

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND SAFETY
INTRA-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

DATE: June 17, 2004

TO: All Structural Plan Check Engineers

FROM: Hector Buitrago, Assistant Chief
Engineering Bureau

SUBJECT: **Protocol for Considering Requests for Modification of Building Ordinances for Additions to Existing Building - Building Code Chapter 71**

The following is applicable when processing Requests for Modifications ("RFM") to the Los Angeles Building Code Chapter 71 requirements so that hazards from methane gas may be mitigated to a level below significance by considering the size and physical features of proposed additions to existing non-conforming buildings.

Methane Buffer Zone

- RFM and mitigation components are not required when the total area of all on-grade-additions to single-family-dwellings and their accessory buildings is less than 750 s.f. and 500 s.f. for all other buildings.
- RFM may be approved for on-grade-additions between 750 s.f. and 1,000 s.f. for single-family-dwellings and their accessory buildings and for all additions to other buildings between 500 s.f. and 750 s.f.

Methane Zone

- RFM and mitigation components are not required when the total area of all on-grade-additions to single-family-dwellings and their accessory buildings is less than 500 s.f. and for additions to all other buildings less than 100 s.f.
- RFM may be approved for on-grade-additions between 500 s.f. and 1,000 s.f. for single-family-dwellings and their accessory buildings and for all additions to other buildings between 100 s.f. and 750 s.f.

Minimum Conditions of Approval for All Cases

The Condition of Approval for the RFM shall be as follows:

- install a 6 mil. Visquene sheet installed below the floor slab,
- install a 2 inch thick gravel layer below the Visquene,
- install two 2 inch diameter Vent Risers in exterior walls located as far apart as possible, and
- install one 4 inch diameter Perforated Horizontal Vent Pipe below the Visquene to connect the two Vent Risers.

These components shall be constructed using the details shown in the LADBS Information Bulletin P-B/C 2002-102 titled: "Methane Hazard Mitigation Standard Plan: Simplified Method For Small Additions"

Requiring full compliance with Chapter 71 for additions less than the thresholds identified above, is not expected to provide an appreciable increase in overall safety since the existing non-conforming building contains no methane mitigating features.

This protocol shall not be applicable to projects located in the Playa Vista project area.