



I. General

This building newsletter will provide guidelines and set forth requirements for the permitting, fabrication, inspection and construction of awnings, entrance canopies and shade structures within the City of San Diego. Refer to the Building Code, Chapter 32 and the City of San Diego Building Code Amendments, Division 32, Section 91.3208 and Building Newsletter 32-1 for additional information and requirements.

II. Definitions

For the purpose of this newsletter the following definitions shall apply:

Awning is a shelter supported entirely by the exterior wall of a building.

Entrance Canopy is a shelter entirely or partially self supporting and attached to the exterior wall of a building entrance (canopy herein after).

Shade Structure is a shelter partially or entirely self supported (detached from or attached to the exterior wall).

Projection is distance measured horizontally from the face of a supporting building to the outer most point of the awning or the entrance canopy.

Clearance is distance measured vertically above any public walkway or underlying surface to the underside of the awning, canopy or shade structure.

III. Work Exempted From Permit

A. For **window awnings or entrance canopies** in all occupancy groups, a building permit will not be required for construction when **ALL** of the following conditions are satisfied:

1. The awning or canopy is made of non-combustible frame construction.
2. Projection does not exceed four (4) feet.
 - a. For **window awnings** supported by an exterior wall in Group R, Division 3 Occupancy lodging houses, congregate residences (each accommodating 10 or fewer persons) when projection does not exceed 54 inches.
 - b. For **window awnings** supported by an exterior wall in Group U Occupancy (private garages and agricultural buildings) when projection does not exceed 54 inches.
 - c. For **window awnings** supported by an exterior wall in Group R, Division 3 Occupancy

(dwellings) or Group U, Division 1 Occupancy (residential accessory structures), when projection does not exceed six (6) feet.

3. All portions of the awning or canopy have a clearance of at least eight (8) feet except for valances which shall have a clearance of not less than seven (7) feet.
 4. No combustible material is stored, handled, displayed or sold underneath the awning or canopy.
 5. The building which the awning or canopy is attached to is not sprinklered.
 6. The awning or canopy is not located upon or over public property or right of way.
 7. The awning or canopy is not lighted or illuminated.
 8. The awning or canopy is not attached to or supported from un-reinforced masonry construction or hollow clay tile construction.
 9. The awning or canopy is located in such a manner that does not block building fire escape or obstruct the use of a required means of egress.
 10. The location of the awning or canopy with respect to distance from property lines is such that it is not required to be fire protected.
 11. The awning or canopy is attached to the exterior wall of a building with proper fasteners and an approved quick-release device.
 12. The awning or canopy is not located in the "Coastal Zone" or "Planned Residential Developments", as defined in Municipal Code Section 101.0901, or "Planned Infill Residential Developments", as defined by Municipal Code Section 101.0930.
- B. For **shade structures** in Group R, Division 3 Occupancy (dwellings) or Group U, Division 1 Occupancy (residential accessory structures) in R1 Zone, a building permit will not be required provided:
1. The projected roof area does not exceed 300 square feet and
 2. It is not located in any required yard, as defined in Municipal Code, Section 101.0101.50 and
 3. It is not located in any established setback area, as defined in Municipal Code, Section 101.0602 and
 4. It does not exceed 12 feet above grade as defined in Municipal Code Section 101.0101.24 and
 5. The shade structure is not located in the "Coastal

Zone” or “Planned Residential Developments”, as defined in Municipal Code Section 101.0901, or “Planned Infill Residential Developments”, as defined by Municipal Code Section 101.0930.

6. All portions of the shade structure have a clearance of at least eight (8) feet.
7. That no combustible material is stored, handled, displayed or sold underneath the shade structure.

Note: Exemption from the permit requirements of the Building code does not authorize any work to be done in any manner in violation of the provisions of the Building Code or any other applicable local, state or federal regulations.

IV. When a Building permit is Required

When the awning or canopy or shade structure is not exempt from a permit as described above, a building permit is then required. Plans, details, specifications and structural calculations shall be submitted for review and approval to City of San Diego, Planning and Development Review Department. Additionally, items E through I below must also be considered.

- A. Plans, Details and Specifications must be prepared, stamped and signed by an architect or engineer licensed to practice in the State of California.
- B. Structural Calculations must be prepared, stamped and signed by an architect or engineer licensed to practice in the State of California.
- C. Fire Department Approval

The covering material, height and sprinkler system located under the roof of or adjacent to the entrance canopy as shown on plans shall be reviewed and approved by the City of San Diego, Fire and Life Safety prior to issuance of a permit. Prior to scheduling for final inspection, the covering material, height and sprinkler system as built shall be inspected and approved by the City of San Diego, Fire and Life Safety.

- D. Electrical Permit and Approval

Where the awning or canopy is proposed to be lighted or illuminated by any light source directly attached to the structure, an electrical permit is also required. Entrance canopies shall not be lighted or illuminated by any light source attached directly to the canopies.

- E. Shop Fabrication

Shop Fabrication of the frame for awning, canopy or shade structures shall be made within the premises of a fabricator’s shop registered and approved by the City of San Diego, Inspection Services.

A fabricator’s shop which is not registered and approved by Inspection Services is required to have special inspections during fabrication performed by a special inspector certified by Inspection Services.

For further information and requirements refer to Building Newsletter 17-6.

- F. Special Inspection

Special Inspection may be required on a continuous or periodic basis during shop fabrication and / or during field fabrication. The architect or engineer of record responsible for structural design of the project must state the special inspection requirements on plans. The fabricator is responsible to schedule for special inspections in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Building Code. For further information refer to Building Newsletters 17-1, 17-3 and 17-6.

Special inspections must be performed by special inspectors or agencies approved by the City of San Diego, Inspection Services. A list of approved construction materials testing laboratories and special inspection agencies is available upon request from Inspection Services.

- G. Construction

1. Awnings shall have non-combustible frames but may have combustible coverings. Awnings shall be either fixed, retractable, folding, or collapsible.
2. All entrance canopy frames and supporting structural members shall be constructed of corrosion-resistant metal designed to support a live load of five (5) pounds per square foot and a wind load of ten (10) pounds per square foot. Canopies shall be covered with approved cloth, plastic or corrosion-resistant metal.
3. Canopies shall be attached to the exterior wall of a building with approved quick-release devices.
4. Awnings, canopies or shade structures shall be attached at the building wall and at their base with proper and approved fasteners.
5. The awning, canopy or shade structure shall have a clearance of not less than eight (8) feet above underlying surface, except for valances, which shall not be less than seven (7) feet above the underlying surface. Valances shall not extend more than 12 inches in width.

- H. Encroachment on Public Property or Public Right of Way

Construction of awning, canopy or shade structures encroaching onto public property and public right of way are restricted. For further information refer to the Building Code, Ch 32, Section 3206, the City of San Diego Building Code Amendments, Division 32, Section 91.3208, Building Newsletter 32-1 and Information Bulletin number 176. The architect engineer of record, fabricator, erector, installer and the property owner are all responsible to assure that the awning or canopy or shade structure is not located upon or over public property or public right of way unless approved by the City Engineer.

I. Method of Attachment

Attachment of the awning, canopy or shade structure frame at the building wall and at the base shall be made by proper fasteners designed and approved to support the structure against applicable dead load, live load and wind or seismic load.

Bolts with expansion anchors and bolts using adhesive anchor systems (epoxy) are required to be listed and have a current and valid approval report by a listing agency approved by the City of San Diego. An example of such a recognized listing agency is the International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO). For installation, special inspection and testing requirements of such

anchors refer to the listing agency approval report. Special inspection in accordance with the building code, Section 1701, is required for all anchor installations using adhesive anchor systems (epoxy). Special inspections may be required for bolt installations using expansion anchors. For further information refer to Building Newsletters 17-5 and 17-7.

V. Questions

For questions regarding special inspections, structural observations, materials testing and off-site fabrication, contact Inspection Services at (858) 492-5070.