

CITY OF VENTURA
THOMAS FIRE
REBUILD
**HELPING OUR
COMMUNITY
REBUILD**



REBUILDING TOGETHER



CITY OF
VENTURA



WORKING FOR YOUR RECOVERY

Ventura City Council 2018:

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Matt LaVere, Deputy Mayor
Cheryl Heitmann, Councilmember
James Monahan, Councilmember

Erik Nasarenko, Councilmember
Mike Tracy, Councilmember
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Thomas Fire Recovery Statement

The City strives to quickly rebuild our communities to be more sustainable, more fire resistant, and consistent with current building materials and designs. We will work together to build communities, seeking to ensure new homes respect neighbors and a wider community identity. We will balance the needs for individual home styles and preferences with this desire to create and enhance our existing community images. The City will ensure the communities rebuilding continue to be served with adequate infrastructure.

Jeff Lambert, Community Development Director
Community Development
501 Poli St. Rm. 117





YOUR REBUILDING PROCESS

1 DEBRIS REMOVAL

2 DESIGN

3 PERMITTING & REVIEW

4 CONSTRUCTION & INSPECTIONS

5 WELCOME HOME

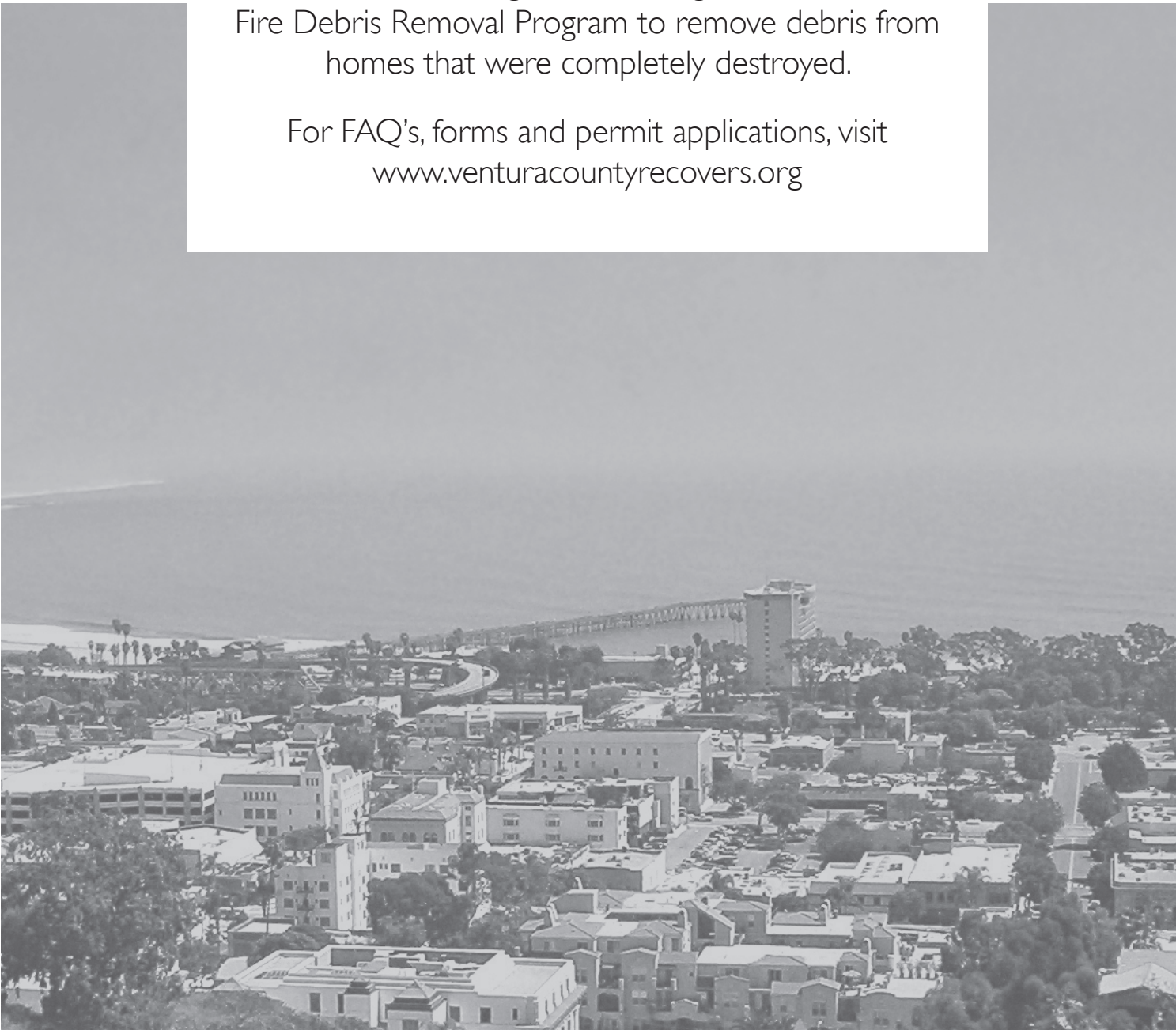
FAQS



DEBRIS REMOVAL

Property owners may choose to participate in the Cal OES Fire Damage Debris Program or the Local Fire Debris Removal Program to remove debris from homes that were completely destroyed.

For FAQ's, forms and permit applications, visit
www.venturacountyrecovers.org



DESIGN

Working with a design professional, you'll need to create or rebuild a set of plans for your new home including all design, engineering, and required code upgrades. You may be able to access the original plans by contacting the original designer or City of Ventura Building & Safety Division. Building plans that are different from your original plans will affect the turn around time of your permitting and review process.

Tip: Now is a great time to begin interviewing and selecting a licensed contractor.

KEY ACTIVITIES:

- Hire design professional
- Retrieve original plans or start from scratch
- Make any design enhancements and required code upgrades
- If applicable, coordinate any necessary reviews with your homeowner's association (HOA)

PERMITTING & REVIEW

A key milestone in building your new home will be applying for and getting your building and associated permits. While all new construction must meet federal, state, and local standards, the City of Ventura is committed to expediting the review process to help property owners rebuild homes lost in the Thomas Fire. The best way to save time and money is to first work with your design professional to ensure your Submittal Packet is 100% complete and that your design professional consults with City Planning Staff.

KEY ACTIVITIES:

- Work with design professional to complete submittal packet
- For zoning and any non-conforming regulation, consult with Planning Division staff
- Review and confirm Building & Safety Thomas Fire Residential Plan Check submittal screening checklist
- Select and hire a licensed contractor

CONSTRUCTION AND INSPECTIONS

It's time to get started on your new home! Your contractor will help guide the building process and schedule. Most homes will get built from the ground up: starting with grading, groundwork, and foundation work, on to framing and wrapping up with walls, details and landscaping.

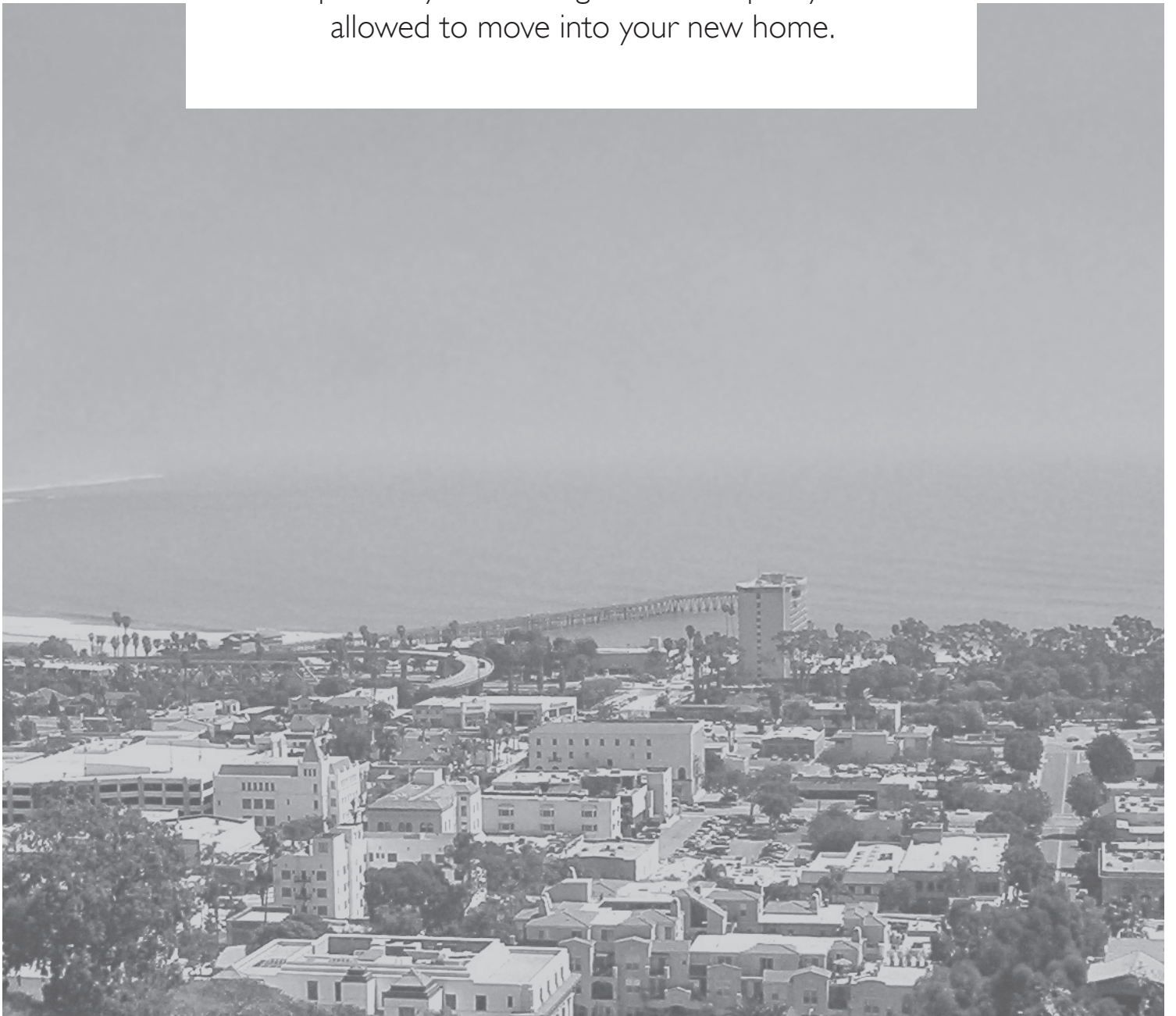
While your contractor is leading you through the building process, they will also be helping coordinate a series of milestone-based inspections. These ensure each step of your new home meets code standards and keeps the progress moving.

KEY ACTIVITIES:

- Work with your contractor to manage building schedule
- Coordinate with your contractor to schedule and manage inspections

WELCOME HOME

Upon the successful completion of your final inspection you will be granted occupancy and allowed to move into your new home.





FAQ'S

What City departments/agencies* and fees are involved in the Building Permit Process?

All coordination with other agencies will be managed by the City.

- Planning - 805-654-7893
- Building & Safety - 805-677-3901
- Land Development - 805-654-7829
- Fire Department - 805-658-4717
- Environmental Services - 805-652-4584
- Ventura Water Department - 805-667-6500

* Ventura Unified School District - 805-641-5000

Planning | 805-654-7893

How long do I have to rebuild my permanent residence?

If your home and accessory structures were considered legal nonconforming and you intend to rebuild the legal nonconforming structures, you will need to file a building permit application within 36 months from the State of Emergency, declared on December 4, 2017; therefore by December 4, 2020. Otherwise, beyond the 36 months, the nonconforming structure will not be allowed to be rebuilt unless it is designed to comply with all zoning regulations. Building and grading permits issued by the City expire 180 days from the date of permit issuance. The City encourages property owners to complete construction as quickly as is practical and not wait to the last minute to call for the next inspection. Permit extensions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

If your home and accessory structures were conforming, there is no time limit for reconstruction but the City encourages and supports homeowners' endeavors to reinvest in their properties and transform the neighborhood.



FAQ'S

Can I live in a trailer or RV on my property while rebuilding a home?

Yes, on February 26, 2018 the Ventura City Council is slated to adopt an ordinance that will allow residents displaced by the fire to live in a recreation vehicle (RV) or permanently towable trailer, as temporary housing onsite or offsite on residential property with authorization of the property owner. Debris removal certification must be completed first and different location standards apply whether the RV or trailer must be located on the destroyed property or on another residential property; parking on the street is prohibited. The RV or trailer is required to have a temporary electrical power permit and a waste removal pumping contract. For further information about the temporary RV or trailer standards and issuance of a Thomas Fire Temporary Housing Permit please contact the Planning Division.

If my structure(s) cannot meet current setback requirements due to lot sizes or topography, will the City still issue building permits?

The City will make every effort to accommodate challenging lot set-back issues. Setbacks can be adjusted under certain circumstances with an Administrative Variance. All fire safe building regulations, environment, and other health and safety ordinances and standards shall apply.

Will the City require evidence of a legal lot prior to issuance of a new building permit?

Yes. Be aware that any legal lot may have several Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs), and that APNs do not establish legal lot status. Therefore, the legal lot lines and status must be confirmed prior to issuance of building permits. The City will accept evidence of a prior Building Permit on your property as establishing legal lot status.

Can I have storage on my property during rebuilding of my home?

On February 26, 2018 the Ventura City Council is slated to adopt an ordinance allowing up to 2 storage units, each unit less than 120 square feet, located on the property, within all setbacks but not on a sidewalk. The ordinance will also allow temporary storage on another residential property with authorization of the homeowner, but located outside of the setback areas. For further information about the storage standards and issuance of a Thomas Fire Temporary Storage Permit please contact the Planning Division.



FAQ'S

Can I build an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) on my destroyed or damaged residential property?

The ADU ordinance adopted by the Ventura City Council in fall 2017 allows for concurrent processing of a new Single Family Dwelling SFD (primary dwelling) and an ADU, filed as one plan check. All ADU ordinance regulations apply. The homeowner/design professional should review the ADU ordinance and consult with Planning Division staff on how to incorporate the ADU into the rebuild design.

How will Hillside Regulations and height be determined for rebuilding my home?

The voter approved Hillside Management Plan does not apply to homes being reconstructed due to the fire. An increase of up to 10% in structure square feet is allowable if it is a nonconforming structure (see page 11 Limited 10% Flexibility Provision). However, proposing to rebuild a structure with a height increase that exceeds the hillside height regulations will require a discretionary Administrative Variance. To obtain a Variance the City Municipal Code requires providing property and height survey data, making the variance findings, and a public hearing before the Planning Commission. Homeowner/design professionals should consult with Planning Division staff in preparation for filing for a Variance application.

Determining pre-existing height: All rebuilding projects (zone clearance during plan check or Administrative Variance application) will require height determination. The City recognizes this is a challenging determination with destroyed properties. The Community Development Director and Planning Division staff will consider the following information, individually or collectively, to verify the height: building permit records, Ventura County Assessor records, as-built plans and site photos. The Director's decision on the height determination shall be final. Homeowner/design professionals should consult with Planning Division staff for determining height in preparation for filing a plan check or Administrative Variance application.

What are "CC&Rs" and do they apply to my property and rebuilding effort?

CC&Rs are "covenants, conditions and restrictions" that are private restrictions recorded on a property. Although the City does not enforce CC&Rs, they exist in some communities and therefore homeowners and their design professionals will need to verify any CC&Rs that might apply to housing type, land uses or development standards on rebuilding their subject property.



FAQ'S

My property had a Variance granted or property specific regulation in the past, how will those be addressed during rebuilding?

Variations are deviations from a setback, height or lot coverage standard which are approved by the City. Homes and associated structures that had variances granted by the City (or formerly by the County) to an individual property, tract-wide subdivision, Planned Development Permit or RPD regulation, can rebuild to that prior specific development standard. Your design professional should seek early consultation with the Planning Division staff to confirm if there was a variance and how to incorporate this standard into the rebuilt design and project plans.

How will nonconforming uses and structures on my property be addressed during the rebuilding?

Under current zoning regulations, all of the destroyed and most of the damaged structures from the fire cannot be rebuilt as originally constructed because they are not in compliance. The current regulations didn't anticipate entire neighborhoods being lost and the need for flexibility when rebuilding. Therefore on February 26, 2018 the Ventura City Council is slated to adopt an ordinance that assists the rebuilding effort by allowing destroyed or damaged homes, garages and other accessory structures that are legal nonconforming (built with a building permit) due to setbacks, height or other zoning regulations to rebuild.

Like-for-like – means same gross square footage, same building footprint, same height and setbacks even when nonconforming to current regulations.

Limited 10% Flexibility Provision: For legal nonconforming structures (nonconforming to setback or lot coverage only – not height), an increase of up to 10% of the total square footage of that structure will be allowed. This provision grants some limited flexibility to a homeowner to modify portions of the structure footprint as they redesign their new home. For example, a nonconforming setback of 10 feet, where 20 feet is required, could be applied to the "10% increase" in square feet that matches the 10 foot nonconforming setback, not the 20 foot setback requirement. Another example is when total lot coverage is nonconforming at 38% and the required coverage limitation is 35%. In this case, the homeowner could redesign all rebuilt structures on the lot up to 38%, this provides flexibility in the location of coverage of the proposed structures.

Determining pre-existing use and square footage: The Community Development Director will consider building permit records and County assessment records to determine pre-existing use and square footage, the Director's decision shall be the final determination.



FAQ'S

Will Design Review be required to rebuild my home?

Single family homes and duplex units are exempt from Design Review; only zoning clearance will be required during the building permit plan check. Homeowner/design professionals should consult with Planning Division staff in preparation for filing for plan check.

Multifamily structures (3 or more units) are subject to Design Review. However, if a property owner desires to rebuild “like-for-like” with no façade changes, then no Design Review is required. However, the City recognizes the property owner may seek design or increased units during the rebuilding effort. Therefore, on February 26, 2018 the Ventura City Council is slated to adopt an ordinance to expedite the approval process. If expanded in size, design, or number of units, a recommendation from the Design Review Committee (DRC), through no more than 2 public hearings, to the Director is required.

Building & Safety | 805-677-3901

When I rebuild my home, does it have to be in compliance with current building codes?

Yes. All buildings must meet the 2016 California Codes, as amended and adopted by the City of Ventura.

How will the applicant determine the square footage of destroyed structures that were on my property prior to the fire?

The design professional will refer to the Building Department history records and Tax Assessors records to determine the square footage of the structures before the fire. The City does not retain building plan sets in most cases, but may have permit application forms and inspection records for most permitted structures.

Is a Building Permit required to repair damage to a structure?

Yes. A Permit is required for repairs and construction pursuant to State Code (2016 California Codes.) Some situations may necessitate that a Registered Engineer evaluates the condition of the damaged home and provide engineered plans for the repair.



FAQ'S

What documents do I need for a Building Permit?

All plans and documents required for a Building Permit are identified on the Thomas Fire Residential Plan Check submittal screening checklist.

Once I have all building permit plans ready, how do I submit them?

Applications can be submitted at the Thomas Fire Rebuild table at 501 Poli St., Room 117 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 7:30 am to 5 pm, Thursday 9 am to 5 pm, closed alternate Fridays and holidays. To schedule an appointment call 805-677-3901

Land Development | 805-654-7829

Will I need a new encroachment permit?

An encroachment permit will be required for any upgrades to the existing water service. Encroachment permits will also be required for any repair or modifications or relocation of driveway connections.

Do I need a Grading Permit to rebuild?

Rebuilding a destroyed home with minor changes in layout does not require a grading permit. Moderate changes such as expansion of the home, or earthwork with new retaining walls may not require a grading permit if an exception can be processed by the Land Development Division. Major changes in the footprint, layout and location on the lot may trigger the need for a grading permit and compliance with the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit requirements for single-family hillside homes.

Fire Department | 805-658-4717

Are fire sprinklers required for my new structure(s)?

Yes. Residential fire sprinkler systems are required as mandated by the 2016 California Codes and locally-adopted ordinances. The sprinkler system design should take water meter, water service size, and static pressure into account.



FAQ'S

Do I need a licensed fire protection contractor (C-16) to design and install the sprinkler system?

Not necessarily, however it is highly recommended. Owner-builders may assume all liabilities of the entire construction project and apply for all permits under the provisions of the State as it relates to owner-builder allowances and thus design and install their own systems as approved by the Fire Department. If a licensed C-16 fire protection contractor is used they shall install their own design. A C-16 fire protection contractor CANNOT design a system they do not install.

Further information on residential fire sprinkler systems can be found in our Automatic Fire Sprinkler Handbook on our website at www.cityofventura.ca.gov/181/Fire-Prevention-Forms.

Who enforces the regulations regarding clearance of fuel around buildings?

The Ventura City Fire Department will enforce fire hazard abatement and defensible space requirements for clearance of vegetation from around buildings within High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones as mandated by the California Fire Code and locally adopted ordinances. Additional information on defensible space and brush clearance can be found in the Ready, Set, Go! Wildfire Action Plan booklet, which can be found on our website at www.cityofventura.ca.gov/191/Ready-Set-Go-Wildland-Fire.

Am I responsible for clearing the brush from around buildings?

Yes. The property owner is responsible for clearing brush from around buildings.

Ventura Water Department | 805-667-6500

Do I need to upgrade my water line and meter on my property?

Homeowners should work with their design professional to address this technical issue. Any required upgrades are based upon the applicant/design professional determination based on current building and fire code requirements.



FAQ'S