

San Diego Planning Commission Meeting

**PHONE-IN TESTIMONY PERIOD NOW OPEN FOR
2025 CALIFORNIA WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE CODE (CWUI) WORKSHOP**

Telephone - Dial 669-254-5252 or (Toll Free) 833-568-8864.

When prompted, input Webinar ID: **160 944 0367**

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San Diego Fire–Rescue Department

2025 California Wildland–Urban Interface Code

Planning Commission

Item #3

December 18, 2025

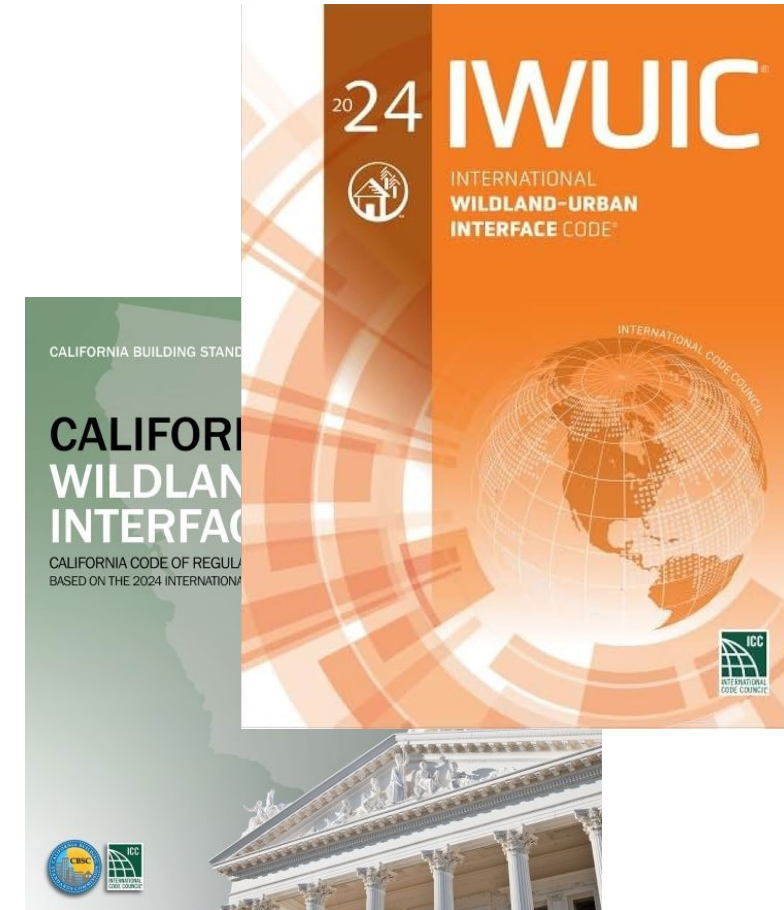
California Wildland-Urban Interface Code

- CWUIC being adopted for the first time by California
- Published on July 1, 2025
- Effective date January 1, 2026
- Part 7 of the California Building Standards Code, adopted on triennial cycle.



California Wildland-Urban Interface Code

- Based on 2024 International Wildland-Urban Interface Code
- Heavily Amended by California
- Consolidates several existing codes and regulations all applying to Wildland-Urban Interface Areas



CWUIC Organization

Chapter 1

- Administration

Chapter 2

- Definitions

Chapter 3

- Chapter 49 CFC - Adoption of Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map

Chapter 4

- Title 14 – State Minimum Fire Safe Regulations

Chapter 5

- Chapter 7A California Building Code, R337 California Residential Code
- Ignition Resistant Building Construction

Chapter 6

- California Fire Code Chapter 49
- Title 14

Appendix H

- California Civil Code, Government Code, Public Resources Code, Title 14, Title 19, Health & Safety Code.
- Cross Referencing Tool

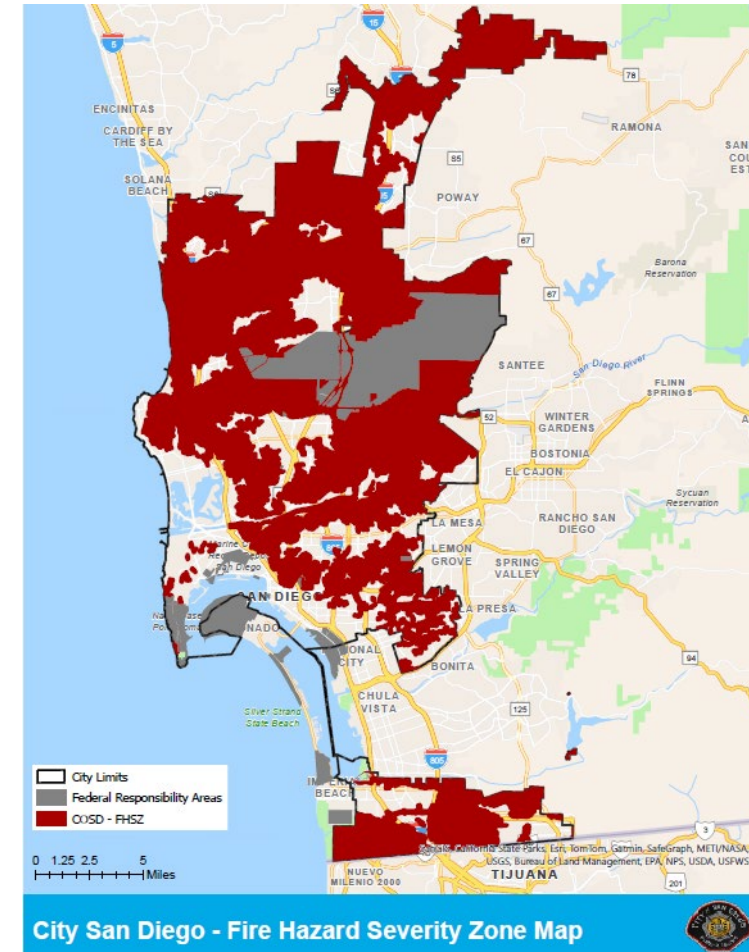
Scope

- Requirements set forth in the California Wildland-Urban Interface Code apply in all Wildland-Urban Interface Areas as defined in the CWUIC.
- Overlay Code
 - Provides additional requirements beyond the base codes such as the building code or residential code

Wildland-Urban Interface Area Defined

Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area:

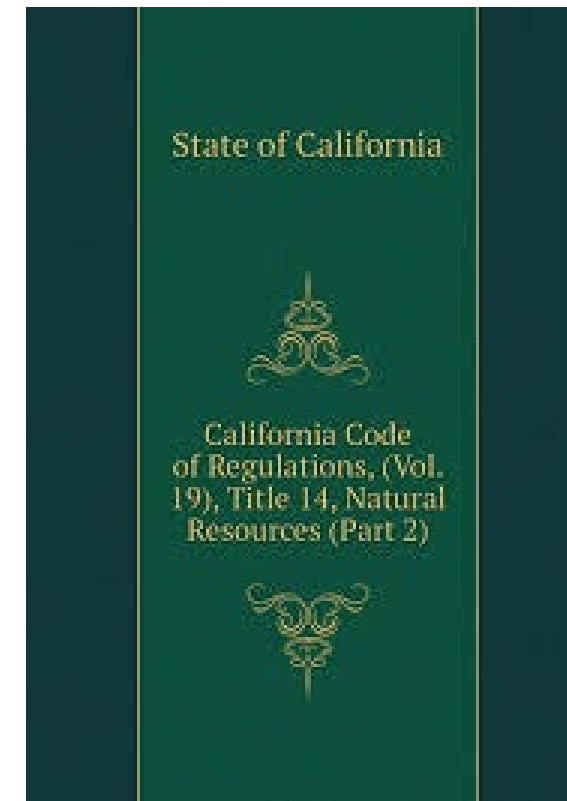
- *A geographical area identified by the state as a “Fire Hazard Severity Zone” in accordance with the Public Resources Code Sections 4201 through 4204 and Government Code Sections 51175 through 51189, and other areas designated by the enforcing agency to be at a significant risk from wildfires.*
- SFM issued recommended FHSZ for San Diego on March 24, 2025
- City of San Diego Adopted FHSZ maps including additional areas designated by SDFD through Ordinance O-21992 with an effective date of August 30, 2025.



Ch. 4 - Wildland-Urban Interface Area Requirements

Title 14, Division 1.5, Chapter 7, Subchapter 2 State
Minimum Fire Safe Regulations (July 1, 2021):

1. Administration
2. Ingress and Egress
3. Signing and Building Numbering
4. Emergency Water Standards
5. Building Siting, Setbacks and Fuel Modification



Fire Access Requirements

- Establishes requirements for fire department access for new subdivisions and individual structures.
- Based on Access Requirements in CFC and Title 14

Width	Road Surfaces	Grades
Turning Radius	Turnarounds	Turnouts
Gates	Road and Driveway Structures	Dead-End Roads

Dead-End Roads

The maximum length of a Dead-end Road, including all Dead-end Roads accessed from that Dead-end Road, shall not exceed the following cumulative lengths, regardless of the number of parcels served:

Zoning	Maximum Length
Parcels zoned for less than one acre	800 feet
Parcels zoned for 1 acre to 4.99 acres	1,320 feet
Parcels zoned for 5 acres to 19.99 acres	2,640 feet
Parcels zoned for 20 acres or larger	5,280 feet

Water Supply Requirements

- Establishes requirements for fire department water supply for new subdivisions and individual structures.
- Based on water supply Requirements in CFC and Title 14

Water Supply - Fire
Flow

Hydrants – number
and spacing

Hydrant
Identification –
reflectorized blue
marker

Testing and
Maintenance

Road Signs and Building Numbering

Road Signs

- New roads must be identified by name or number
- min. 4" letter height
- Reflectorized

Address Numbers

- All buildings must be addressed
- References CFC for minimum letter or number height
- Addresses for residential buildings must be reflectorized.

Chapter 5 – Ignition Resistant Building Construction

Contains requirements previously located in CBC 7A and CRC R337.

Construction Requirements affecting exterior envelope of home.

Applies to new buildings, additions and remodels.



Chapter 6 – Fire Protection Requirements

- Fire Protection Plans may be required to determine the acceptability of fire protection and life safety measures designed to mitigate wildfire hazards.
 - Fire department access
 - Egress
 - Road and address signage
 - Water supply
 - Fuel modification zones
 - Mitigation measures to address the projects specific wildfire risk



Chapter 6 – Fire Protection Requirements

Landscape Plans

- Must be provided when required by the Fire code Official.
- Development and maintenance requirements for defensible space *Fuel Modification Zones* for new projects
- Spacing requirements for trees and shrubs based on height and slope
- New plantings of trees or shrubs shall be fire-smart vegetation
- Similar to current brush management zones



Chapter 6 – Fire Protection Requirements

Maintenance of Defensible Space

- Required for all structures located in a Wildland-Urban Interface Area
- WUI Code references PRC 4291, GOV 51182, Title 14 1299.03, Title 19 3.07.
- Local Amendments include specific requirements for each zone including Zone 0 based on most recent BOF draft regulations.

Chapter 6 – Fire Protection Requirements

Subdivision Review Survey

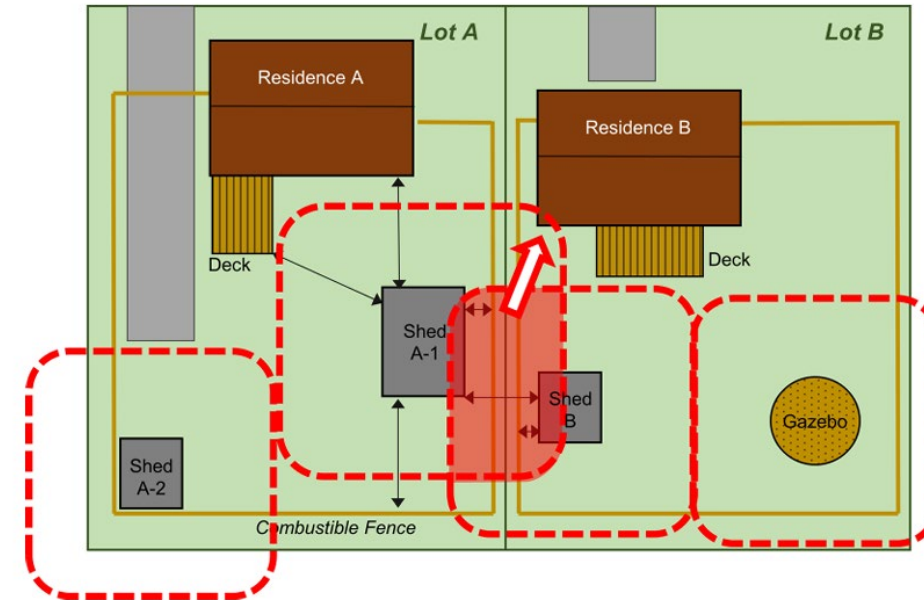
- Identify existing subdivisions :
 - Having more than 30 dwellings
 - located in a VHFHSZ
 - Without a secondary egress route
- The BOF, OSFM and Local government must develop recommendations to improve the subdivisions fire safety.
- Re-survey every 5 years



Building Siting and Setbacks

Parcels required to provide a minimum 30-foot setback for all buildings from property lines and the center of a road. Title 14 1276.01

- Intent is to reduce likelihood of structure-to-structure ignition during a wildfire event.
- Setback reductions are allowed based on practical reasons including:
 - Parcel dimension or size
 - Topographic limitations Development density requirements
 - Other development patterns that promote low carbon emissions outcomes
 - Sensitive habitat
 - Other site constraints
- Where these conditions are present an alternative method to reduce structure-to-structure ignition may be proposed.



Building Siting and Setbacks



Chapter 6 – Fire Protection Requirements

Wildfire Protection Measures

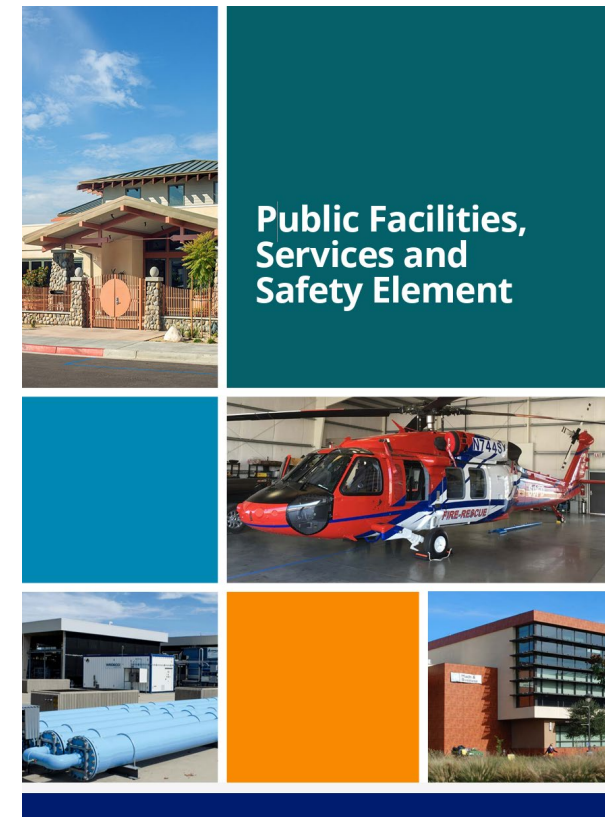
- Identification of Strategic Ridgelines
 - Support Fire Suppression Activities
- Fuel Breaks
 - Local jurisdiction determines need and location for approval of new parcels or zoning density increases.
- Green belts, greenways, open spaces and Parks
 - May function as fuel breaks



Chapter 6 – Fire Protection Requirements

General Plan Safety Element

- Reviewed and updated as necessary to address the risk of fire for land classified as an LRA Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. GOV 65302(g)(3)
- Draft shall be submitted to the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (BOF) at least **90 days** prior to adoption or amendment. GOV 65302.5(b)(1)
- BOF shall review the draft and recommend changes to the planning agency within **60 days** of its receipt regarding the requirements in GOV Section 65302.5(b)(2).
- City council shall consider the recommendations, if any, made by the BOF and respond to the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection and any local agency providing fire protection in compliance with Government Code Section 65302.5(b)(3) and (b)(4) and Title 14, Division 1.5, Chapter 7, Article 6.



Local Adoption

- SDFD proposed local amendments to CWUIC and CFC
- Presented to Public Safety Committee on November 12, 2025.
- CWUIC takes effect on January 1, 2026 statewide.
- Local Amendments anticipated to be effective mid-January 2026.

Questions?

