



City of Laguna Niguel
Building Division
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Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ)

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ADVISORY:

The City of Laguna Niguel recommends that new construction of structures in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) be done in accordance with Chapter 7A (Materials and Construction Methods for Exterior Wildfire Exposure) of the 2016 California Building Code.

California Government Code Sections 51178 and 51181 require the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to identify VHFHSZ using consistent statewide criteria for wildland fire hazards, transmit this information to local government agencies, and periodically review and update the zones. On October 28, 2011, the City received from the Director of CAL FIRE a recommendation for a VHFHSZ (2011) in the City of Laguna Niguel. The recommended VHFHSZ map was made available for public review at the Community Development Department public counter and on the City's website in accordance with Government Code Section 51178.5.

Government Code Section 51179(a) requires the City to designate, by ordinance, the VHFHSZ in the City within 120 days of receiving the recommendation from the Director of CAL FIRE. The VHFHSZ defines where ignition resistant building standards (Chapter 7A of the 2016 California Building Code) are to be implemented for **NEW** construction. **Chapter 7A requirements do not apply to room additions or remodels.**

As of February 28, 2012, the City of Laguna Niguel has not adopted the VHFHSZ as recommended by CAL FIRE. The City Council and City Staff are still reviewing the proposed VHFHSZ. However, the City Council and City Staff **strongly recommend that new structures built in the VHFHSZ be constructed in accordance with Chapter 7A of the 2013 California Building Code.**

The intent of Chapter 7A is to provide additional building features increasing the ability of a structure to resist the intrusion of flames and wind-blown embers in the event of a wildland fire. Some of the more notable building standards contained in Chapter 7A is the use of:

- Boxed/Closed Roof Eaves
- Ember Protection on Class A Roof Tile Ends
- Tempered Windows
- Fire Rated Exterior Doors
- Smaller Roof and Attic Vents & Screens
- Ignition Resistant Construction Materials on Balconies, Decks and other Accessory Structures

Additional information regarding the various ignition resistant building standards and requirements of Chapter 7A can be obtained from the City's Building Official or your architect.



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CAL FIRE Recommended 2011 Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map

