



Fireplace

CITY OF SAN DIEGO DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
1222 FIRST AVENUE, MS 301 SAN DIEGO, CA 92101-4101
CALL (619) 446-5300 FOR APPOINTMENTS AND (619) 446-5000 FOR INFORMATION

This Information Bulletin describes the minimum requirements for obtaining fireplace permits for residential buildings. For clarification of the permit process, visit the Development Services Department, third floor, 1222 First Avenue.

I. WHEN IS A PERMIT REQUIRED?

A building or combination permit is required to construct any masonry fireplace or wood burning prefabricated fireplace. Some gas burning decorative fireplaces, fire pits, kilns or barbecues do not require a building or combination permit but may require a plumbing or electrical permit, refer to information bulletin 103.

II. ZONING REGULATIONS

Fireplace enclosures may encroach into required yards subject to the following limitations (SDMC 131.0461 item (a)(4):

- A. The fireplace enclosure may not encroach into the required yard more than 2 feet 6 inches or 50 percent of the width of the required yard, whichever is less. The fireplace shall not be closer than 2 feet 6 inches to the property line;
- B. The fireplace and chimney are not subject to the 45-degree sloped building envelope requirement and may extend to the maximum structure height at the required setback;
- C. The fireplace enclosure shall have a maximum width of 10 feet measured from grade to the roof eave or the sill plate of the second floor, whichever is lower, and a maximum width of 5 feet beyond that; and
- D. No more than two projecting fireplaces per building elevation are permitted.

III. OPTION FOR SERVICE

Prefabricated fireplaces that have been tested and evaluated by an approved testing agency such as ICC-ES, CSA or UL reports may be checked and approved at screening counter while the customer is present.

If the construction of an interior fireplace is part of a room addition or remodel project, the plans can be checked at over the counter by Information

Documents referenced in this Information Bulletin

- California Building Code, (CBC)
- San Diego Municipal Code, (SDMC)
- [Information Bulletin 103](#), Fee Schedule & Worksheet for Mechanical, Plumbing/Gas, Electrical
- [Information Bulletin 117](#), Regulations Covering Permit Expiration and Extension
- [Information Bulletin 120](#), How to Obtain Project Inspection
- [Information Bulletin 122](#), How to Prepare a Single Family Residential Site Plan and Vicinity Map
- [Information Bulletin 501](#), Fee Schedule, Construction Permits - Structures
- Inspection Record Card, DS-1798
- General Application, [DS-3032](#)
- Mandatory Measures Checklist: Residential, [MF-1R Form](#)

and Application Services (IAS) Combined Review. It may be necessary to include copies of these reports or specifications in the building plans.

Reports for prefabricated fireplaces may be acquired from the responsible testing agency or from the supplier of the fireplace. These reports must comply with the 2007 California Building Code (CBC).

Custom designed fireplaces require a registered design professional's (Architect or Engineer) stamp on the construction plans and associated calculations and may have to be submitted for structural plan review, based on the determination by over the counter structural.

IV. FORMS TO COMPLETE

A. GENERAL APPLICATION

California State Law requires every permit applicant to provide specific information and declarations regarding the proposed work on an application before a permit may be issued.

B. TITLE 24 ENERGY DOCUMENTATION

All interior fireplace construction must comply with the California State Energy Commission

Section 3.5.2. Compliance is demonstrated by compiling the “Mandatory Measures Checklist: Residential” (MF-1R). This checklist must be incorporated into the building plan.

V. PLAN REQUIREMENTS

Plans must be clear, legible and drawn to scale. The following is a list of minimum plan requirements:

A. Site Plan

This plan shows the layout of the lot as well as all existing and proposed structures. For more information refer to Bulletin 122, “How to Prepare a Single Family Residential Site Plan and Vicinity Map.”

B. Foundation Plan

A foundation construction detail may be incorporated into an approved report. In all cases a foundation plan is required.

C. Floor Plan

Provide a dimensioned floor plan of the room where the fireplace will be installed. If a door or window opening is being removed, provide dimensions of all remaining doors and windows.

D. Other Plans

Custom designed fireplaces may require plans not listed. These include but are not limited to, exterior elevations, section views and connection details. An analysis for all necessary views and details will be made at the time of submittal for plan review.

VI. APPROVALS

A plan check for structural, zoning and mechanical code compliance is required for the installation of fireplaces. Multifamily and Commercial Buildings may require an electrical plan check.

VII. PERMIT ISSUANCE

After all required approvals have been obtained, permits may be issued. Three sets of plans are necessary upon permit issuance. Two sets must be stamped and signed for all required approvals.

One set is retained by Development Services as a permanent record. The other set is returned to the applicant and is to be made available to the building inspector during inspections. The third, unstamped, set of plans is forwarded to the County Assessor’s Office.

When the permit is issued, an Inspection Record Card Form (DS-1798) is included with the

approved plans. The approved plans, the Inspection Record Card and the permit are important records and should be retained after construction is completed.

A building permit shall become void if the work authorized by the permit has not begun within 180 calendar days of the date of permit issuance. Once the construction work has commenced, the Building Permit shall become void if the work authorized by the Building Permit is suspended or abandoned for a continuous period of 180 calendar days.

A Building Permit for single family residences, duplexes, additions, alterations and commercial tenant improvement shall expire if the work covered under the building permit is not completed within 24 months. Building permits for all other new buildings shall expire after 48 months. The permit shall expire by limitation and become void after the given utilization period has elapsed. For additional information regarding permit expiration and extension, refer to Bulletin 117, “Regulations Covering Permit Expiration and Extension.”

VIII. FEES

Fees will be collected for custom designed fireplaces submitted to the City for plan review permit.

Single family residences are issued combination permits which include electrical, plumbing/gas, and mechanical along with the building permit.

Fees will be determined by the type of fireplace permitted, as described in Section II, of this information bulletin. For more information, refer to Information Bulletin 501, Fee Schedule for Construction Permits - Structures.

IX. INSPECTION

During construction inspections are required for such items as foundation, framing, electrical, plumbing, fireplace installation and interior and exterior wall covering.

The inspector will sign the Inspection Record Card for each inspection approved. The phone number and information required to schedule an inspection is prominently displayed on the Inspection Record Card. For more information regarding inspections refer to Information Bulletin 120, “How to Obtain Project Inspections,” or phone (858) 492-5070.