

## **POLICY ON BUILDING PLANS REQUIRED TO BE PREPARED, WET SIGNED AND STAMPED BY A CALIFORNIA PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER OR CALIFORNIA REGISTERED ARCHITECT**

### **WHAT REQUIRES SIGNATURE OF A CALIFORNIA PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER OR CALIFORNIA REGISTERED ARCHITECT?**

All plans submitted for permit are required to be signed by either a California Professional Engineer or California Registered Architect, except as follows:

#### **1. Plans for New Buildings and Additions to Existing Buildings:**

Section 2320.1 of the Los Angeles Building Code and Sections 5537 and 6737.1 of the California Business & Professions Code provide the following exceptions for building plans that have been designed in accordance with the Building Code requirements of Division IV of Chapter 23 for conventional light wood-frame construction and tables of limitation for wood frame construction as adopted by the City of Los Angeles.

An unlicensed person may prepare plans, drawings or specifications for the following:

- C Single family dwelling not more than one story in height<sup>1</sup>.
- C Multiple dwellings containing no more than four dwelling units and not more than one story in height<sup>1</sup>. Also, maximum of four dwelling units on any lot.
- C Garages or other structures appurtenant to single-family dwelling or multiple dwellings not more than one story in height<sup>1</sup>.
- C Agricultural and ranch buildings unless the building official deems that an undue risk to the public health, safety or welfare is involved.

However, if any portion of any structure exempted by these sections, deviates from the

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<sup>1</sup> The *architectural* drawings for this type of building up to two stories may be prepared by an unlicensed person per Section 5537 of the California Business and Professions Code.

requirements for conventional light wood-frame construction or tables of limitation for wood frame construction found in Division IV of Chapter 23 of the Building Code as adopted by local jurisdiction, then the building official may require the preparation of plans, drawings, specifications or calculations for that portion by, or under the responsible charge of, a licensed engineer, or by, or under the responsible control of, an architect licensed pursuant to Chapter 3 of the California Business & Professions Code. The documents for that portion shall bear the stamp and signature of the licensee who is responsible for their preparation.

## **2. Plans for Alterations, Rehabilitation and Repair of Existing Buildings:**

Sections 5538 and 6745 of the California Business & Professions Code do not prohibit any person from furnishing plans for any of the following:

- Nonstructural store fronts, interior alterations or additions, fixtures, cabinet work, furniture, or other appliances or equipment.
- Any nonstructural work necessary to provide for their installation.

However, an unlicensed person may not prepare plans for those alterations that will change or affect any components of the structural system or safety of the building or its occupants.

Except as specifically noted above, here are some examples of projects that require plans to be prepared, signed and stamped by a California Professional Engineer or California Registered Architect:

- New buildings, additions to existing buildings,
- Projects with interior or exterior structural alterations,
- Interior alteration with an occupancy change,
- All Group A (Assembly) Occupancies,
- All Group E (School and Day Care) Occupancies,
- All Group F (Factory and Industrial) Occupancies,
- All Group H (Hazardous) Occupancies,
- All Group I (Institutional) Occupancies,
- All Group R, Division 1, 2 or 6 Occupancies,
- Projects with mixed occupancies,
- Interior alteration with walls and partitions over 5 feet 9 inches in height or ceiling work which cover a floor area greater than 3,000 square feet, for Groups B, S-1, S-2 or M Occupancies,
- Storage racks over 8 feet in height,
- Remodeling projects that creates or alters 1-hr fire rated corridors, fire rated occupancy separations or area separation walls,
- Alteration which changes the means of egress (exit) requirements,
- Tanks and vessels,
- Nonstructural component or equipment attached to building requiring design per

- Section 1632.1,
- Remodeling Projects in high-rise (having floors over 75 feet in height) building,
  - Lateral force resisting systems utilizing poles embedded in the ground,
  - Any project deemed by Building Official to require design by a California Professional Engineer or California Registered Architect.

## **WHAT DOCUMENTS REQUIRE WET STAMP AND SIGNATURE?**

Per Section 6735(a) of the California Business & Professions Code, each sheet of plans prepared by a licensed engineer or architect, that are permitted or that are to be released for construction are required to be signed, and sealed or stamped with the license expiration date and the date of signing and sealing or stamping.

Specifications, calculations, and reports prepared by an engineer or architect are required to be signed, and sealed or stamped including the date of signing and sealing or stamping, and expiration date of the license except that if they have multiple pages, this information shall appear at a minimum on the title sheet, cover sheet, or signature sheet.

Per Section 106.3.3.2 of the Los Angeles Building Code, on structures which do not require engineers or architects' signatures according to the California Business and Profession's Code but do require some structural design, the person responsible for such design shall sign and seal or stamp the sheets of the plans having engineering details thereon and the calculations in the manner specified above. For example, in the case of a two-story single family dwelling with architectural plans designed by an unlicensed person—as allowed by Section 5537 of the California Business and Professions Code—only the structural drawings need to be signed, and sealed or stamped by a licensed engineer or architect; the architectural plans need not be signed.