

**Significant Changes to the
California Fire Code: Based on the
2025 International Fire Code®**

2025 Edition

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Preface

The purpose of *Significant Changes to the California Fire Code, 2025 Edition*, is to familiarize fire officials, building officials, plans examiners, fire inspectors, design professionals and others with many of the important changes in the 2025 *California Fire Code* (CFC). This publication is designed to assist code users in identifying the specific code changes that have occurred and, more important, in understanding the reasons behind the changes. It is also a valuable resource for jurisdictions in order to help them explain the significance and impact of the changes as they go through their code adoption process.

Only a portion of the total number of code changes to the CFC are discussed in this book. The changes selected were identified for a number of reasons, including their frequency of application, special significance or change in application. However, the importance of the changes not included is not to be diminished. Further information on all code changes can be found in the *Revision History to the 2024 I-Codes*, available from the International Code Council® (ICC®), through the online store at <http://shop.iccsafe.org>. This resource collection provides the published documentation for each successful code change contained in the 2024 *International Fire Code* (IFC), since the 2021 edition (2025 CFC is based on the 2024 IFC).

Significant Changes to the California Fire Code, 2025 Edition, is arranged to follow the general layout of the CFC, including code sections and section number format. The table of contents, in addition to providing guidance in the use of this publication, allows for a quick identification of those significant code changes that occur in the 2025 CFC.

Throughout the book, code changes are accompanied by a photograph or an illustration to assist in and enhance the reader's understanding of the specific change. A summary and a discussion of the significance of the change are also provided. Each code change is identified by type, be it an addition, modification, clarification or deletion.

The code change itself is presented in a legislative format similar to the style utilized for code change proposals. Deleted code language is shown with a strike-through, and new code text is indicated by underlining. As a result, the actual 2025 code language is provided as well as a comparison with the 2022 language, so the user can easily determine changes to the specific code text.

As with any code change text, *Significant Changes to the California Fire Code*, 2025 Edition, is best used as a companion to the 2025 CFC. Because only a limited discussion of each change is provided, the reader should reference the code itself in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the code change and its application.

The commentary and opinions set forth in this text are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position of ICC. In addition, they may not represent the views of any enforcing agency because such agencies have the sole authority to render interpretations of the CFC. In many cases, the explanatory material is derived from the reasoning expressed by code change proponents.

Comments concerning this publication are encouraged and may be directed to ICC at significantchanges@iccsafe.org.

About the California Fire Code

Building officials, design professionals and others involved in the building construction industry recognize the need for a modern, up-to-date building code addressing the design, construction and installation of building systems through requirements emphasizing performance. The 2024 IFC is the basis for the 2025 CFC and is intended to meet these needs through model code regulations that safeguard the public health and safety in all communities, large and small.

The CFC is one in a family of California building codes (California Code of Regulations, Title 24) that are published on a triennial basis. This comprehensive fire code establishes minimum regulations for building systems by means of prescriptive and performance-related provisions. It is founded on broad-based principles that make possible the use of new materials and new building designs. The California Building Standards Commission (CBSC) is responsible for the administration of each code cycle, which includes the proposal, review and adoption processes. Supplements and errata are issued throughout the cycle.

Acknowledgments

Significant Changes to the California Fire Code, 2025 Edition, was authored and organized by the California Fire Prevention Officers—Building and Fire Code Committee. Their insight and technical knowledge are greatly appreciated. The author is grateful to the Code Committee Members, and the following major contributors

Crystal Sujeski, North Co-Chair, Chief, Code Development and Analysis, CAL Fire, Office of the State Fire Marshal; Cary Yballa, North Co-Chair, Fire Inspector, Central County Fire Department; Darcy Davidson, South Co-Chair, Division Chief/Fire Marshal, Carlsbad Fire Department; Adria Smith, South Co-Chair, Fire Service Manager, CSG Consultants; Kevin Scott, KH Scott & Associates LLC; Sagiv Weiss-Ishai, P.E., Senior Fire Protection Engineer, San Francisco Fire Department; Joseph Cervantes Sr., Business Development, Space Age Electronics; Megan C. Hall, PhD, Director-UC Chemical Management Safety Center of Excellence, Deputy Fire Marshal-Hazardous Materials.

California Fire Prevention Officers (FPO)

The mission of the fire prevention officers is to promote the protection of life, property and the environment from the effects of fire and other hazardous events, through effective education, engineering and enforcement. Special thanks to the Presidents of both the North and South: Nick Otis, North President, Lead Designated Campus Fire Marshal UC Santa Cruz and Nicole Pesqueira, South President, Fire Marshal, Brea Fire Department.

CAL FIRE

Special thanks to Daniel Berlant, California State Fire Marshal Chief, appointed State Fire Marshal by Governor Gavin Newsom in October 2023.

Key values that this collaborative effort embodies: Trust, Communication, Customer Service, Consistency.

Additionally, appreciation is given to the following talented staff of ICC Business and Product Development: Jay Elbettar, Director of Building Codes Consulting Services; Doug Thornburg, A.I.A., C.B.O., retired Vice President, Director of Education and Certification; and Jay Woodward, A.I.A., retired Senior Staff Architect.

About the Authors

Crystal Sujeski

Chief of Code Development and Analysis, CAL FIRE/Office of the State Fire Marshal

Crystal Sujeski is a recognized leader in the fire service, widely respected for her expertise in code development and her commitment to enhancing fire and life safety throughout California. As the Chief of Code Development and Analysis for CAL FIRE/Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM), she oversees the development, interpretation, and maintenance of statewide regulations that safeguard communities from fire, life, and panic hazards.

With a career in code development dating back to 2008, Crystal has spent the last decade with CAL FIRE/OSFM, contributing significantly to the advancement of both state and national fire and building codes. She has been involved in the initiation, development, and evaluation of code change proposals at the international, national, and state levels. Actively involved in numerous committees and working groups, she is a member of the International Code Council (ICC), National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), California Fire Chiefs Association (CalChiefs), California Fire Prevention Officers (CalFPO), California Building Officials (CALBO), the California Building Standards Commission Code Correlating Committee, California Historical Safety Board, Seismic Safety Commission, and the California Division of the State Architect Public School Construction Collaborative.

Crystal chairs several key OSFM work groups and committees, including the California Wildland–Urban Interface, Single-Exit Stair, Day Care and I-4 Occupancy, Energy Storage Systems, Fire Alarm Regulations, and the OSFM Code Interpretation Committee.

Crystal works closely with Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation, Fire Engineering, Fire and Life Safety, Pipeline Safety, and State Fire Training programs to ensure cohesive, effective regulation. Chief Sujeski was honored as the 2025 recipient of the Mary Eriksen-Rattan Award—one of the field’s most respected awards. This honor reflects her dedication to elevating code development, strengthening partnerships, and improving public safety statewide.

Kevin H. Scott

President

KH Scott & Associates LLC

Kevin Scott is President of KH Scott & Associates LLC. Kevin has extensive experience in the development of fire safety, building safety and hazardous materials regulations. Kevin has actively worked for over 30 years in the development of fire code, building code and fire safety regulations at the local, state, national and international levels. Kevin previously worked as a Senior Regional Manager with the International Code Council, and before that, he was Deputy Chief for the Kern County Fire Department, California, where he worked for 30 years. He has developed and presented many seminars on a variety of technical subjects, including means of egress, high-piled combustible storage, hazardous materials and plan review and inspection practices.

Kevin was a member of the original IFC Drafting Committee that worked to create the first edition of the IFC. He served for 7 years on the IFC Code Development Committee and was chairperson for the committee from 2001 to 2004. Kevin has actively participated in numerous technical committees to evaluate specific hazards and technologies, and to create regulations specific to those hazards.

Some of the more significant committees are:

- High-piled Combustible Storage Committee
- Hydrogen Gas Ad Hoc Committee
- Task Group 400
- Technical Advisory Committee on Retail Storage of Group ‘A’ Plastic Commodities
- Underwriters Laboratories Fire Council

Kevin’s constant work to improve fire and life safety has been recognized on many levels. His contributions have been acknowledged by various organizations when they presented him with the following awards:

- Mary Eriksen-Rattan Award in 2013—presented by the Southern California State Fire Prevention Officers’ Association
- William Goss Award in 2009—presented by the California State Firefighters Association
- Fire Official of the Year Award in 2005—presented by the California Building Officials
- Robert W. Gain Award in 2003—presented by the International Fire Code Institute

About California Fire Officials

The Office of the State Fire Marshal supports the mission of CAL FIRE by focusing on fire prevention. The Office of the State Fire Marshal provides support through a wide variety of fire safety responsibilities, including: regulating buildings in which people live, congregate, or are confined; controlling substances and products which may, in and of themselves, or by their misuse, cause injuries, death and destruction by fire; providing statewide direction for fire prevention within wildland areas; regulating hazardous liquid pipelines; developing and reviewing regulations and building standards; and providing training and education in fire protection methods and responsibilities. These achievements are accomplished through several major program elements, including engineering, education, enforcement and support from the State Board of Fire Services.

About the Office of the State Fire Marshal

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Until consolidation with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection in 1995/1996, the Office of State Fire Marshal was one of the smallest independent departments in State Government. The office was established by legislative act in 1923, although at that time not as a State Department. The records that are available from those days are rather sparse and it is difficult to determine the purpose and intent of the sponsors. One reason that has been discussed was the Oakland Hills Fire of 1921 this may have been what was used to bring the fire service closer together and to demonstrate the need for a statewide fire authority. It is apparent the original sponsors did not visualize all of the functions, which are now a part of the Office. Almost every session of the legislature has made changes and added further duties and responsibilities

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