

Planning Department
Building and Safety Division

Retrofit Requirements for Removal from Inventory of Soft Story Buildings

This document provides an overview of retrofit requirements to remove a building that is (or will be) on the Inventory of Potentially Hazardous Buildings due to a Soft, Weak, or Open Front story (SWOF) as provided by Berkeley Municipal Code 19.39. Buildings that are removed from the inventory by retrofit will be exempt from being placed on another inventory of Soft, Weak, or Open Front Buildings for 15 years (BMC 19.39.100).

Please complete the following items:

- A. Apply for a building permit at the City of Berkeley Permit Service Center (PSC):
1. Make an appointment by calling the PSC at the contact number on page 2.
 2. At the appointment, provide the required copies (up to 6) of construction documents (drawings, calculations, special inspection forms, and any other document as needed). Pay the required fee based on the valuation.
 3. Provide 3 copies of a report as required by the City of Berkeley Soft Story Seismic Engineering Evaluation Report Framework (Framework Document) or equivalent information in the engineering design documents. Follow the Soft Story Engineering Evaluation Report Framework, and clearly demonstrate that, after the retrofit, all items in Table A4-A of the 2003 IEBC are appropriately checked “C” for “Compliant.” Clearly identify the project as a Seismic Upgrade of a building subject to the Soft Story Ordinance. An additional report review fee is not required when filing for a building permit.
 4. Provide a professional engineer’s seal with expiration date, wet signature, and date of signature on all drawing sheets and covers of calculations or reports.
 5. State the scope of the seismic upgrade on the cover sheet of the drawings including a statement that the seismic upgrade will allow the building to meet the requirements of the Berkeley Municipal Code (BMC) Chapter 19.39 for removing the building from the Soft Story Inventory.
 6. Include a copy of Table A4-A in the cover sheet filled out as directed by the Framework Document.
 7. See Guidelines to triggered requirements for other work that may be required based on type and valuation of work.

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from Inventory of Soft Story Buildings, p2.

- B. Once the building permit is obtained:
 - 1. Complete the seismic upgrade, including the required city inspections;
 - 2. Provide the City of Berkeley building inspector completed special inspection reports, structural observation reports, and any other documents as required;
 - 3. Obtain an approved final inspection.

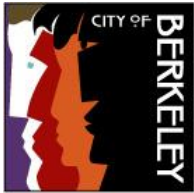
- C. To be removed from the Inventory, provide a letter addressed to the Building Mitigation Manager, City of Berkeley, Building and Safety Division, sealed and wet-signed from the engineer in charge, stating that:
 - 1. The seismic upgrade work has been completed per the approved plans,
 - 2. The building is no longer subject to BMC chapter 19.39
 - 3. The building should, therefore, be removed from the Soft Story Inventory.

For further information:

For information specific to a building permit application for your project, contact the Permit Service Center at 2120 Milvia Street or by telephone at 510 981-7500.

For further information regarding the Soft Story program, contact the Building and Safety Division, at 2120 Milvia Street, at 510 981-7440 option 0 by telephone, or via email at BuildingandSafety@CityofBerkeley.info.

Visit our WEB site at <http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/softstoryprogram> for copies of BMC 19.39, the Soft Story Engineering Evaluation Report Framework, a copy of the current Inventory, a roster of engineers, and other information.



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Guidelines to Local Ordinances and State Requirements Triggered by Building Permits Based on Type and Value of Construction

Point of Sale

- **RECO** (Residential Energy Conservation Ordinance) Requires certain energy conservation measures be installed in residential buildings. Administered by Building and Safety. For more information, go to <http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/sustainable/residents/ResSidebar/RECO.html>
- **CECO** (Commercial Energy Conservation Ordinance) Requires that certain energy conservation measures be installed in commercial buildings. Administered jointly by Office of Energy Services and Building and Safety. For more information, go to <http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/sustainable/buildings/ceco.html>
- **PSL** (Sewer Lateral Replacement) Applies to all buildings – commercial or residential - when 2 or more plumbing fixtures are involved. Requires that the upper sewer lateral be inspected and replaced or repaired. Administered by Public Works. For more information, go to <http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/ContentDisplay.aspx?id=8160>

\$1,000 in building permit valuation

- **Installation of smoke detectors** – exception for exterior work such as roofing and siding. In most cases, battery operated smoke detectors are acceptable for single- family homes.

\$50,000 in valuation for remodeling projects

- **RECO** – see Point of Sale triggers above
- **CECO** – see Point of Sale triggers above
- **PSL** – see Point of Sale triggers above

\$100,000 in valuation for remodeling projects

- **PSL** - (Sewer Lateral Replacement) Applies to all buildings –commercial and residential, regardless of number of plumbing fixtures involved. Same requirements as above.
- **C and D** - Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling – Requires approval of a recycling plan and monitoring of recycling debris in conjunction with issuance and sign off of building permit

Demolition Permits

- **C and D** - Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling – Requires approval of a recycling plan and monitoring of recycling debris in conjunction with issuance and sign off of building permit

Disabled Access Requirements apply to the following projects:

- **New buildings** need to meet all disabled access requirements. Requirements are found in the latest edition of the California Building, Plumbing and Mechanical Codes. Chapter 11A covers residential buildings and Chapter 11B for commercial buildings.
- **Existing buildings** (commercial buildings and hotels and other public accommodations) Certain work on apartment buildings and all one and two family dwellings are exempt.
 1. When the value of the work exceeds \$116,837, (the amount changes increases January 1st each year), the following items must comply - path of travel to the area of the work, primary entrance, restrooms, drinking fountains, telephones and parking.
 2. When the value of the work is less than \$116,837, 20% of the valuation must be spent on disabled access upgrades in the following order- path of travel to the area of the work, primary entrance, restrooms, drinking fountains and parking.
 3. Each time a permit is applied for, compliance is required to be reviewed. The exception is when all elements as outlined in #2 are in compliance and there have been no changes in the code since the last permit, then no further work is triggered. When all access work has been previously completed or if additional work is required, compliance has to be demonstrated on the plans.
- **Notes:**
 1. Disabled access requirements are complicated. Depending upon the circumstances of the individual project and the specific code requirements applying to the project, exceptions can sometimes be granted for 'unreasonable hardships' when equivalent facilitation is provided. Equivalent facilitation is an approved alternate method of achieving accessibility complying with the requirements.
 2. Exceptions and alternate methods can also apply to qualified historic buildings. See the California State Historic Building Code found in the back of the current edition of the California Building Code.