Residential Bathroom Remodels

A permit is required for bathroom remodels that include removal and replacement and/or relocation of showers, tubs or lavatories (sinks) or replacement/alteration to the electrical, & exhaust fan. A permit is not required for bathroom countertop replacement or re-facing of the existing cabinets. If a permit is required it must be obtained prior to the start of the remodel.

This handout is for information and reference only, and is not a substitute for plans prepared for each project.

The following is a list of the general requirements based on the 2019 California Electrical Code (CEC), 2019 California Residential Code (CRC), 2019 California Mechanical Code (CMC), and 2019 California Plumbing Code (CPC), 2019 California Energy Code (CEnC), 2019 California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen) and the California Civil Code. Contact the Building & Safety Division for any questions or additional information, including requirements for new/altered plumbing (water, sewer, or gas lines) or mechanical (bathroom exhaust fan).

Water Conserving Plumbing Fixtures [California Civil Code 1101.4(a)]

The California Civil Code requires that all Residential buildings constructed before January 1, 1994 with existing non-compliant plumbing fixtures (based on water efficiency) throughout the house be upgraded whenever a building permit is issued for remodeling improvements even if the fixtures are not within the scope of work. The following table shows the fixtures that are considered to be non-compliant and the type of water-conserving plumbing fixture that should be installed.

Type of Fixture	Non-Compliant Plumbing Fix- ture	Required Water-Conserving Plumbing Fixture (max. rate) [CalGreen 4.303]
Water Closet (Toilet)	More than 1.6 gallons/flush	1.28 gallons/flush
Urinal	More than 1.0 gallons/flush	0.125 gallons/flush for wall mount; 0.50 for others
Showerhead	More than 2.5 gallons/minute	1.8 gallons/flush at 80 psi
Faucet-Bathroom	More than 2.2 gallons/minute	1.2 gallons/minute at 60 psi
Faucet- Kitchen	More than 2.2 gallons/minute	1.8 gallons/minute at 60 psi

ELECTRICAL

- A minimum of (1) 20 amp circuit is required for bathrooms. [CEC 210.11(C) 3] This circuit shall not contain other outlets, except, where the 20-ampere circuit supplies a single bathroom, outlets for other equipment within the same bathroom shall be permitted to be supplied in accordance with CEC 210.23 (A) (1) and (A)(2).
- At least one electrical outlet shall be installed within 36 inches of the outside edge of each bathroom sink basin and be located on wall or partition adjacent to the sink, on the countertop or installed on the side or face of the basin cabinet not more than 12 inches below the countertop.
- All bathroom outlets and whirlpools tubs must be GFCI protected. [CEC 210.8 (A)(1)]



LIGHTING

- No electrical fixtures within 3 feet away and 8 feet above bathtub. Recessed lighting at bathtub/ shower shall be suitable for damp locations and provided with a solid lens cover. [CEC 410.10(D)]
- Bathrooms lighting shall be high efficacy luminaries or controlled by an occupancy sensor. High efficient and non-high efficient light must be switch separately. Reference the 2019 California Energy Code.
- Recessed luminaries installed in an insulated ceiling shall be I.C. (insulation contact) rated and AT (air tight) and shall be sealed and/or gasketed between ceiling and housing.

MECHANICAL

- Back draft dampers are required on bathroom ventilation fans. Ventilation fans must vent through an approved duct and shall terminate 3 feet from an opening or property line. [CMC 504.1]
- Each bathroom shall be mechanically vented must be controlled by a humidity control, capable of manual or automatically controlled capable of adjusting humidity between relative humidity between ≤ 50 percent to a maximum of 80 percent. Exhaust fans shall be capable of provideing a minmum of 50 cfm intermittently or 20 cfm continuous ventilation. [CMC 402.5, CGBS 4.506.1., CRC R303.3]

PLUMBING

- The hot water valve shall be installed on the left side where two separate handles control are provided [CPC 417.5]
- Minimum shower dimensions 1024 square inches (30 inch circle).
- Shower stall door must open out. Opening must be a minimum 22 inches wide.
- Water closets are required to be a minimum 15 inches from center to wall, 24 inches clear in front of toilet. [CPC 402.5]

 Maximum 3 water closets on a 3 inch line.
 Hot water is required to be controlled by the left control valve.
Provide 12 inch x 12 inch minimum access to slip joint tub trap and whirlpool tub motor.
GLAZING IN HIGH HAZARD AREAS
Except as indicated in CRC Section R308.1.1 each pane of glazing installed in hazardous locations as defined in Section R308.4 shall be provided with a manufacturer's designation specifying who