

CALIFORNIA NOISE INSULATION STANDARDS

(California Administrative Code, Title 25, Chapter 1, Subchapter 1; Adopted February 22, 1974)

Article 4. Noise Insulation Standards

1092. Noise Insulation Standards

(a) Purpose. The purpose of this article is to establish uniform minimum noise insulation performance standards to protect persons within new hotels, motels, apartment houses, and dwellings other than detached single-family dwellings from the effects of excessive noise, including but not limited to hearing loss or impairment and persistent interference with speech and sleep.

(b) Application and Scope. The provisions of this article relating to noise insulation performance standards apply to new hotels, motels, apartment houses and dwellings other than detached single-family dwellings.

These regulations shall apply to all applications for building permits made subsequent to the effective date of these regulations.

These regulations shall be effective 6 months after the adoption by the Commission and Housing and Community Development.

(c) Definitions. The following special definitions shall apply to this article as applicable:

(1) Impact Insulation Class (IIC)-A single number rating for ceiling-floor construction that represents the ability of the construction to isolate impact noise, where measurement procedure is based on ASTM E492-73T and as defined in UBC Standard No. 35-2.

(2) Sound Transmission Class (STC)-A single figure rating for floor-ceiling and interior wall partition construction that represents the ability of the construction to isolate airborne noise, where measurement procedure is based on ASTM E90-70 or ASTM E366-71 and as defined in UBC Standard No. 35-1.

(3) Detached Single-Family Dwelling-Any single-family dwelling which is separated from adjacent property lines by 3 feet or more or is separated from adjacent buildings by 6 feet or more.

(d) Sound Transmission Control Between Dwelling Units.

(1) Wall and Floor-Ceiling Assemblies. Wall and floor-ceiling assemblies separating dwelling units or guest rooms from each other and from public space such as interior corridors and service areas shall provide airborne sound insulation for walls, and both airborne and impact sound insulation for floor-ceiling assemblies.

(2) Airborne Sound Insulation. All such separating walls and floor-ceiling assemblies shall provide an airborne sound insulation equal to that required to meet a Sound Transmission Class (STC) of 50 (45 if field tested) as defined in UBC Standard No. 35-1.

Penetrations or openings in construction assemblies for piping, electrical devices, recessed cabinets, bathtubs, soffits, or heating, ventilating or exhaust ducts shall be sealed, lined, insulated or otherwise treated to maintain the required ratings.

Dwelling unit entrance doors from interior corridors together with their perimeter seals shall have a Sound Transmission Class (STC) rating of not less than 30 and such perimeter seals shall be maintained in good operating condition.

(3) Impact Sound Insulation. All separating floor-ceiling assemblies between separate units or guest rooms shall provide impact sound insulation equal to that required to meet an Impact Insulation Class (IIC) of 50 (45 if field tested) as defined in UBC Standard No. 35-2. Floor coverings may be included in the assembly to obtain the required rating, and must be retained as a permanent part of the assembly and may only be replaced by other floor covering that provides the same sound insulation required above.

(4) Tested Assemblies. Field or laboratory tested wall or floor-ceiling designs having an STC or IIC of 50 or more as determined by UBC Standard 35-1, 35-2 or 35-3 may be used without any additional field testing when in the opinion of the Building Officials the laboratory tested design has not been compromised by flanking paths. Tests may be required by the Building Official when evidence of compromised separations is noted.

(5) Field Testing. Field testing, when required, shall be done under the supervision of a person experienced in the field of acoustical testing and engineering, who shall forward test results to the Building Official showing that the minimum sound insulation requirements stated above have been met.

(6) Airborne Sound Insulation Field Tests. When required, airborne sound insulation shall be determined according to the applicable Field Airborne Sound Transmission Loss Test procedures of U.B.C. Standard No. 35-3. All sound transmitted from the source room to the receiving room shall be considered to be transmitted through the test partition.

(7) Impact Sound Insulation Field Test. When required, impact sound insulation shall be determined in accordance with U.B.C. Standard No. 35-2.

[Note: Excerpts from the 1973 U.B.C., Appendix Chapter 35, reproduced with permission of International Conference of Building Officials, 5360 S. Workman Mill Road, Whittier, California.]

(e) Noise Insulation from Exterior Sources.

(1) Location and Orientation. Consistent with land use standards, residential structures located on noise critical areas, such as proximity to select system of county roads and city streets (as specified in 186.4 of the State of California Streets and Highways Code), railroads, rapid transit lines, airports, or industrial areas shall be designed to prevent the intrusion of exterior noises beyond prescribed levels with all exterior doors and windows in the closed position. Proper design shall include, but shall not be limited to, orientation of the residential structure, set-backs, shielding, and sound insulation of the building itself.

(2) Interior Noise Levels. Interior community noise equivalent levels (CNEL) with windows closed, attributable to exterior sources shall not exceed an annual CNEL of 45 dB in any habitable room.

(3) Airport Noise Source. Residential structures to be located within an annual CNEL contour (as defined in Title 4, Subchapter 6, California Administrative Code) of 60 require an acoustical analysis showing that the structure has been designed to limit intruding noise in the prescribed allowable levels. CNEL's shall be as determined by the local jurisdiction in accordance with its local general plan.

(4) Vehicular and Industrial Noise Sources. Residential buildings or structures to be located within exterior community noise equivalent level contours of 60 dB of an existing or adopted freeway, expressway, major street, thoroughfare, railroad or rapid-transit line shall require an acoustical analysis showing that the proposed building has been designed to limit intruding noise to the allowable interior noise levels prescribed in Section 1092 (e) (2).

Exception: Railroads, where there are no nighttime (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) railway operations and where daytime (7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.) railway operations do not exceed four (4) per day.

(f) Compliance.

(1) Evidence of compliance shall consist of submittal of any acoustical analysis report, prepared under the supervision of a person experienced in the field of acoustical engineering, with the application for building permit. The report shall show topographical relationship of noise sources and dwelling site, identification of noise sources and their characteristics, predicted noise spectra at the exterior of the proposed dwelling structure considering present and future land usage, basis for the prediction (measured or obtained from published data), noise attenuation measures to be applied, and an analysis of the noise insulation effectiveness of the proposed construction showing that the prescribed interior noise level requirements are met. If interior allowable noise levels are met by requiring that windows be unopenable or closed, the design for the structure must also specify the means that will be employed to provide ventilation and cooling, if necessary, to provide a habitable interior environment.

(2) Field Testing. Only when inspection indicates that the construction is not in accordance with the approved design, field testing may be required. Interior noise measurements shall be taken under conditions of typical maximum exterior noise levels within legal limits. A test report showing compliance or noncompliance with prescribed interior allowable levels shall be submitted to the Building Official.

Where a complaint as to noncompliance with this article requires a field test to resolve the complaint, the complainant shall post a bond or adequate funds in escrow for the cost of said testing. Such costs shall be chargeable to the complainant when such field tests show that compliance with these regulations is in fact present. If such tests show noncompliance, then such testing costs shall be borne by the owner or builder.