



The City of San Diego  
Fire-Rescue Department

## Code Change Report 2025 California Wildland-Urban Interface Code

The 2025 edition of the California Building Standards Code (CBSC), Title 24 California Code of Regulations, Part 7, has been adopted by the State of California and will be effective on a statewide basis on January 1, 2026. The City of San Diego proposes to adopt by reference part 7 of the CBSC including local amendments and additions as illustrated in this report.

**Wildland-Urban Interface Code Regulations:** The 2025 California Wildland-Urban Interface Code (CFC) is Part 7 of Title 24 in the California Code of Regulations and is based on the 2024 International Wildland-Urban Interface Code. Local amendments are published in Chapter 5, Article 12, Divisions 1-6 of the Municipal Code.

The local amendments as proposed are necessary due to the following reasons:

1. Comply with enacted State legislation.
2. Comply with the California Building Standards Code.
3. Local amendments necessary due to local climatic, topographical or geological conditions.

The local review process will include the following:

1. Review by the Technical Advisory Committee on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025.
2. Review by affected industry stakeholder groups in November 2025 via the Community Risk Reduction web site and direct outreach.
3. Review and approval by the City Council expected January 2026. The effective date of the local amendments, shall be effective after final passage and filing with the California Building Standards Commission.

For questions or comments regarding the proposed amendments please contact Daniel Hypes, Assistant Fire Marshal, at 619-533-4427 and via e-mail at [dhypes@sandiego.gov](mailto:dhypes@sandiego.gov).

**Section Headings**

**Section headings that are highlighted in red text indicate newly proposed local amendments or additions to the 2025 San Diego Wildland-Urban Interface Code.**

**Text**

Text has been provided to distinguish between the CWUIC language and the proposed language with local amendments and additions. CWUIC language that has been removed is identified with ~~strikeout~~ and proposed additions or amendments to the CWUIC language are identified with underline.

## **2025 California Wildland-Urban Interface Code Amendments**

### **CFC Section 101.1 Title – Amended (New)**

~~These regulations shall be known as the California Wildland-Urban Interface Code of [NAME OF JURISDICTION], hereinafter referred to as "this code."~~

This code, which is a portion of the San Diego Municipal Code (SDMC), shall be known as the "San Diego Wildland-Urban Interface Code," (San Diego WUI Code) and whenever the word "code" is used in this code it shall mean the San Diego WUI Code.

**Reason:** This administrative provision clarifies that Chapter 5, Article 12, Divisions 1-6 of the San Diego Municipal Code is specific to the local adoption of the California Wildland-Urban Interface Code including necessary amendments, is titled "The San Diego Wildland-Urban Interface Code" and when the term code is used, it refers to the San Diego Wildland-Urban Interface Code.

### **CFC Section 104.7 Official Records – Amended (New)**

~~The code official shall keep official records as required by Sections 104.7.1 through 104.7.5. Such official records shall be retained for not less than 5 years or for as long as the building or structure to which such records relate remains in existence, unless otherwise provided by other regulations.~~

Any records associated with this Article shall be retained in accordance with the retention periods set forth in the City's Master Records Schedule on file with the City Clerk and in compliance with local, state and federal laws.

**Reason:** This section, which references sections 104.71. – 104.7.5, listed specific types of records and associated retention periods which may conflict with federal, state or local laws. This amendment revised that language to indicate that all records will be

maintained in accordance with the city's master records schedule which is periodically updated to ensure consistency with applicable laws.

**CFC Section 108.2 Fee Schedule – Amended (New)**

~~Where a permit is required, a fee for each permit shall be paid as required, in accordance with the schedule as established by the applicable governing authority.~~

Fees shall be charged to recover the cost related to the issuance of permits and associated inspections, or other inspections or activities as deemed necessary by the Fire Code Official to determine the extent of compliance with the provisions of this code, in accordance with the User Fee Schedule adopted by City Council.

**Reason:** Expands on the model code language which requires fees for permits and also includes fees to recover the costs related to the issuance of permits and associated inspections, or other inspections or activities as deemed necessary by the Fire Code Official. This section also clarifies that the fees will be charged in accordance with the with the fee schedule established by resolution of the City Council.

**CFC Section 109.3.7 Violation Penalties – Amended (New)**

~~Persons who shall violate a provision of this code or shall fail to comply with any of the requirements thereof or who shall erect, install, alter, repair or do work in violation of the approved construction documents or directive of the code official, or of a permit or certificate used under provisions of this code, shall be guilty of a [SPECIFY OFFENSE], punishable by a fine of not more than [AMOUNT] dollars or by imprisonment not exceeding [NUMBER OF DAYS], or both such fine and imprisonment. Each day that a violation continues after due notice has been served shall be deemed a separate offense.~~

**(1) Civil Penalties.**

- a. Any person who commits, causes, or maintains a violation of the San Diego WUI Code shall be subject to administrative citations and civil

penalties, as set forth in Chapter 1, Article 2 of the San Diego Municipal Code. The fines for such violations shall be determined in accordance with the User Fee Schedule adopted by City Council.

- b. The imposition of civil penalties shall not be deemed a waiver of the City's right to seek any other remedy available at law or in equity, up to and including criminal prosecution.

**(2) Criminal Penalties.**

- a. Any person who violates any provision of the San Diego WUI Code, or any order, rule, or regulation made pursuant to the code, is guilty of a misdemeanor, in accordance with the authority granted by California Health and Safety Code section 13112, as set forth in Chapter 1, Article 2 of the San Diego Municipal Code.
- b. Each day that a violation of any provision of this code or any order of the Fire Code Official continues shall be deemed a separate and distinct offense.

**(3) Abatement and Cost Recovery**

- a. In addition to the penalties provided in this chapter, the Fire Code Official may seek legal or equitable relief to compel compliance. If any person fails or refuses to correct or eliminate a fire or life hazard after receiving a written order from the Fire Code Official, the City may cause the hazard to be abated in compliance with San Diego Municipal Code, Chapter 1, Article 2.
- b. All costs incurred by the City in the abatement of a fire or life hazard, as set forth in Chapter 1, Article 2, may be recovered from the person in violation.

**Reason:** Amends model code language regarding violation penalties and creates

separate sections for clarification to distinguish between civil penalties, criminal penalties and abatement and cost recovery in accordance with local, state and federal laws.

**CFC Section 112.1 General Board of Building Appeals and Advisors –**

**Amended (New)**

~~In order to hear and decide appeals of orders, decisions or determinations made by the code official relative to the application and interpretation of this code, there shall be and is hereby created a board of appeals. The board of appeals shall be appointed by the applicable governing authority and shall hold office at its pleasure. The board shall adopt rules of procedure for conducting its business and shall render all decisions and findings in writing to the appellant, with a duplicate copy to the code official.~~

When a question involving the interpretation of the intent and purpose of any provisions of the San Diego WUI Code or the suitability of alternate materials and types of construction is presented to the code official, the code official may request the Board of Building Appeals and Advisors to investigate such matters under the procedures established in section 111.0207 of the San Diego Municipal Code regarding building inspection. The request for Board of Building Appeals and Advisors action shall be made pursuant to section 111.0207(d).

**Reason:** The Board of Building Appeals and Advisors has already been established pursuant to Section 111.0207 of the Municipal Code and reviews requested code deviations, as well as interpretations from/for the San Diego Fire Code; the Building, Electrical, Plumbing, Mechanical, Residential Building, Green Building, and Existing Building Regulations. The Board evaluates alternatives proposed and advises the Building Official and Fire Chief as to suitability and equivalence to required building standards in the regulations.

**CFC Section 202 General Definitions – Amended (NEW)**

FIRE CODE OFFICIAL- means The Fire-Rescue Chief of the City of San Diego or other

~~designated authority charged with the administration and enforcement of the California Fire Code, or a duly authorized representative any member of the Fire-Rescue Department designated by the Fire-Rescue Chief to carry out the provisions of this Article.~~

*WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE AREA*—means A 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~~ City of San Diego Fire-Rescue Department to be at significant risk from wildfires.

**Reason:** These definitions provide clarification of terms found within the California Wildland-Urban Interface Code.

**CFC Section 302.1.1 Adoption of Fire Hazard Severity Zones – Added (New)**

The Council of the City of San Diego adopts the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones as recommended by the State Fire Marshal, as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, and includes additional areas on a map titled, “City of San Diego Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map,” on file with the City Clerk as Document No. OO-21992, effective August 30, 2025.

**Reason:** This section is included to clarify the adoption of the Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps as recommended by the State Fire Marshal and as adopted by the City of San Diego pursuant to GOV 51179. This map is essential in determining the extent of the Wildland-Urban Interface Area where the provisions of this code apply. This was previously located in CFC Chapter 49 and was moved to this section after Ch 49 was repealed and Part 7 was adopted by the CBSC.

**CFC Section 403.2.2 Road Signs – Amended (New)**

- a. Newly constructed or approved Roads, including naming and signage, must comply with Chapter 12, Article 5, Division 11 of the San Diego Municipal Code

~~and the City's Land Development Manual. must be identified by a name or number through a consistent system that provides for sequenced or patterned numbering and/or nonduplicative naming within each Local Jurisdiction.~~ This section does not require any entity to rename or renumber existing roads, nor shall a ~~R~~oad providing access only to a single commercial or industrial ~~O~~ccupancy require naming or numbering.

- ~~b. The size of letters, numbers and symbols for Road signs shall be a minimum four-inch letter height, half-inch stroke, reflectorized, contrasting with the background color of the sign.~~
- ~~c. During "red-flag" warnings or fire weather watch conditions, the *Fire Code Official* or their designee may prohibit street parking, so a wider pathway is available to support rapid evacuation when side-street parking narrows the road to a smaller width than is required by Section 403.1.2. Such areas shall be marked with signs approved by the *Fire Code Official*.~~

**Reason:** The City's Land Development Manual already contains a road identification system meeting or exceeding the criteria listed in 403.2.2. This also adds a requirement for road signs to include signs prohibiting parking during "red flag" warnings or fire weather watch conditions to maintain adequate road width for evacuations. This is consistent with an existing local addition to the CFC included in section 503.3.1. See explanation for CFC 503.3.1 for additional background.

**CFC Section 504.2.3 Drip Edge Flashing – Added (New)**

When drip edge flashing is used at the free edges of roofing materials, it must be non-combustible.

**Reason:** Carries over non-combustibility requirements for drip edge flashing that were previously adopted in SDMC sections 145.0705(b) and 149.0337(d)(2) as local additions to

Chapter 7A of the California Building Code and section 337R of the California Residential Code. This local addition supports home hardening in WUI areas based on the increased wildfire risk due to climatic and topographical features.

**CFC Section 504.8.3 Vinyl Window Reinforcing – Added (New)**

Glazing frames made of vinyl materials shall have welded corners, metal reinforcement in the interlock area, and be certified to the most current edition of American Architectural Manufacture's Association (AAMA)/ Window and Door Manufacture's Association (WDMA)/Canadian Standards Association (CSA) 101/I.S.2/A440-22 structural requirements.

**Reason:** Carries over reinforcement requirements for vinyl windows and updates the referenced standard that was previously adopted in SDMC sections 145.0708 and 149.0337(e) as local additions to Chapter 7A of the California Building Code and section 337R of the California Residential Code. This local addition supports home hardening in WUI areas based on the increased wildfire risk due to climatic and topographical features.

**CFC Section 601.3 Division 6 Definitions – Amended (New)**

Where used in this chapter, the terms listed below shall be defined as follows:

DEFENSIBLE SPACE. *Defensible space* means ~~T~~he buffer that landowners ~~a responsible person are~~ is required to create on their property between a ~~“Building or Structure” structure~~ and the plants, brush and trees or other items surrounding the ~~“Building or Structure” structure~~ that could ignite in the event of a fire.

Fuel modification zone means a strip of land where combustible vegetation has been thinned or modified or both and may be partially or totally replaced with approved fire-

smart and/or irrigated plants to provide an acceptable level of risk from vegetation fires.

Fuel modification reduces the radiant and convective heat on a *structure* and provides valuable *defensible space* for firefighters to make an effective stand against an approaching fire front.

*Hazardous fire area* means any land which is covered with native and naturalized vegetation including grass, grain, brush or forest, whether privately or publicly owned, or which is so situated or is of such inaccessible location that a fire originating upon such land would result an abnormally difficult job of suppression or would result in great and unusual damage through fire or resulting erosion.

*Public nuisance* means the existence of dry and drying weeds, rubbish and waste material on property, lands or premises which are dangerous or injurious to that or neighboring property, lands or premises and which are detrimental to the welfare of the occupants or residents of the vicinity.

*Responsible person* has the same meaning as set forth in Chapter 1, Article 1, Division 2 of the San Diego Municipal Code, including any person or entity who owns or who is legally obligated to maintain a *structure*.

*Structure* means any habitable building designed primarily for human occupancy including residential, commercial, educational and industrial uses and accessory buildings adjacent thereto that form a means of transmitting fire to the habitable building.

*Vegetation* means all plants, including trees, shrubs, grass, and perennial or annual plants.

**Reason:** These definitions are needed to clarify defensible space requirements and

maintain consistency with current practice and state law.

**CFC Section 603.2 Application – Amended (New)**

All new plantings of vegetation in State Responsibility Area (SRA) and Local Responsibility Areas (LRA) designated as a Fire Hazard Severity Zone Wildland-Urban Interface Areas within the City of San Diego shall comply with Sections 603.3 through 603.4.2.15 and the “Landscape Regulations” set forth in Chapter 14, Article 2, Division 04 of the San Diego Municipal Code.

**Reason:** This section was amended to simplify the application to any Wildland-Urban interface area which is a defined term and applies to any Fire Hazard Severity Zones in the SRA or LRA and any additional areas designated by the local jurisdiction. This also includes references to the Landscape Regulations in the SDMC.

**CFC Section 603.3 Landscape Plans – Amended (New)**

Landscape plans shall be provided for any new construction of, or additions to structures located in or adjacent to a hazardous fire area or when required by the Fire Code Official. The landscape plan shall include development and maintenance requirements for the vegetation management fuel modification zones adjacent to structures and roadways, and provide significant fire hazard reduction benefits for public and firefighting safety.

**Exception.** Landscape plans are not required where it is determined by the Fire Code Official that the establishment of fuel modification zones is not necessary based on lot size, configuration, or proximity to hazardous vegetation.

**Reason:** Provides additional clarification to determine when landscape plans are required to be submitted consistent with current SDMC brush management requirements, while still allowing for fire code official discretion.

**CFC Section 603.3.1 Contents – Amended (New)**

Landscape plans shall contain the following:

1. Delineation of the 5-foot (1524 mm), 30-foot (9144 mm) and 100-foot (30 480 mm) fuel management zones *fuel modification zones* from all *structures*.
2. Identification of existing *vegetation* to remain and proposed new vegetation.
3. Identification of irrigated areas.
4. A plant legend with both botanical and common names, and identification of all plant material symbols.
5. Identification of ground coverings within the 30-foot (9144 mm) zone.
6. Identification of all hardscapes within the 100-foot (30 480 mm) fuel management modification zone from all structures.
7. Identification of all slope grade breaks between fuel modification zones: 0-20%, 20-40%, and over 40%.

**Reason:** Includes requirement for delineation of the 5-foot ember resistant zone including any hardscapes as well as slope grade breaks on landscape plans to help determine compliance with zone 0 and required plant spacing in other fuel modification zones.

**CFC Section 603.4.1 Shrubs – Amended (New)**

All new plantings of shrubs shall comply with the following:

1. Shrubs shall not exceed 6 feet (1829 mm) 4 feet (1219 mm) in height in zone 1 and 6 feet (1829 mm) in height in zone 2;
2. Groupings of shrubs are limited to a maximum aggregate diameter of 10 feet (3048 mm);

3. Shrub groupings shall be separated from other groupings a minimum of 15 feet (4572 mm) or as required by table 604.3.6 (1), whichever is greater;
4. Shrub groupings shall be separated from structures a minimum of 30 feet (9144 mm); and
5. Where shrubs are located below or within a tree's drip line, the lowest tree branch shall be a minimum of three times the height of the understory shrubs or 10 feet (3048 mm), whichever is greater.

**Reason:** Reduces maximum height of shrubs in zone 1 from 6' to 4' consistent with requirements established in SDMC brush management regulations.

**CFC Section 603.4.2 Trees – Amended (New)**

Trees shall be managed as follows within the 30-foot zone (9144 mm) of a structure:

1. New trees shall be planted and maintained so that the tree's drip line at maturity is a minimum of 10 feet (3048 mm) from any combustible structure; and
2. The horizontal distance between crowns of new trees and crowns of adjacent trees shall not be less than 10 feet (3048 mm) or as required by table 604.3.6 (1), whichever is greater; and
3. All portions of trees, other than the trunk, which extend within 10 feet (3048 mm) of a structure or the outlet of any chimney, must be cut back. Existing trees shall be trimmed to provide a minimum separation of 10 feet (3048 mm) away from chimney and stovepipe outlets per California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 1299.03.

**Reason:** Expands on the requirements for trees to be 10 feet from a chimney and includes a minimum separation distance of 10' from structures consistent with current SDMC brush management requirements.

**CFC Section 603.5 Fuel Modification Zone Requirements – Added (New)**

Where required by section 603.3, the landscape plans shall identify and establish *fuel modification zones*. The building or development permit must include legally binding covenants, conditions, and restrictions, designating the *fuel modification zones* and property owner or community maintenance responsibilities.

- (1) The standard fuel modification area is 100 feet (30 480 mm) in width, measured out horizontally from the *structure* in all directions on the site and is comprised of three (3) distinct zones. The width of each zone shall be established according to Table 603.5.
- (2) The *Fire Code Official* may increase the *fuel modification zone* beyond the 100-foot (30,480 mm) minimum if fuel or topography or both are determined to increase the fire hazard severity, and when required, based on a fire protection plan. Any increase to the *fuel modification zone* beyond the 100-foot minimum shall comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations governing environmentally sensitive lands.
- (3) The *fuel modification zones* must be established and maintained on the subject property, unless a recorded easement is granted by an adjacent property owner to the owner of the subject property to establish and maintain the required *fuel modification zone(s)* on the adjacent property.
- (4) The *fuel modification zones* shall extend for a distance not less than 100 feet (30 480 mm) from all portions of the *structure* to provide an effective fire break between all *structures* and contiguous areas of native or naturalized *vegetation*. Where a minimum of 100 feet (30 480 mm) cannot be provided, an applicant may request approval of alternative compliance if all the following conditions exist:
  - a. The proposed alternative compliance provides sufficient *defensible space* between all *structures* on the premises and

- contiguous areas of native or naturalized vegetation as demonstrated to the satisfaction of the *Fire Code Official* based on documentation that addresses the topography of the site, existing and potential fuel load, and other characteristics related to fire protection and the context of the proposed development;
- b. The proposed alternative compliance includes additional mitigation efforts to building construction or other site modifications to address the lack of *defensible space*; and
  - c. The proposed alternative compliance is not detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare of persons residing or working in the area.
- (5) The *Fire Code Official* may require fuel modification zones to be established for existing structures or previously established fuel modification zones to be modified in compliance with this section for any area, independent of size, location, or condition if it is determined that an imminent fire hazard exists based on current conditions related to fuels, slope, new development or other hazardous conditions as determined by the *Fire Code Official*.
- (6) The height, area and spacing requirements for vegetation in a fuel modification zone shall comply with Tables 604.3.6 (1) and 604.3.6 (2).
- (7) Fuel modification zones shall be maintained at all times in accordance with Section 604.3.

**Reason:** This section clarifies when fuel modification zones need to be identified and established on landscape plans and established minimum requirements therein. Necessary due to the climatic and topographic conditions in the region creating severe wildfire risk due to the hot, dry climate and steep terrain resulting in extreme wildfire conditions.

**CFC Table 603.5 Fuel Modification Zone Width Requirements – Added (New)**

**Table 603.5**  
**Fuel Modification Zone Width Requirements**

<b><u>Fuel Modification Zone (FMZ)</u></b>	<b><u>Distance From Structure</u></b>
<u>Zone 0</u>	<u>0 - 5 feet</u>
<u>Zone 1</u>	<u>5 - 30 feet</u>
<u>Zone 2</u>	<u>30 - 100 feet</u>
<u>Zone 3<sup>a</sup></u>	<u>100 – 200 feet</u>

a. Where required by section 603.5 (2) the *Fire Code Official* may require an additional 100' for a total *fuel modification zone* of 200'

**Reason:** Clarifies the required width of each fuel modification zone and introduces the new zone 0 and zone 3 (where required by the fire code official) in addition to the zone 1 and 2 requirements consistent with state law. Necessary due to the climatic and topographic conditions in the region creating severe wildfire risk due to the hot, dry climate and steep terrain resulting in extreme wildfire conditions.

**CFC Section 603.5.1 Fuel Modification of Combustible Vegetation from Sides of Roadways – Added (New)**

The *Fire Code Official* may require a *responsible person* to modify combustible vegetation in the area within 20 feet (6096 mm) from each side of a public or private road adjacent to the property to establish a *fuel modification zone*.

**Reason:** Allows the *Fire Code Official* to require a property owner to modify combustible vegetation in the area within 20 feet from each side of a public or private road adjacent to the property to establish a *Fuel Modification Zone* to facilitate evacuation or access needs. Necessary due to the climatic and topographic conditions in the region creating

severe wildfire risk due to the hot, dry climate and steep terrain resulting in extreme wildfire conditions.

**CFC Section 604.1 General – Amended (New)**

A responsible person shall manage Hazardous vegetation and fuels shall be managed to reduce the severity of potential exterior wildfire exposure to buildings structures and to reduce the risk of fire spreading to buildings structures, as required by applicable laws and regulations.

~~Defensible space shall be managed around all buildings and structures in State Responsibility Areas (SRA) as required in Public Resources Code 4291.~~

**Reason:** Clarifies who is responsible for managing vegetation and fuels around structures. Replaced the term building with the term structure as defined in Chapter 6 for clarification and consistency.

**CFC Section 604.2 Application – Amended (New)**

~~Buildings and structures located in the following Wildland-Urban Interface areas~~ shall maintain the required ~~hazardous~~ vegetation and fuel management:

1. All unincorporated lands designated as a State Responsibility Area (SRA).
2. Land designated as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone by a city or local agency.
3. Land designated in a city or local agency ordinance as a wildland-urban interface (WUI) area.

**Reason:** Replaced the term buildings and structures with the term structure as defined in Chapter 6 for clarification and consistency. Clarified that defensible space is required

within all WUI areas as defined in this code.

**CFC Section 604.3 Requirements – Amended (New)**

Hazardous ~~v~~Vegetation and fuels around all ~~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, Article 3, Section 1299.03.
3. California Government Code, Section 51182.
4. California Code of Regulations, Title 19, Division 1, Chapter 7, Subchapter 1, Section 3.07.

**Reason:** Replaced the term buildings and structures with the term structure as defined in Chapter 6 for clarification and consistency.

**CFC Section 604.3.1 Defensible Space Fuel Modification Zones – Added (New)**

- (1) A responsible person shall at all times maintain a defensible space zone(s) around a structure within a Wildland-Urban Interface Area by removing, clearing, or modifying combustible vegetation and other flammable materials from areas within 100 feet (30 480 mm) from all portions of any structure. When a structure is setback less than 100 feet (30 480 mm) from the property line, a defensible space fuel modification zone shall be maintained in the area between the structure and the property line.
- (2) Distances may be increased by the Fire Code Official because of a site-specific analysis, based on local conditions or, when required, based on a fire protection plan.

**Reason:** Clarifies where defensible space fuel modification zones need to be established consistent with Government code 51182.

**CFC Section 604.3.2 Zone 0 Requirements – Added (New)**

Zone 0 is the area immediately adjacent to the exterior wall surface or patio, deck, or attachment to structures extending 5 feet (1524 mm) on a horizontal plane. Zone 0 requirements shall apply to all new structures applying for a building permit on or after the effective date of this Ordinance, and shall apply to existing structures one year after the Ordinance effective date. A compliance plan may be established to allow sufficient time for structures to fully comply with these regulations. The requirements within Zone 0 are as follows:

- (1) No landscape materials that are likely to be ignited by embers are permitted within Zone 0. This includes ornamental or native plants, shrubs, fallen leaves and tree needles, weeds, and combustible mulches including bark and woodchips; and
- (2) No items that are likely to be ignited by embers are permitted within Zone 0, including combustible boards, timbers, firewood, petroleum-based products, window boxes, and trellises. The responsible person shall keep the roof and rain gutters shall be kept clear of leaves and needles. The area under decks, balconies, and stairs shall be kept free from vegetation and combustible items.

**Reason:** Establishes requirements for zone 0 consistent with the draft regulations established by the Board of Forestry as a result of AB 3074. Specific requirements are included in this code for the readers convenience. Necessary due to the climatic and topographic conditions in the region creating severe wildfire risk due to the hot, dry climate and steep terrain resulting in extreme wildfire conditions.

**CFC Section 604.3.3 Zone 1 Requirements – Added (New)**

Zone 1 is the area immediately adjacent to Zone 0 and extends out in a horizontal plane from the structure. Zone 1 shall typically consist of pavement and permanently irrigated ornamental planting. All vegetation shall be well watered and well maintained by the responsible person. The requirements within Zone 1 are as follows:

- (1) Vegetation within Zone 1 shall be primarily low-growing and less than 4 feet (1219 mm) in height except for trees; and
- (2) The responsible person shall remove all dead or dying grass, plants, shrubs, trees, branches, leaves, weeds, and needles from Zone 1; and
- (3) Trees within Zone 1 shall be located away from structures to a minimum distance of 10 feet (3048 mm) as measured from the drip line of the tree at maturity to the roofline of a structure or chimney or stovepipe outlet; and
- (4) Exposed firewood piles shall be relocated outside of Zone 1 unless they are completely enclosed in a fire-resistant material.
- (5) Zone 1 includes a transitional area adjacent to Zone 0 that protects the integrity of Zone 0 and is the area within 5 feet (1524 mm) of Zone 0 or to the property line, whichever is closer. Plants within this transitional zone shall not be greater than 2 feet (610 mm) in height.

**Reason:** Establishes requirements for zone 1 consistent with current requirements in Title 14, GOV 51182 and SDMC brush management regulations. Specific requirements are included in this code for the readers convenience. Necessary due to the climatic and topographic conditions in the region creating severe wildfire risk due to the hot, dry climate and steep terrain resulting in extreme wildfire conditions.

**CFC Section 604.3.4 Zone 2 Requirements – Added (New)**

Zone 2 is the area immediately adjacent to Zone 1 extending out in a horizontal plane from the structure. The responsible person shall comply with the requirements within

Zone 2 as follows:

(1) Annual grasses and forbs shall be cut down to a maximum height of 4 inches (102 mm).

**Exception.** Grass may be maintained up to 18 inches (457 mm) in height on slopes where it is necessary stabilize the soil and prevent erosion.

(2) Dead and dying woody surface fuels and aerial fuels shall be removed; except loose surface litter, normally consisting of fallen leaves or needles, twigs, bark, cones, and small branches, shall be permitted to a maximum depth of 3 inches (76 mm).

(3) All exposed wood piles must have a minimum of 10 feet (3048 mm) of clearance, down to bare mineral soil, in all directions.

(4) Horizontal and vertical spacing among shrubs and trees must follow the spacing guidelines in Table 604.3.6 (1).

(5) Approximately 50% of the plants over 24 inches (610 mm) in height shall be cut and cleared to a height of 6 inches (125 mm) to achieve the spacing required in Table 604.3.6 (1).

(6) Ground cover or shrubs that are less than 24 inches (610 mm) in height can be maintained in mosaic groupings of up to 400 square feet (37 square meters). Groupings shall be separated by a minimum of 10 feet (3048 mm).

(7) All plants remaining after 50% are reduced in height, shall be pruned to reduce fuel loading. Non-native plants shall be pruned before native plants are pruned.

**Reason:** Establishes requirements for zone 2 consistent with current requirements in Title 14, GOV 51182 and SDMC brush management regulations. Specific requirements are included in this code for the readers convenience. Necessary due to the climatic and topographic conditions in the region creating severe wildfire risk due to the hot, dry climate and steep terrain resulting in extreme wildfire conditions.

**CFC Section 604.3.5 Zone 3 Requirements – Added (New)**

Zone 3, when applicable, is considered a thinning zone and is any fuel modification zone greater than 100 feet (30 480 mm) from a structure. When provided, either by conditions of development or where required by the Fire Code Official, the amount of fuel reduction and removal shall take into consideration the type and density of fuels, aspects, topography, weather patterns, and fire history. Typical fuel reduction in Zone 3 is 50% thinning between 100 and 150 feet from the structure and 30% thinning between 150 and 200 feet from the structure.

**Reason:** Establishes requirements for zone 3 where defensible space beyond 100 feet is required by the fire code official or by a fire safety expert as part of a fire protection plan. Necessary due to the climatic and topographic conditions in the region creating severe wildfire risk due to the hot, dry climate and steep terrain resulting in extreme wildfire conditions.

**CFC Section 604.3.6 Spacing and Separation Requirements – Added (New)**

The height, area and spacing of trees, shrubs and other vegetation shall be in accordance with Tables 604.3.6 (1) and 604.3.6 (2)

Table 604.3.6 (1)

<u>Plant Spacing Requirements</u>		
<u>Trees</u>	<u>Minimum horizontal space from edge of one tree canopy to the edge of the next tree canopy</u>	
	<u>Slope</u>	<u>Spacing</u>
	<u>0% to 20%</u>	<u>10 feet</u>
	<u>20% to 40%</u>	<u>20 feet</u>
	<u>Greater than 40%</u>	<u>30 feet</u>

		<u>Minimum horizontal space between edges of shrub</u>	
<u>Shrubs</u>	<u>Slope</u>	<u>Spacing</u>	
	<u>0% to 20%</u>		<u>2 times the height of the shrub</u>
	<u>20% to 40%</u>		<u>4 times the height of the shrub</u>
	<u>Greater than 40%</u>		<u>6 times the height of the shrub</u>
<u>Vertical Space</u>	<u>Minimum vertical space between top of shrub and bottom of lower tree branches:</u>  <u>3 times the height of the shrub</u>		

**Table 604.3.6(2)**  
Vegetation Height and Area Requirements

<u>Type of Vegetation</u>	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Maximum Height</u>	<u>Maximum Area /diameter</u>	<u>% of Slope / Minimum horizontal Spacing</u>
<u>Ground Cover</u>	<u>1 &amp; 2</u>	<u>12-inches</u>	<u>Not Applicable</u>	<u>Not Applicable</u>
<u>Mosaic Grouping of Ground Cover (GC)</u>	1	<u>18-inches</u>	<u>Groupings shall not exceed 200 sq. ft. without minimum spacing to next grouping</u>	<u>Table 604.3.6 (1)</u>
	2	<u>24-inches</u>	<u>Groupings shall not exceed 400 sq. ft. without</u>	<u>Table 604.3.6 (1)</u>

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			<u>minimum spacing to next grouping</u>	
<u>Single Shrub</u>	1	<u>4 feet</u> <u>(2 feet</u> <u>within Zone</u> <u>1</u> <u>Transitional</u> <u>area)</u>	<u>4-foot diameter</u>	<u>Table 604.3.6</u> <u>(1)</u>
	2	<u>6-feet</u>	<u>4-foot diameter</u>	<u>Table 604.3.6</u> <u>(1)</u>
<u>Grouping of shrubs</u>	1	<u>Not Allowed</u>	<u>Not Applicable</u>	<u>Not Applicable</u>
	2	<u>4-feet</u>	<u>Groupings shall not exceed</u> <u>100 sq. ft. without</u> <u>minimum spacing to next</u> <u>grouping</u>	<u>Table 604.3.6</u> <u>(1)</u>
<u>Single Tree</u>	1	<u>Not Applicable</u>	<u>Tree canopy at full</u> <u>maturity not allowed within</u> <u>10 feet of any structure</u>	<u>Table 604.3.6</u> <u>(1)</u>
	2	<u>Not Applicable</u>	<u>Not Applicable</u>	<u>Table 604.3.6</u> <u>(1)</u>

**Reason:** This section and the associated tables provide clarifications on vertical and horizontal spacing requirements for trees and shrubs consistent with the requirements of Title 14 section §1299.03 (b) 1. which references the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection's, "General Guidelines for Creating Defensible Space. Necessary due to the

climatic and topographic conditions in the region creating severe wildfire risk due to the hot, dry climate and steep terrain resulting in extreme wildfire conditions.

**CFC Section 604.3.7 Public Nuisance – Added (New)**

Any condition caused, maintained or permitted to exist in violation of any provisions this code which constitutes a threat to the public's health, safety and welfare may be deemed a public nuisance and may be abated by the City under the procedures set forth in San Diego Municipal Code, Chapter 1, Article 2, Divisions 06 and 07 and Chapter 5, Article 4, Division 02.

**Reason:** Clarifies that a violation of these requirements may be deemed a public nuisance consistent with California Government Code section 51177 and references existing abatement procedures established in with SDMC Chapter 1, Article 2, Divisions 6 & 7 and Chapter 5, Article 4, Division 2.

**CFC Section 604.3.8 Vacant Lots – Added (New)**

- (1) The responsible person shall remove trash, rubbish, debris, and other combustible materials, including weeds, which create a fire or safety hazard, must be removed from the property.
- (2) The responsible person shall clear properties of one acre or less of weeds and other combustible vegetation or materials in their entirety.
- (3) Properties larger than one acre:
  - a. shall have a minimum of 30 feet (9144 mm) of clearance from the property lines that abut improved properties; and
  - b. shall have a minimum of 100 feet (30 480 mm) of clearance from structures on adjacent properties.
- (4) Clearance Requirements:
  - a. Clearance of properties shall be accomplished by methods that will not

- disturb native soil or rootstock such as mowing or trimming. Cuttings may be mulched and left on top of the soil to a maximum depth of 3 inches (76 mm) or may be hauled to an approved landfill site; and
- b. Annual grasses and weeds shall not exceed a height of 4 inches (102 mm) or less; and
  - c. The responsible person shall remove all dead or dry plants, shrubs, weeds, leaves, and pine needles; and
  - d. Minimum vertical space between the top of shrubs and the bottom of lower tree branches shall be three times the height of the shrub (branches shall be no less than 6 feet above the ground); and
  - e. Areas within 100 feet (30 480 mm) of a structure must be maintained in accordance with section 604.3.4.

**Reason:** Establishes requirements for vacant lots to reduce the risk of weeds or other combustible vegetation or materials igniting and placing surrounding buildings or vegetation at risk of fire. Necessary due to the climatic and topographic conditions in the region creating severe wildfire risk due to the hot, dry climate and steep terrain resulting in extreme wildfire conditions.

**CFC Section 604.3.9 Designated Evacuation Roadways – Added (New)**

Responsible person shall provide vegetation management along City-designated evacuation roadways. Vegetation management shall consist of clearing, modifying, or both clearing and modifying, 20 feet on each side of designated roadways. Vegetation management includes:

- a. maintaining grass to a maximum height of 4 inches;
- b. removing all vegetation that is not fire-smart;
- c. removing invasive species;
- d. removing all dead plants, shrubs, and weeds;

- e. removing dead or dry leaves and pine needles;
- f. trimming tree canopies and branches so that they do not extend over any portion of the roadway; and
- g. maintaining minimum vertical space between the top of shrubs and the bottom of lower tree branches to three times the height of the shrub.  
Branches shall be no less than six feet above the ground.

**Reason:** Establishes requirements to maintain vegetation along designated evacuation roadways to maintain safe evacuation routes for the public and support emergency access in the event of an emergency. Necessary due to the climatic and topographic conditions in the region creating severe wildfire risk due to the hot, dry climate and steep terrain resulting in extreme wildfire conditions.

#### **CFC Section 604.3.10 Prescribed Herbivory – Added (New)**

- (1) Where specifically authorized by the *Fire Code Official*, goats may be used for brush management on privately owned land.
- (2) At least 10 business days prior to using goats for brush management, the property owner shall apply to the Fire Rescue Department for a permit.

**Reason:** Allows the use of goats for prescribed herbivory as established in section 142.0412 of the SDMC. Requires approval of the *Fire Code Official* and the issuance of a permit.

#### **CFC Section 605.1 General – Amended (New)**

Chimneys serving fireplaces, barbecues, incinerators or decorative heating appliances, or other burning equipment or device in which solid or liquid fuel is used, shall be provided with a spark arrestor. Spark arrestors shall be constructed of woven or welded wire screening of 12 USA standard gage wire (0.1046 inch) (2.66 mm) having openings not

exceeding 1/2 inch (12.7 mm).

**Reason:** Amends the requirement for spark arrestors to include “other solid or liquid fuel burning equipment or devices” in which solid or liquid fuel is used to prevent the intrusion of embers. Necessary due to the climatic and topographic conditions in the region creating severe wildfire risk due to the hot, dry climate and steep terrain resulting in extreme wildfire conditions.

**CFC Section 608.2 General - Amended (New)**

All parcels shall provide a minimum 30-foot (9144 mm) setback for all buildings from property lines and the center of a road, except as provided for in section 608.2.1 and section 608.2.2.

**Reason:** Amends the language for setback reductions to reference the addition of section 608.2.2 which provides setback requirements from top of slope.

**CFC Section 608.2.1 Setback Reduction - Amended (New)**

A reduction in the minimum setback shall be based upon practical reasons, which may include but are not limited to, parcel dimensions or size, topographic limitations, development density requirements or other development patterns that promote low-carbon emission outcomes, sensitive habitat, or other site constraints, and shall provide for an alternative method to reduce structure-to-structure ignition by incorporating features such as, but not limited to:

- (1) noncombustible block walls or fences; or
- (2) noncombustible material extending 5 feet (1524 mm) horizontally from the furthest extent of the building structure; or
- (3) hardscape landscaping; or

- (4) a reduction of exposed windows on the side of the ~~s~~*Structure* with setback less than 30 feet (9144 mm); or
- (5) increased fire resistance rating of wall(s)/opening(s); or
- (6) The most protective requirements in Chapter 5 of the California WUI Code.

**Reason:** Includes increased fire resistance rating of wall(s)/opening(s) as additional alternative method to reduce structure-to-structure ignition allowing for a setback less than 30 feet.

**CFC Section 608.2.2 Setback From Slope – Added (New)**

Where a slope has a gradient exceeding 4:1 (25%) or steeper, and 50 feet (4572 mm) in vertical height or higher, the following setbacks shall apply:

- (1) Single-story structures shall be setback a minimum of 15 feet (4572 mm) horizontally from top of slope to the farthest projection from the structure.
- (2) Structures with two or more stories, or single-story structures where plate height exceeds 12 feet (3658 mm) above grade shall be setback a minimum of 30 feet (9144 mm) horizontally from top of slope to the farthest projection from the Structure. The following exceptions shall apply:
  - (A) Structures constructed with a noncombustible exterior wall adjacent to the slope, no openings adjacent to the slope, no combustible attachments to the exterior wall adjacent to the slope, and no roof eaves adjacent to the slope.
  - (B) There exists no open wildland fuel area directly adjacent to the structure, and the slope is directly adjacent to developed parcels with fuel management principles in place.
  - (C) The Fire Code Official determines that a significant hazard does not exist.

**Reason:** Provides requirements for setback from top of slope to address the significantly

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increased risk to the structure when located at the top of a slope with flammable vegetation below due to increased fire intensity and convective heat. Necessary due to the climatic and topographic conditions in the region creating severe wildfire risk due to the hot, dry climate and steep terrain resulting in extreme wildfire conditions.