



Draft deadline: The City of San Diego invites public review and comment of the City's draft Storm Water Standards manual to assist in preparing the final version by December. The document is available via the City's web page at www.sandiego.gov, by clicking on "Development Services" under the "Business" heading. It can also be purchased at the Records Center of the Development Services Department located at 1222 First Avenue, 2nd Floor, in downtown San Diego. Comments must be received by 5 p.m. on Sept. 18, 2002. Written comments must be received by the Land Development Review Division, 1222 First Avenue, Fifth Floor, San Diego, CA 92101.

Don't wait in line, get online: Development Services activated the Epermit online service one year ago and it has been a big success. On average, 200 to 300 simple miscellaneous permits are issued each month through the Epermit program. Contractors, developers and homeowners can request permits for simple mechanical, plumbing, and electrical projects conveniently via the Internet from their home or business. The Epermit program saves customers time and money by avoiding a trip downtown to the Development Services Center or Community Service centers. Since the Epermit program was initiated, more than 2,840 miscellaneous permit requests have been processed.

Keen on green: Everyone wants to create energy-efficient buildings, right? But how is this really accomplished? The nonprofit Sustainable Buildings Industry Council (SBIC) has published a new comprehensive guidebook, *Green Building Guidelines: Meeting the demand for low-energy, resource-efficient homes*, that will help you get there. Written by builders for builders, this earth-friendly book reviews specific design strategies, offers construction and marketing tips, checklists, references to additional resources, and even addresses means for improving indoor air quality. The council also offers Green Building workshops. The book sells for \$50 (\$40 for SBIC members) and can be purchased on the organization's website at www.SBICouncil.org. From their homepage, go to "store," then select "resources" and look up *Green Building Guidelines*.

New program aims to increase affordable housing

San Diego's need for affordable housing is a major issue being addressed on many fronts. The San Diego City Council took a bold step to remedy this situation in August by endorsing an affordable housing plan. The Council's resolution includes a plan to accelerate the processing time for affordable housing projects by 50 percent.

The affordable housing/infill housing expedite program is intended to reduce the cost of housing in San Diego by processing affordable housing projects sooner, as well as increasing the supply of housing in San Diego. The increased fees associated with this service will significantly offset the carrying cost that is paid on the land due to lengthy processing times.

"We can't afford not to succeed in this effort," said Development Services Director Tina Christiansen. "Housing shortages are critical. We will ensure that these projects move through the process in a timely manner, and move forward to hearings for Planning Commission and City Council approval."

The City Council's overall action approved increased financing for affordable housing through bonds, mandated an inclusionary housing policy, and created the expedite program. To implement the expedited services, the Development Services Department will hire a program manager to serve as the City's "Housing Czar," and will determine the appropriate staffing and fees for this new service. The fees are being examined as part of the Development Services Department's overall fee study. Staff is expected to make a recommendation for the accelerated processing fees this fall.

For developers, this means that paying reduced carrying costs on land will allow them to provide more affordable homes. Developers were supportive of this measure because of the increased certainty in processing time lines and decisions regarding code interpretations.

"The Development Services staff is excited about playing a significant role in alleviating the housing crisis in San Diego," said Development Services Deputy Director Marcela Escobar-Eck. "The aggressive schedule we'll be pursuing for these projects will help the community as a whole."

This year, Barron's Magazine ranked San Diego as the second most overpriced home market in the country, and the National Association of Home Builders lists San Diego as the fifth least affordable housing market in the US. Development Services staff will be developing the expedite program over the next several months and will begin implementation in six to nine months.

Customer compliments department service

The City of San Diego Development Services Department processes more than 32,000 permits each year, regulating the design, safety and environmental standards of all construction work in America's seventh largest city. The department has grown from the small building inspection operation into a one-stop shopping center for homeowners, construction industry and development customers.

Development Services staff members have worked diligently to streamline the land development process and provide service to customers from "concept to completion." Over the years, the volume of permit requests has grown steadily, and with an increased workload comes a greater challenge in delivering quality customer service. Through the use of new processing systems, coordinated review and access to many services via the Internet, staff members make every effort to provide professional and timely assistance to the public. As we continue to strengthen our services, we'd like to share some successes along the way.



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Engineering geologist/hydrogeologist Phil Rosenberg is a veteran of the consulting industry in San Diego. He works for Geocon, a longtime local engineering consulting firm, and deals with a number of government agencies. Over the summer his team was working on a project as part of the North Embarcadero improvements. Even for someone with experience, it's not always easy to determine what is required for each project.

"We had difficulty getting encroachment permits," Rosenberg said. "But a Development Services staff member stepped up, walked us through the process and got it approved. This saved us time and money."

Development issues are complicated, especially in a city the size of San Diego. The process can seem quite intimidating for those new to the process. Rosenberg agreed that navigation gets easier once one becomes familiar with the process. The Development Services Department has made a number of improvements to help newcomers and regular customers.

"I think it's much better than it used to be," Rosenberg said.

Development Services welcomes customer feedback to help the department continue to improve, and customer comment cards are available at service counters in the Development Services Center. Comments can also be made via the City's web page at www.sandiego.gov. We look forward to hearing from you.

Development Seminars

A series of development seminars will be presented this fall at the Development Services - Ridgehaven office in Kearny Mesa. Topics include code updates, means of egress and disabled access issues. Dates are Sept. 27, Oct. 11 and 25, Nov. 22 and Dec. 13, all from noon to 4:30 p.m. Cost for each is \$75. For details call Tika Wesley at (619) 446-5405, or view the schedule online at www.sandiego.gov. Click on "Development Services" under "Business," then select "Construction Industry Professionals" and look under "general information".

Does the building you are working on contain lead paint?

Many buildings, houses, and apartments built before 1978 have paint that contain high levels of lead (called lead-based paint). Lead from paint chips and dust can pose serious health hazards to construction workers and the people that occupy the structure, especially children. Lead damages the brain, nerves, and kidneys. This damage can be permanent.

Lead-based paint is usually not a hazard if it is in good condition, and it is not on an impact or friction surface, like a window. It is defined by the federal government as paint with lead levels greater than or equal to 1.0 milligram per square centimeter, or more than 0.5% by weight (5000 parts per million).

Renovation or demolition work impacting lead-based paint can be very dangerous. Lead dust can form when lead-based paint is dry scraped, dry sanded, heated, or removed by other mechanical means. Lead chips and dust can get on surfaces and objects that people touch. Settled lead dust can re-enter the air when people vacuum, sweep, or walk through it.

BEFORE and during remodeling or demolition projects for structures built before 1978, you should:

- Have the paint tested to determine the lead concentration.
- Do not use a belt-sander, propane torch, heat gun, dry scraper, dry sandpaper, or abrasive blast to remove lead-based paint. These actions create large amounts of lead dust and fumes. Lead dust can remain in a building or home long after the work is done.
- Hire a contractor that is state-certified to perform lead-related construction work.
- Make sure the contractor is using lead-safe work practices during any activity that disturbs the paint. The City of San Diego will be offering free training for lead-safe work practices this year. Contact Alan Johanns at (858) 573-1262 for more information.

A new federal regulation requires contractors, maintenance staff, electricians, plumbers, painters, carpenters, and anyone else that disturbs more than 2 square feet of paint in a pre-1978 building, to distribute a federal lead hazard information pamphlet to the owner and tenant before renovation work begins. To obtain the pamphlet or a compliance handbook on this pre-renovation rule, you can contact (800) 424-LEAD or on the internet at www.epa.gov/lead.

The City of San Diego has a new program entitled "Lead Safe Neighborhoods Program." If you have any questions or need additional information regarding lead paint hazards, please contact Environmental Services at (858) 694-7000.



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New Chief Building Official appointed



Isam Hasenin is the new Chief Deputy Director for the Development Services Department, responsible for the Building Development Review and Inspection Services divisions. This key position serves as the Chief Building Official for the City of

San Diego, with the responsibility to ensure public safety in buildings. The Chief Building Official also serves as technical advisor to the City Manager, advising him of projects that could be problematic.

With this appointment comes restructuring to optimize the department's efforts. "We reorganized the Building Development Review and Inspection Services divisions under the Chief Building Official to provide a clear line of authority on code interpretation and implementation in the department," said Department Director Tina Christiansen. "Codes are becoming more complex and require more interpretation and better coordination between those who provide plan review and inspection."

Hasenin has more than 18 years of design, plan review and code development experience, and is a registered Civil Engineer, Certified Building Official and Plans Examiner. Hasenin most recently served as Assistant Building Official and Chief Engineer for the City of Long Beach Department of Planning and Building. He previously worked for the City of San Diego in the capacity of Structural Engineering Senior for more than 10 years. Hasenin is a published author in the area of accessibility and a frequent lecturer and presenter of code-related classes and seminars. He is also an active participant in the code development process and serves on many professional boards and committees. Hasenin earned a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from San Diego State University and a master's degree in Civil Engineering with an emphasis in structural design from Pennsylvania State University.

New construction codes take effect in November

The City Council's Land Use and Housing Committee (LU&H) met on July 23 to review proposed amendments to the San Diego Municipal Code necessary to adopt the 2001 California construction codes. As a part of the public hearing process the committee considered input and recommendations by a number of individuals, organizations and the

Board of Building Appeals and Advisors.

The LU&H committee unanimously approved the adoption of the proposed construction codes and approved the proposed municipal code amendments as presented, which incorporate revisions due to previously submitted public comments. LU&H has taken issue with one item that will be discussed by the City Council when they hear the proposed code changes in September. City Council was expected to hear the issue Sept. 9 or 10, and the 2001 California construction codes are planned to go into effect Nov. 1, 2002.

Construction permit applications submitted on or after Nov. 1 will have to comply with the new construction codes as well as approved amendments in the San Diego Municipal Code. Construction permit applications that are closed when a permit is not issued within 360 days of the initial application file date must be resubmitted as required in Section §129.0211 "Closing of Building Permit Application" of the San Diego Municipal Code. The department will determine the applicable codes based on the acceptance date of the submitted permit application and associated plans and documents. Permit applications submitted prior to Nov. 1 will be processed under the existing codes. Check the Permit Press for future updates or call Ali Fattah at (619) 446-5092 for more information.

Water Quality Update: "Sue Sump" who?

Hey "Sue," "Sue Sump." Welcome to San Diego.

If you haven't heard about her arrival, you better learn quickly because she is here. You will likely never meet *Sue* but her fingerprints will be left on future development and redevelopment projects in San Diego County forever. "*Sue Sump*" is actually not a person, a monster truck, or racing sloop but an acronym for Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (SUSMP), a set of new regulations for development and redevelopment. The regulations are tied to the 1972 Federal Clean Water Act, which established the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program. The NPDES permit program regulates the discharge of pollutants to waters of the United States.

The purpose of the SUSMP is simple:

To reduce the negative impacts to receiving waters (e.g. our precious beaches and bays) from development runoff.

As with a lot of things in life, although simple in concept, implementation will be complicated and one of the biggest challenges facing cities throughout Southern California. The new regulations will require that urban runoff pollution issues be specifically addressed in development planning for public and private projects. In addition to considering alternative site design approaches and instituting source controls (i.e. methods to keep pollutants out of contact with storm water), structural treatment devices or storm water Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be required. Specific BMP examples include biofilters (e.g. grass swales), detention basins, infiltration basins, wetlands, drainage inserts, filtration systems, and hydrodynamic separator systems. These structural treatment devices are relatively new to our area but have been used in other parts of the nation for years.

The Model Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (SUSMP), which is intended to guide the implementation countywide, is avail-

able on the County of San Diego's Project Clean Water website, San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) website at http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb9/Programs/Storm_Water/storm_water.html. This Model SUSMP was submitted to the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board in February 2002 and was reviewed and approved by the Regional Board on June 12th of this year, through a public process. The other municipalities in San Diego County and the County itself are now required to adopt their own Local SUSMP and ordinances consistent with the Regional Board-approved Model SUSMP within 180 days after that approval.

Under the Local SUSMP, each jurisdiction will approve the SUSMP project plan(s) as part of the development plan approval process for discretionary projects, and prior to issuing permits for ministerial projects. To allow flexibility in meeting SUSMP design standards, structural treatment control Best Management Practices (BMPs) may be located on- or off-site, used singly or in combination, or shared by multiple developments, provided certain conditions are met.

The SUSMP requirements will have a broad impact and add costs to projects. It is anticipated that the cost of these required measures would offset the cost of other watershed protection measures in the future. Polluted runoff impacts the aquatic environment, human health, and the economy. Better site design with water quality in mind has considerable potential to reduce the environmental impacts of development. Implementing water quality features within development breaks the pattern of designing for flood control where water quality was largely neglected. I think you would agree water quality is important to all of us, so let's take steps now to protect it for future generations.

Maybe someday, after *Sue*'s been around for a while, water quality features will be everywhere. One neighbor will ask another on a rainy Saturday afternoon, "how's your biofilter doing?"



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Service Locations

Development Services Center, 1222 First Ave.
Development Services (Building Development Review, Information & Application Services, Land Development Review, Support Services).
Stadium/Kearny Mesa area, 9601 Ridgehaven

Ct., Suite 220
Development Services Inspection Services: Selected permit issuance, reinspection fee payment (checks only), 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., office open to 5. Construction, sign, demolition inspectors.
City Administration Building, 202 C St.
Planning Department (Long Range Planning, Multiple Species Conservation Program, Transportation Planning, Facilities Financing)
Executive Complex, 1010 Second Ave.
Engineering and Capital Projects Dept., Traffic Engineering.
Civic Center Plaza, 1200 Third Ave.
Neighborhood Code Compliance

Community Service Centers are located in many neighborhoods, including Clairemont, Market Street, Mid-City, Navajo, Otay Mesa/Nestor, Peninsula, Rancho Bernardo and San Ysidro. Call City Information at (619) 236-5555 for the nearest location and operating hours.