

# Guide to the 2025 CALIFORNIA GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS CODE NONRESIDENTIAL



This guide is developed by the California Building Standards Commission to assist code users with application, verification and enforcement of the 2025 *California Green Building Standards Code*, Part 11, Title 24, *California Code of Regulations*.

Part 11 of Title 24 is also known as *CALGreen* and the 2025 edition is effective January 1, 2026.



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**Guide to the 2025 California  
Green Building Standards Code  
Nonresidential**

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# PREFACE

This is the 6th edition of the *Guide to the California Green Building Standards Code Nonresidential* prepared by the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC).

This edition reflects regulatory changes that were made to the *California Green Building Standards Code*, Part 11, Title 24, during the 2022 Intervening and 2024 Triennial Code Adoption Cycles. The guide is intended to highlight and clarify both mandatory and voluntary nonresidential standards in the 2025 *California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen)* for use by local building departments, builders and designers. The effective date of the *CALGreen* Code is January 1, 2026.

Comments and suggestions regarding this guide are welcome in order to make future editions more beneficial to code users. Comments may be submitted to [cbcs@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:cbcs@dgs.ca.gov) or mailed to:

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## Effective Use of This Guide

This guide is intended to assist code users and local enforcement authorities with nonresidential applications in Chapters 5 (mandatory) and A5 (voluntary) of the 2025 edition of *CALGreen*. The intent of each code section is explained, and compliance and enforcement recommendations are provided. The guide is formatted as follows:

- **Code section:** Sections from the 2025 *CALGreen* Code are reprinted in green text.
- **Intent:** Most of the code sections are followed by an explanation of the intent of the requirement. In some instances, other laws or regulations that served as a catalyst for the regulation are described.
- **Change for 2025:** Identifies new code language or amendments made during the 2022 Intervening Code Adoption Cycle and/or the 2024 Triennial Code Adoption Cycle.
- **Compliance method:** Suggestions or examples for the design team to include in construction documents (plans and specifications and/or site plans) and/or information regarding how to comply with the regulation.
- **Enforcement:**
  - Plan intake:** Recommendations for the plan reviewer concerning the construction documents; and
  - On-site enforcement:** Recommendations for the local inspector during construction inspection.

## About the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC)

Established in 1953 by California Building Standards Law, CBSC is a commission within the Department of General Services. Members of the commission are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the state senate, and serve four-year terms.

CBSC's mission is to produce sensible and usable state building standards and administrative regulations that implement or enforce those standards. Specifically, CBSC administers the adoption, approval and implementation processes for the *California Building Standards Code* as follows:

- Manages the regulatory triennial and intervening code adoption cycles, and respective Title 24 publications.
- Coordinates and collaborates with all code-proposing and code-adopting state agencies regarding the code cycles and model code revisions to ensure uniformity throughout California's building standards.
- Promotes transparency and public participation throughout the code development processes.
- Administers a public appeal process.
- Educates the public and stakeholders about the nonresidential green building code to ensure understanding and compliance.
- Develops building standards for state buildings and universities, and nonresidential green building standards where no other state agency has authority, and any other occupancies as directed by the legislature and/or executive order.

## CBSC Education and Outreach

CBSC offers *CALGreen* nonresidential training along with a variety of resources and educational publications available on its website: [dgs.ca.gov/BSC/Resources](http://dgs.ca.gov/BSC/Resources). For information on *CALGreen* training, contact the commission via email at [cbstraining@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:cbstraining@dgs.ca.gov), or complete the Education and Outreach contact form located at [dgs.ca.gov/BSC/Education-and-Outreach](http://dgs.ca.gov/BSC/Education-and-Outreach). The following industry organizations may also offer *CALGreen* educational programs:

- International Code Council—([iccsafe.org](http://iccsafe.org))
- Green Technology—([green-technology.org](http://green-technology.org))
- California Building Officials—([calbo.org](http://calbo.org))

## About the International Code Council® (ICC)

The International Code Council is the leading global source of model codes and standards and building safety solutions that include product evaluation, accreditation, technology, codification, consulting, training and certification. The International Code Council's codes, standards and solutions are used to ensure safe, affordable and sustainable communities and buildings worldwide.

The International Code Council family of solutions includes the ICC Evaluation Service (ICC ES), S. K. Ghosh Associates, the International Accreditation Service (IAS), General Code, ICC NTA, ICC Community Development Solutions, Alliance for National & Community Resilience (ANCR) and American Legal Publishing.

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To purchase all or part of the 2025 edition of Title 24 or the *Guide to the 2025 Green Building Standards Code Nonresidential*, contact ICC at 888-ICC-SAFE (888-422-7233) or [iccsafe.org](http://iccsafe.org).



## Title 24, *California Code of Regulations*

The 2025 *California Building Standards Code*, Title 24, *California Code of Regulations* consists of the following thirteen parts. CALGreen is Part 11 of Title 24.

- Part 1     *California Administrative Code*
- Part 2     *California Building Code* Volume 1 and Volume 2 are based on the 2024 *International Building Code*
- Part 2.5   *California Residential Code* is based on the 2024 *International Residential Code*
- Part 3     *California Electrical Code* is based on the 2023 *National Electrical Code*
- Part 4     *California Mechanical Code* is based on the 2024 *Uniform Mechanical Code*
- Part 5     *California Plumbing Code* is based on the 2024 *Uniform Plumbing Code*
- Part 6     *California Energy Code*
- Part 7     *California Wildland-Urban Interface Code* is based on the 2024 *International Wildland-Urban Interface Code*
- Part 8     *California Historical Building Code*
- Part 9     *California Fire Code* is based on the 2024 *International Fire Code*
- Part 10    *California Existing Building Code* is based on the 2024 *International Existing Building Code*
- Part 11    *California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen)*
- Part 12    *California Referenced Standards Code*

## History of CALGreen

CALGreen is the first-in-the-nation mandatory green building standards code. In 2007, the California Building Standards Commission was directed to develop green building standards in an effort to meet the goals of California's landmark initiative Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32, Chapter 488, Statutes of 2006), which added Division 25.5 to the California Health and Safety Code. Known as the California Global Warming Solutions Act, AB 32 established a comprehensive program of cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gases (GHG) to 1990 levels by 2020, including mandatory emissions reporting and an ongoing market-based compliance program. Other green building legislation proposed in the 2007–2008 legislative session (AB 35 concerning state-owned buildings, AB 888 concerning commercial B-occupancy buildings, and AB 1035 concerning residential construction) was vetoed by the governor. In his veto messages, the governor expressed his support for development of green building standards, but that they should not be statutory, conflict with current safety standards or rely on private entities to set the standards.

In response to the above actions, CBSC worked closely with the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Division of the State Architect and the Office of Statewide Hospital Planning and Development to establish green building standards with the following goals:

1. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) from buildings.
2. Promote environmentally responsible, cost-effective, healthier places to live and work.
3. Reduce energy and water consumption.
4. Respond to the environmental directives of the administration. State agency representatives, industry stakeholders and interested parties were enthusiastic contributors to the initial code development process and remain active participants in the evolution of *CALGreen* measures today.

The first edition of *CALGreen* contained only voluntary measures and was published in 2008 with an effective date of August 2009. It established Administration, Definitions and Green Building chapters and created the code categories of planning and design, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material conservation and resource efficiency, environmental air quality, referenced standards, installer and inspector qualifications, and appendices for residential, nonresidential and referenced standards. Mandatory measures were then adopted in the 2010 *CALGreen* edition, which went into effect in January 2011.

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) announced in a California Greenhouse Gas Emissions report ([arb.ca.gov/ghg-inventory-data](http://arb.ca.gov/ghg-inventory-data)), released on July 28, 2021, that in 2019, emissions from statewide emitting activities were 418.2 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e, or milliontonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e), 7.2 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e lower than 2018 levels and almost 13 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e below the 2020 GHG Limit of 431 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e. Since the peak level in 2004, California's GHG emissions have generally followed a decreasing trend. In 2016, statewide GHG emissions dropped below the 2020 GHG Limit and have remained below the limit since that time. The *CALGreen* Code continues to be an important element in California's efforts to expand more efficient and responsible building design, which has helped California significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The following is a summary of *CALGreen* Code changes that have been adopted since the first edition:

**The 2010 *CALGreen* Code** established chapters for residential and nonresidential mandatory measures. A 20 percent reduction of indoor water use, and a 50 percent construction waste reduction were required along with waste management plan requirements. Building commissioning for new buildings 10,000 square feet and over was also introduced along with requirements for temporary construction ventilation and finish materials.

**The 2013 *CALGreen* Code** clarified and expanded a number of requirements that included upgraded triggers for nonresidential additions and alterations. New sections were added in the areas of water efficiency and conservation, which included a 20 percent reduction of indoor water use. References to the California Energy and Plumbing Codes were also included. Demolition and recycling requirements were further defined.

**The 2016 *CALGreen* Code** addressed clean air vehicles and increased requirements for electric vehicle charging infrastructure. A new universal waste code section was incorporated for additions and alterations. Organic waste was defined and included an exception for rural jurisdictions. Clarification was added for commissioning 'I' and 'L' occupancies not currently regulated by the Office of Statewide Hospital Planning and Development or California Energy Commission. Water efficiency and conservation included a new section for food waste disposers, and outdoor water

use remained subject to the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELo) emergency standards of 2015. Pursuant to Executive Order No. B-29-15, addressing California's ongoing emergency drought conditions, state agencies proposed water-related emergency standards that were immediately enforceable in June 2015 and later adopted as amendments to the 2016 *CALGreen Code*.

**The 2019 *CALGreen Code*** clarified and updated many previously implemented regulations, including: backlight, uplight and glare reference standards; outdoor water use; Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) testing standards for carpet and resilient flooring systems; and Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) ratings for air filters.

**The 2022 *CALGreen Code*** included significant changes to electric vehicle charging sections to support the implementation of California governors' executive orders (EO) to achieve the goals of having over 1.5 million zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) on California roadways by 2025 (EO B-16-2012), 5 million ZEVs on California roadways by 2030 (EO B-48-2018), and, by 2035, having 100 percent of passenger cars and trucks sold in-state be zero-emission vehicles (EO N-79-20). California is the first state in the country to have a building code that requires the installation of electric vehicle charging stations in new construction. Other key 2022 *CALGreen* amendments included: updating clean air vehicle parking space percentages in the voluntary tiers; relocating regulations for thermal insulation, acoustical ceiling and wall panels from voluntary to mandatory; and moving thermal insulation Tier 2 regulations to Tier 1.

Notably, the supplements to the 2022 edition of *CALGreen*, which contained new provisions adopted during the 2022 Intervening Code Adoption Cycle, added voluntary provisions for bird-friendly building design and three mandatory compliance pathways for embodied carbon reduction in new construction as well as qualifying additions and alterations to existing buildings. These new mandatory regulations built upon existing voluntary measures, and the voluntary tiers were updated to provide even more stringent carbon reduction options.

## New in 2025 *CALGreen* Nonresidential

### Definitions

#### Section 202

Several new terms have been added or amended to support revised electric vehicle (EV) regulations and the inclusion of new bird-friendly design and carbon reduction compliance regulations.

### Embodied Carbon Reduction

New mandatory embodied carbon reduction measures for nonresidential occupancies under BSC-CG's authority were added in the supplements to the 2022 edition of *CALGreen* and consist of three available compliance pathways described below.

**Section 5.105 and its subsections** address deconstruction and reuse of existing structures to help incentivize the reuse of existing building infrastructure and components. If a building is reused, the Building Reuse pathway requires 45 percent of the existing primary structural elements and enclosure to be maintained. If the percentage cannot be achieved, two other pathways are provided in Section 5.409 to comply with embodied carbon reduction regulations: the Whole Building Life Cycle Assessment (WBLCA) and Product Global Warming Potential (GWP) compliance.

**Section 5.409.2 and its subsections** address the WBLCA. Qualified projects are required to conduct a cradle-to-grave WBLCA, excluding operational energy, and demonstrate a minimum 10 percent reduction in GWP.

**Section 5.409.3 and its subsections** address the Product GWP prescriptive compliance path. Each product that is permanently installed and listed in Table 5.409.3 is required to comply with specified GWP limits and have a Type III Environmental Product Declaration (EPD).

Voluntary Tier 1 and Tier 2 measures provide designers and jurisdictions the opportunity to go beyond the minimum mandatory requirements with three pathways to achieve compliance.

## **Bicycle Parking**

**Section 5.106.4 and its subsections** were amended to base bicycle parking facilities calculations on anticipated “peak daily visitors” and/or “tenant-occupants,” as opposed to the number of vehicular parking spaces provided for a building.

## **Electric Vehicles**

The objectives of amending 2025 *CALGreen* regulations relative to EVs are to further advance EV infrastructure and provide consistency in EV-related codes in all parts of Title 24, such as the *California Electrical Code*.

**Section 5.106.5.3 and its subsections:** Multiple sections were updated to increase the EV infrastructure percentages for mandatory and voluntary provisions and require Level 2 EV chargers for new construction. Updates expand EV infrastructure, further clarify EV charging site development requirements, require clean air vehicle space minimums, and reference *California Building Code* accessibility requirements in Chapter 11B for clean air vehicle parking. Tables have also been updated to reflect the changes in the regulations. The voluntary Tier 1 and Tier 2 provisions were updated to align with the allowed Direct Current Fast Charger (DCFC) 1-to-5 ratio for both EV capable and Electric Vehicle Charging Station (EVCS) and include the new Power Allocation Method alternate compliance pathway.

**Section 5.106.5.4 and Table 5.106.5.4.1** amended the requirements for electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles to include manufacturing facilities and office buildings in addition to warehouses, grocery stores and retail stores with planned off-street loading spaces.

## **Indoor Water Use**

**Section 5.303.3.4.6 Pre-rinse spray valve.** Code language and Table H-2 were repealed and replaced with a pointer to the *California Plumbing Code*.

## **Indoor Air Quality**

**Section 5.506.3 Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) monitoring in classrooms** is an existing section applicable to projects under the jurisdiction of the Division of the State Architect. This section was adopted by BSC and became applicable to projects under BSC’s authority requiring a CO<sub>2</sub> monitor or sensor in new construction and qualifying additions/alterations to existing classrooms.



**Bird-Friendly Building Design**

**Section A5.107 and its subsections** were added in the supplements to the 2022 edition of *CALGreen* to reduce the negative impact of bird deaths caused by collisions with buildings. The scope is for newly constructed buildings or alterations of existing buildings that include the addition or replacement of 50 percent or more of the exterior glazing.

Details regarding these updates, and all others made for the 2025 edition of *CALGreen*, can be found in mandatory Chapter 5 and voluntary Appendix A5 of this guide.