons of residential sprinklers proved to be of major concern to these facility managers.

Code Interpretation

In order to provide the best possible service to our customers, the SFM will now provide Code Interpretations only when requests are submitted in writing through the U.S. mail. No requests will be accepted over the phone or through email. When submitting a request, identify the specific code section, including the code edition year if applicable. If the question involves a specific project, the location must be identified. Be as complete as possible. Include maps or drawings if they would help identify the issue. Requests should be mailed to:

Ernie Paez, Division Chief
Office of the State Fire Marshal
602 E. Huntington Drive, Suite A
Monrovia, CA 91016

Fire Prevention

Check it out

Have you checked out the beta test page developed by the University of California at Berkeley? <http://firecenter.berkeley.edu/fhsz/>

This partnership project will enable property owners and building officials to check the fire hazard severity zone for a particular address. Right now it is only applicable to addresses in the State Responsibility Areas (SRA), but eventually it will also have all the Local Responsibility Areas Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone information also.



Code Development

LRA Compliance Moved Forward to July 1, 2008

On September 20, 2007, the California Building Standards Commission approved the Office of the State Fire Marshal's emergency regulations amending section 701A.3.2 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 24, Part 2, known as the 2007 California Building Code (CBC). This section revised the mandatory effective date for those areas where local government has responsibility for wildland fire protection (LRA) to July 1, 2008.

The regulations contained in CBC Chapter 7A will not be mandatory in State Responsibility Area (SRA) Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) until January 1, 2008 and July 1, 2008 for LRA FHSZ, but voluntary until those dates arrive. This will not change any project timelines; it merely lets those jurisdictions that are ready to adopt locally on January 1, 2008 or sooner to do so whereas other jurisdictions in the LRA may require additional time to prepare and adopt the FHSZ maps after they are finalized and published.

Below is the approved language.

701A.3.2 New Buildings Located in Any Fire Hazard Severity Zone. New buildings located in any Fire Hazard Severity Zone shall comply with one of the following:

1. State Responsibility Areas. New buildings located in any Fire Hazard Severity Zone within State Responsibility Areas, for which an application for a building permit is submitted on or after January 1, 2008, shall comply with all sections of this chapter.

2. Local Agency Very-High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. New buildings located in any Local Agency Very-High Fire Hazard Severity Zone for which an application for a building permit is submitted on or after July 1, 2008, shall comply with all sections of this chapter.

3. Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area designated by the enforcing agency . New buildings located in any Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area designated by the enforcing agency for which an application for a building permit is submitted on or after January 1, 2008, shall comply with all sections of this chapter.

CAL FIRE Office of the State Fire Marshal
<http://osfm.fire.ca.gov>
