



City of Santa Barbara  
Fire Prevention Bureau  
**Automatic Fire Sprinkler Requirements**

This information sheet is to make you aware of the enhanced automatic fire sprinkler requirements adopted under Municipal Code 8.04, Ordinance #5920, as part of the City's amendments to the 2019 California Fire Code.

**New Construction:** The enhanced sections will require approved fire sprinklers in all new construction, including single family residences and duplexes.

Exception: Detached utility buildings ("U" Occupancies) less than 5000 square feet, or less than 500 square feet in the high fire hazard areas.

### **Additions, Alterations**

**Commercial:** Approved automatic fire sprinklers will be required throughout the building when:

- There is an addition to any building other than a single family residence (R-3 Occupancy)  
*Exception: a single addition of not more than 250 square feet, provided the addition does not change the use to a more hazardous occupancy.*
- A remodel involves greater than 50% of the existing floor area of the structure.
- A change in the occupancy use to a higher hazard classification.

**Residential:** Approved automatic fire sprinklers will be required when:

- An addition or remodel exceeds 75% of the existing floor area of the structure.

**Floor Area Computation** Square footage computations are per the 2019 California Building Code in accordance with Chapter 2, Definitions "Floor Area, Gross".

**Aggregate** Floor area computations shall be counted in the aggregate for both commercial and residential remodels / additions from the effective date of this ordinance.

**Additional City Department Review:** Sprinkler systems in the City of Santa Barbara are subject to review and approval by other departments including Public Works, Planning and Zoning, Building and Safety, as well as the Fire Department. All exterior sprinkler related devices are subject to review and approval by the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) or Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) as administered by the Planning Division.

\*NFPA does not allow for partially sprinklered buildings.

Questions about these requirements may be directed to the Santa Barbara City Fire Department, **Fire Prevention Bureau**, at **805-564-5702**. Please also see our website at:  
<http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/Government/Departments/Fire/>