



## WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE BUILDING STANDARDS (WUIBS) *Training Program*

Beginning in January 2008 new fire safety amendments apply to Chapter 7A of the California Building Code. Wildland-Urban Interface building standards are now more stringent. On May 19<sup>th</sup>, HEF, along with CAL FIRE and UCCE ANR, sponsored a training session for building officials and fire department personnel.

The goals of the program was to provide attendees with a working knowledge of the new WUIBS Chapter 7A of the California Building Code, so that it can be successfully implemented on the local level.

**How Buildings Are Exposed to Wildfire:** Buildings in the WUI must be protected from:

- Embers or fire brands: air-born vegetation, construction materials etc. that enter through vents or land on horizontal surfaces.
- Flame impingement: nearby vegetation, debris, construction material, fire wood etc.
- Radiation: nearby dense vegetation, adjacent building/deck fire
- A building will be exposed to the main flame front of a wildfire for a relatively short period of time. A building will be exposed to a pre- and post fire for a much longer time.


**Applicability Implementation:** The changes to the building code apply to new construction, though existing code may already apply to replacement (such as roof covering). Code applicability is determined by Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) Rating:

- In State Responsibility Area Chapter 7A will apply in all FHSZ areas regardless of local adoption.
- In Local Responsibility Areas maps that determine where Chapter 7A applies must be adopted by local ordinance


**Building Materials & Components:** The new building code covers the following materials and components:

- Roof Coverings, Assemblies, Gutters and Edge
- Eave and Vents
- Exterior Walls & Siding
- Windows
- Decks and Other Attachments

**Fire Rating for Roof Coverings**



Flame penetrated through to the underside of the roof sheathing, into what would be the attic. As built, this is not a 'Class A' roof.



Burning [12"x 12"] 'A Brand' placed on roof covering. Will flame penetrate through the covering to the underside of the roof deck (into the attic), or not?

704A2.2 Vents shall not be installed in eaves and cornices.  
EXCEPTION: ... they may be used provided they resist the intrusion of flame and burning embers ...



Eave vents are eliminated and moved to the roof. Vent location is in the lower portion of the roof – other venting must be installed close to the ridge (or ridge vents used).

**Summary of Chapter 7A applicability<sup>1</sup>**

Responsibility Area	FHSZ		
	Very High	High	Moderate
SRA	Yes	Yes	Yes
LRA	Yes	No	No

<sup>1</sup> Roof covering requirements also depend on provisions given in Chapter 15.



*The Hills Emergency Forum facilitates a cooperative approach among eight governing organizations addressing urban wildland interface fire issues in the Oakland-Berkeley hills.*