RESIDENTIAL FLOOD ZONE - 2026

Design Guidelines

Property Owner/Developer/Engineer

When you are doing **substantial improvement** to a property located within a flood zone, you are ***required*** to hire a licensed Civil Engineer to establish the base flood elevation (BFE) and prepare **grading** and **drainage** plans in compliance with *California Building Code* Section 107.3.4, Section 1612, Appendix G and *California Residential Code* Section R322, Section R401.3 and Section R403.1.7.

Please submit grading and drainage improvement plans which show the following:

1. Grading plan shall demonstrate the finished floor elevation is 1 foot above the BFE as required by CA Building Code (CBC) and CA Residential Code (CRC).
2. At completion of construction, the design engineer of record shall provide an elevation certificate sheet, stamped and signed, demonstrating that the structures lowest floor elevation is located 1 foot above BFE. When the property is located within Zone A, the design engineer may use the depth of 1 foot to establish the BFE from the existing highest adjacent grade (natural grade), plus 1 foot for the lowest floor elevation to meet CRC Section R322.2.1 and FEMA's minimum requirements.
3. Where no BFE has been established, the design engineer shall establish the highest elevation in the flowline of the gutter in the street, frontage for the project, plus 1 foot above that highest elevation plus a slope of 2% minimum from that highest elevation in the street to establish a BFE for the pad of the new structure, as required under Section 1808.7.4 of the CBC.
4. Show horizontal control tied to property boundary and show elevations of surrounding grades within property boundary and on adjacent parcels.
5. The boundary of the property shall be substantiated either by found monument corners or by ground survey by a licensed surveyor.
6. Drainage plan shall demonstrate compliance with CRC Section R401.3. When physical barriers prohibit 6 inches of fall within 10 feet, provide underground drains.
7. Provide gutters on both new and existing structures and tie to underground drain system.
8. Coordinate with building structural design engineer and provide deepened foundations that accommodates the differential elevations between accessory structure, main structure, and surrounding property walls
9. Prior to building permit issuance, applicant must submit and get approval of the grading plan, or include a City-approved grading plans into the building plan set for reference.
10. Civil Engineer who prepares the grading and drainage plans shall review, stamp, and sign the building foundation plan prior to building permit issuance.

Base Elevations may be obtained from surrounding benchmarks or available street improvement plans. No temporary or “assumed” benchmarks may be used for vertical control.

Please be advised that no building permits will be issued until documentation has been reviewed and approved by Engineering Division. ***For specific questions regarding grading requirements, contact***

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