



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
Building and Safety Division

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## Building Codes and Regulations

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** January 1, 2011

**SUBJECT:** MERCED COUNTY, CALIFORNIA-STATUS OF BUILDING CODES AND REGULATIONS (FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL)

**FEDERAL REGULATIONS,** Minimum National Standard:

- A. National Fire and Safety Code
- B. Federal Housing Code-compliance if Federal monies are involved
- C. OSHA-Safety Regulations, exceeded by CAL-OSHA (State Code)
- D. Consumers Safety Board Regulations
- E. Federal Register, Volume 47, No. 150, August 4, 1982, Physically Handicapped Regulations
- F. Federal Register, Volume 56, No. 144. July 26, 1991, Americans with Disabilities Act.
- G. 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (not mandatory until construction starting on or after March 15, 2012).

NOTE: The above regulations do not normally impact our operations, as the State of California mandated regulations are usually more demanding than the basic Federal Codes.

**STATE REGULATIONS:**

Following are State "TITLES" which establish the minimum building codes and regulations within the State of California.

- A. Title 1, Government Code-basic authority for all other Titles.
- B. Title 8, CAL-OSHA-Safety Code for State, incorporates Federal requirements. Continually being modified to address safety issues.
- C. Title 17, Structural Code-incorporates (by adoption) portions of the Uniform Building Code.
- D. Title 19, Health and Safety Code (Regulations of the State Fire Marshal are a part of this Title)-the State Fire Marshal incorporates (by adoption) portions of the 2006 International Fire Code.
- E. Title 24, State Building Codes (Disabled Access regulations are included as part of this Title) - incorporates (by adoption) portions of the following codes: 2006 International Building Code, 2006 Uniform Mechanical and Plumbing Codes, and the 2005 National Electrical Code; 2006 Energy Efficiency Standards.
- F. Title 25, State Housing and Community Development Code-mandated Statewide, incorporates (by total adoption) the 1997 Uniform Housing Code.

**CURRENT LOCAL CODES IN FORCE:**

A. All previously identified State and Federal mandated codes and/or regulations.

B. Merced County (unincorporated areas):

1. Merced County Building Ordinance #1843 and the 2010 California Building Standards Code as adopted by the California Building Standards Commission, which specifically adopts the following model codes:
  - a. 1997 Uniform Housing Code
  - b. 1997 Uniform Building Code for Abatement of Dangerous Buildings
  - c. 2009 International Building Code
  - d. 2009 Uniform Mechanical Code
  - e. 2009 Uniform Plumbing Code
  - f. 2008 National Electrical Code
  - g. 2009 International Fire Code
  - h. 2009 International Residential Code (as modified by the California Building Standards Commission and excluding the electrical, mechanical and plumbing provisions).

**Note:** Merced County is in Seismic Design Categories 'C', 'D' & 'E', and Wind Zone 85 mph Exposure 'C'. The building code requires a soils report under Chapter 18 for almost every non-residential structure within Merced County. The complexity of the soils report depends on which Seismic Design Category your project is located and the type of structure being built. There are a few exceptions for agricultural structures with limited human impact at the discretion of the Building Official. The new Residential Code allows more discretion to waive the requirements for a soils report where the Building & Safety Division is aware of the soil conditions; Soils reports will still be required in areas of expansive soils, high seismic areas or other areas of concern that may result in damage to the structure. Please contact the Building & Safety Division office for more information at 209-385-7477.