

MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF 2013 CALIFORNIA ENERGY CODE

- STREAMLINING THE ENFORCEMENT PROCESS AT
MUNICIPAL LEVEL

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The 2013 California Energy Code not only heightens requirements on building envelopes, lighting, mechanical, and electrical systems, expands coverages to covered processes such as refrigerated warehouse, commercial kitchens and parking garages, it also reinvent the entire compliance documentation system, commissioning over 200 new forms, including residential and nonresidential Certificates of Compliance, Certificate of Installation, Certificate of Acceptance and Certificate of Verification

Challenges Facing Building Departments

Low compliance rates are not simply caused by building departments not doing their jobs, but are the result of the many challenges. Some of these challenges can be overcome by the building department and some are outside of their control. The most common challenges are as follows:

- *Limited resources*-departments are typically funded by permit fees and often these fees are not sufficient to ensure the department can do a thorough job.
- *The 2013 code put more emphasis more on verifying the correct installations of building envelopes, HVAC systems and electrical/lighting system, requiring much more enforcement efforts in the inspection phase of the project.*
- *Low priority*-the energy code is often seen as not having a direct impact on health and life safety and is therefore given a lower priority when resources are stretched thin.
- *Inadequate training*-in order to stay up to speed on changes to codes and technology, it is critical for department staff to have regular training.
- *Lack of awareness*-departments don't typically know what compliance issues exist when it comes to the enforcement of the energy code and therefore cannot address them.

In response, SFDBI:

- *Established an internal energy code enforcement steering committee, headed by the chief of the mechanical/energy section and the chief electrical inspector, to oversee all energy code related policy making and enforcement issues.*
- *Handles Energy code compliance inspections as structural special inspections:*
 1. *During plan review phase, SFDBI plan checkers meet with the design team, jointly agreeing what energy code inspection items are required for a specific project.*
 2. *Once determined, the required energy inspection items are documented on the SFDBI Title 24 Energy Inspection Forms, and entered by SFDBI permit technicians into the department's Permit Tracking System (PTS)*
 3. *Final inspection will not be completed until all energy inspection items flagged by SFDBI's PTS are cleared, in the form of affidavit letter provided by the installing contractors or certified Acceptance Test Technicians (ATTs)*

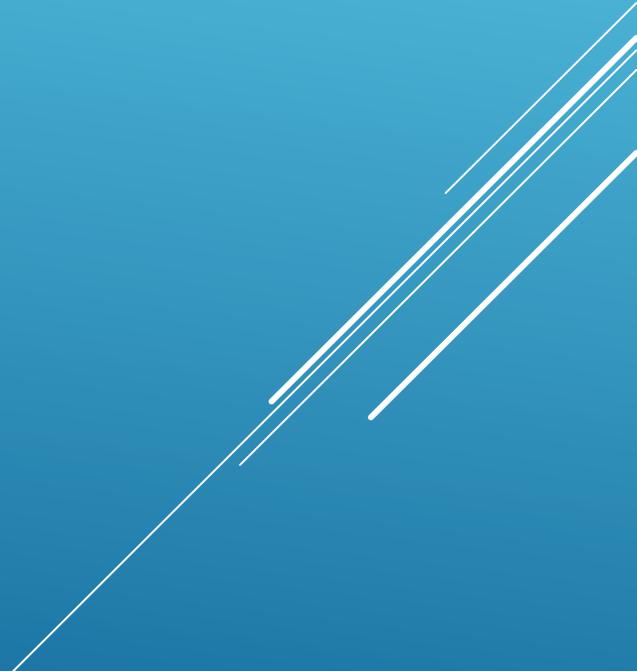
In addition, SFDBI

- *Teams up with the California Energy Commission, PG&E, BayREN to provide SFDBI's over 100 inspectors and engineers with several full-day training on the 2013 California Energy Code. Special topic training classes are also provided targeting electrical and plumbing inspectors in the forms of in-person class and Webinar on a continue, as needed basis.*
- *Increases public outreach effort by bring energy enforcement issues to code advisory meetings, meetings with builders/contractor associations, and building management associations such as SF BOMA*

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

SFDBI's Information Sheet and inspection forms governing the enforcement of the 2013 California Energy Code are available at:

[Http://www.sfdbi.org/information-sheets](http://www.sfdbi.org/information-sheets)

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