

USE OF SUMP PUMPS FOR SURFACE AND SUBSURFACE DRAINAGE

Section 7013.10 for site drainage in the Los Angeles Building Code (LABC) states: “All pads with cut or fill shall slope a minimum of two percent to an approved drainage device or facility, or to a public street. Where used, the drainage device shall be an adequately designed system of catch basins and drain lines, which conducts the water to a street.” Section 7013.9 requires that drainage from roof gutters be conducted by gravity flow to an approved location. The code does not specifically address the use of sump pumps for control of site drainage.

Furthermore, Section 7013.10 of LABC only has language regarding site drainage of graded pads. There are no code sections regulating the subsurface drainage, and surface drainage collected from light wells, stair wells, or driveways sloping toward basement garages. The purpose of this Information Bulletin is to clarify the policy of the Department regarding the use of sump pumps to divert drainage to streets.

I. Subsurface Drainage from Retaining/Basement Walls

A Request for Modification is not required for using a sump pump to divert subsurface water collected from behind retaining/basement walls, to streets. Where the historic high water table is above the bottom of the retaining/basement wall footing, a geology and/or soil report addressing the dewatering of the site shall be approved by the Grading Division. Sites that require permanent dewatering and are located in the San Fernando Valley will require approval from the Upper Los Angeles River Area (ULARA) Watermaster. Contact information for the current Watermaster may be found at www.ularawatermaster.com.

II. Surface Drainage from Light Wells, Stair Wells, and Driveways

A Request for Modification is not required for the use of a sump pump to divert surface water to the street, where the water is collected from light wells, stair wells, and driveways sloping toward basements/subterranean garages.

III. Surface Drainage to Street from Best Management Practices (BMP) Devices

A Request for Modification is not required for the use of a sump pump to divert water collected from BMP devices (cisterns, rain gardens, planter boxes, infiltration basins, rain barrels, etc.), where the water would normally flow to the street via gravity and the overflow of any BMP device would also flow to the street via gravity.

IV. Other Surface Drainage

A Request for Modification shall be required for using a sump pump to divert other surface water to streets. Such a Request for Modification shall be processed by the Grading Division. The Grading Division may require the permit applicant to pay a site inspection fee for the purpose of verifying the site topography and the suitability of using the sump pump. In addition, the Grading Division will require the permit applicant to file an affidavit agreeing to maintain the sump pump in proper working conditions at all times.

V. Sump Pumps Adjacent to Descending Slopes

A. General Conditions

Back-up dispersal wall structures, or alternatively, a battery and/or natural gas/propane powered back-up power generator, may be required where the slope of the ground surface below or adjacent to the sump pump is steeper than 5:1 horizontal:vertical (H:V).

B. Dispersal Wall Approval Conditions:

1. Where the slope of the ground surface is steeper than 5:1 (H:V), the dispersal wall shall be supported by a footing founded in competent material as determined by the geologist/soils engineer and approved by the Grading Division.
2. The dispersal wall shall be designed in compliance with LABC Section 7013.7 or an equivalent design recommended by a licensed engineer and approved by the Grading Division.
3. The dispersal wall shall be located a minimum of 10 feet up-slope of any property line. Greater setbacks may be warranted where irrigation water from landscaped areas drains through the dispersal wall.
4. Water shall not be dispersed onto uncertified fill, landslide areas or slopes with a factor of safety for stability that is less than 1.5.
5. Where the slope of the ground surface is steeper than 3:1 (H:V), a geology/soil engineering report addressing the stability of the slopes, potential impacts of the dispersal of collected water on the slopes, and specifying the foundation bearing material for the dispersal wall to prevent settlement shall be submitted to the Grading Division. See also Information Bulletin P/BC 2020-113 Contents of Reports for Submittal to the LADBS Grading Division.

C. Back-up Battery and/or Natural Gas/Propane Powered Generator Approval Conditions:

1. The generator shall be designed to start automatically in the event of an electrical power outage.
2. For natural gas/propane generators, the generator shall be powered by the same fuel source that services the site structures.
3. In the case of a battery backup or propane powered generator, the battery capacity or supply of propane shall be sufficient to keep the pumps in operation for a minimum of 8 hours.

VI. General

Plumbing and electrical permits are required for sump pumps. Explosion-proof boxes and equipment may be required in hazardous locations.

A Request for Modification form to use a sump pump and the affidavit (general, battery or back-up power generator) to maintain the sump pump in working conditions may be downloaded from the LADBS website at: ladbs.org or obtained from the Grading Division. A Request for Modification to use a sump pump and the associated affidavit must be submitted to and executed only at the

Metro Office of the Grading Division.

Location: 221 N. Figueroa Street, Suite 1200, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Phone: (213) 482-0480

The Request for Modification to use a sump pump and the associated affidavit cannot be processed at the Van Nuys, West Los Angeles, or San Pedro branch office locations.

VII. Forms:

Instructions for Grading Sump Pump Building Code Modification GGI-20
Request for Modification of Building Ordinances - Sump Pump PC-GRAD-Req.Mod.20
Maintenance Affidavit for Sump Pump PC-GRAD-Aff.09
Maintenance Affidavit for Sump Pump and Battery Back-Up System and/or Natural Gas/Propane-Powered Back-Up Generator System PC-GRAD-Aff.09A



INSTRUCTIONS FOR GRADING SUMP PUMP BUILDING CODE MODIFICATION

REV.: 03/09/2022 CLJ

GGI -20

A modification to the building code is required for a sump pump when a property is too low to drain to the street by gravity. The forms below can be obtained online at www.ladbs.org or from Grading Division counter on the 12th Floor of 221 N. Figueroa Street.

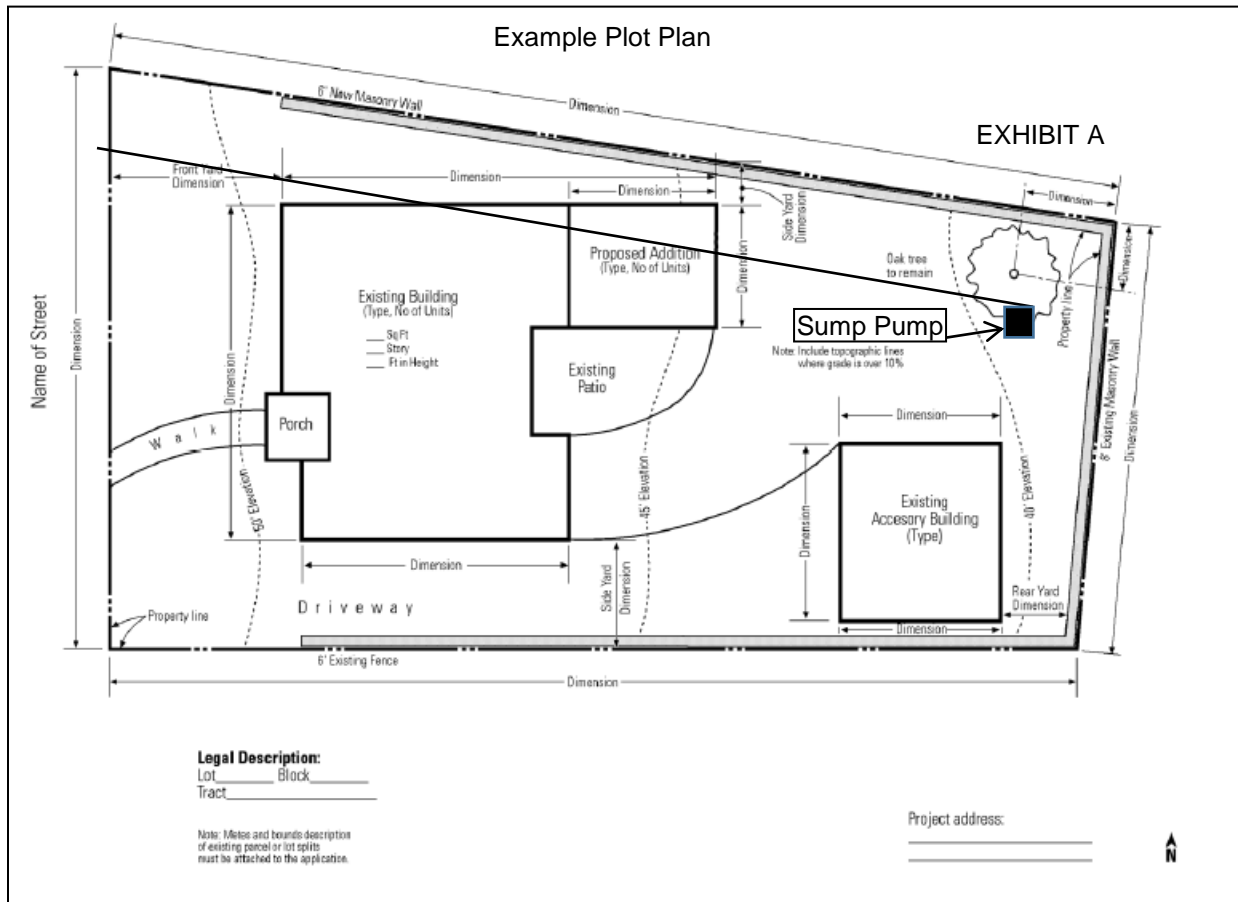
1. **Applicant Review:** Review LADBS Information Bulletin P/BC 2020-103 or latest edition to determine if a modification to the building code is required for your sump pump and whether a back-up dispersal wall or battery/natural gas/propane powered electrical generator are required.
2. **Plot Plan:** Obtain and attach a scaled plot plan (Labeled "Exhibit A") showing the location of the sump pump and discharge pipe to the street. The plot plan should be on a maximum page size of 8½ by 11 inches for recording purposes; include a legal description and site address; and, depict a north arrow, lot boundaries, and building perimeter. If the sump pump is to pump any roof or surface drainage, verify that the limits of the drainage area to be pumped are clearly depicted on the plot plan; and show elevations of the area to be drained and of the street at the outlet. Any proposed retaining walls, buildings, or grading should also be shown on the plot plan.
3. **Request for Modification of Building Ordinances (Form PC-GRAD-Req.Mod.20)**
 - a. **Page 1:** Complete a "Request for Modification of Building Ordinances" application form (PC-GRAD-Reg.Mod.20) that is partially completed for sump pumps. The following information is required:
 - i. Permit Application Number (For Building Permit if multiple permits);
 - ii. Job Address (Must be on file in Navigate LA or verify the current legal description and addresses with the Address Section of the Bureau of Engineering located on the 3rd Floor of the 201 N Figueroa Street, City of Los Angeles offices.);
 - iii. Legal Description: Tract, Block, Lot, Map Book number and pages;
 - iv. Owner and Petitioner Address and Phone Number.
 - b. **Page 2:**
 - i. Complete Permit Application Number and Job Address Sections.
 - ii. Under Condition 2, Identify all sources of water that the sump pump will discharge as shown on the Plot Plan, Exhibit A (pad; roof; deck; subdrains; surface runoff from slope, driveway, ramp, etc.).
 - iii. Complete Condition 8 if a back-up dispersal wall is proposed for the site.
4. **Affidavits:** The affidavit used for your Building Modification will be determined by whether or not a back-up battery/natural gas/propane powered electrical generator is required and proposed for the project. If unsure which affidavit to use, go to the Grading Division counter located on the 12th Floor of 221 N. Figueroa Street. Complete either the:
 - a. **Maintenance Affidavit for Sump Pump (PC-GRAD-Aff.09),** or
 - b. **Maintenance Affidavit for Sump Pumps & Battery Back-up System and/or Natural Gas/Propane-Powered "Back-Up" Generator System (PC-GRAD-Aff.09A).**
5. Complete the Legal Description, Map Book number and pages (Available on Parcel Profile Report as

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GRADING SUMP PUMP BUILDING CODE MODIFICATION

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Map Reference. The Map Book number and pages are not the APN number or Thomas Brother's Map Book pages). Leave the Request for Modification of Building Ordinance File Number and date blank for completion by LADBS personnel.

6. **Notarized Owner Signature:** After completing the items in No. 5, the **Owner(s) or Corporate Officers will provide a notarized signature on the affidavit.**
7. **LADBS Review:** Bring the completed application form, owner signed affidavit, and Exhibit A Plot Plan for LADBS Grading Division review on the 12th floor of 221 N. Figueroa Street. LADBS Grading staff will review the documents, and if acceptable, have you pay the required modification fee, assign the modification number and sign the bottom of the approved affidavit for recordation.
8. **Recordation:** Take the original affidavit with Exhibit A Plot Plan plus 2 or more copies and record them at the Los Angeles County Recorder's Office. Ask the Recorder to provide at least two sets of certified copies with certified stamped plot plans as evidence of recordation.
9. **Submit Recorded Affidavit:** Return to the Grading Counter of LADBS with the certified stamped affidavit and plot plan to complete the application.
10. **Approved Building Code Modification:** Take your granted building code modification to the building official (plan checker, inspector, etc.) requesting the modification to be processed.





REQUEST FOR MODIFICATION OF BUILDING ORDINANCES

UNDER AUTHORITY OF L.A.M.C. SECTION 98.0403

PERMIT APP. #:	DATE:	For City Dept. Use Only
JOB ADDRESS:		Grading
Tract:	Block:	
	Lot:	
Owner:	Petitioner:	
Address:	Address:	
City State Zip Phone	City State Zip Phone	
REQUEST (SUBMIT PLANS OR ADDITIONAL SHEETS AS NECESSARY)	CODE SECTIONS: 7013.10	
TO ALLOW THE USE OF A SUMP PUMP TO PUMP WATER TO THE STREET IN LIEU OF CONVEYING TO THE STREET BY GRAVITY FLOW.		
JUSTIFICATION (SUBMIT PLANS OR ADDITIONAL SHEETS AS NECESSARY)		
SITE IS TOO LOW TO DRAIN TO STREET.		
Owner/Petitioner Name (Print)	Signature	Position
FOR CITY DEPARTMENT'S USE ONLY BELOW THIS LINE		
Concurrences required from the following Department(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Los Angeles Fire Department	Print Name _____ Sign _____	Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Denied <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Works Bureau of Engineering	Print Name _____ Sign _____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Department of City Planning	Print Name _____ Sign _____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	Print Name _____ Sign _____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
DEPARTMENT ACTION		
<input type="checkbox"/> GRANTED <input type="checkbox"/> DENIED	Reviewed by: (Staff) (print) _____	Sign _____ Date _____
	Action taken by: (Supervisor) (print) _____	Sign _____ Date _____
CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL (Continued on Page 2):		
1. AFFIDAVIT # _____ FOR MAINTENANCE OF THE		
SUMP PUMP HAS BEEN RECORDED WITH THE COUNTY RECORDERS OFFICE.		
(SEE ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS ON PAGE 2)		
CONDITIONS CIRCLED THEREON SHALL APPLY.		
FEES		
Appeal Processing Fee.... (No. of Items) =	1 \$ 130 + \$ 39 /addl =	\$ 130.00
Inspection Fee (No of Insp.) =	X \$ 84 =	\$ -
Research Fee (Total Hours Worked) =	2 X \$ 104 =	\$ 208.00
Subtotal.....		\$ 338.00
Surcharge (One Stop)	\$ 338.00 X 3% =	\$ 10.14
Surcharge (Systems Development).....	\$ 338.00 X 6% =	\$ 20.28
Total Fees.....		\$ 368.42
Fees verified by:		
Print and Sign _____		

For Cashiers Use Only
(PROCESS ONLY WHEN FEES ARE VERIFIED)

SUPPLEMENTAL CONDITIONS/INFORMATION AND/OR SKETCH OF JOB CONDITION

BASIS FOR APPROVAL-INFORMATION

For the Superintendent of Building or his designated agent to approve a request for modification or a request for alternate material or method of construction he must determine that special, individual reasons exist that make compliance with the strict letter of the ordinance impractical and that equivalency is provided for requests applicable to the State Housing Law. The resulting condition must be in conformance with the spirit and purpose of the ordinance involved. The applicant must provide sufficient information with this application to allow the above evaluation to be made.

**INFORMATION ON PROCEDURE FOR APPEAL FROM
A DETERMINATION OR ACTION BY THE
DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND SAFETY**

Appeal from the determination or action of the Superintendent of Building or his designated agency may be made to the Board of Building and Safety Commissioners. To appeal, the appellant must give special individual reasons that make compliance with the strict letter of the ordinance impractical. Appeals pertaining to State Housing Law provisions require complete evidence to substantiate that the proposed design, material, or method of construction is at least equivalent to that prescribed by the Code. State such reasons or evidence on the front of this form or on a separate attachment.

Permit Application Number

Job Address

CONDITIONS OF SUMP PUMP APPROVAL

1. Obtain approval from the Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering for the discharge of water from the sump pump to the street prior to permit issuance.
2. The use of the sump pump system for the discharge of water to the street shall be limited to drainage from the _____.
3. All drainage from any roof, deck, and site areas; which are above the lowest street elevation, shall be conducted to the street via non-erosive devices by gravity flow.
4. At each sump pump location, a two-pump system shall be installed in such a manner that, if one of the pumps becomes inoperable, the other pump will become operative automatically. Each sump pump shall contain an early warning device which will be activated by a pump's malfunction.
5. The owner has recorded a covenant with the County's Recorder's office agreeing to maintain the sump pump system in proper working order at all times. The completed and recorded affidavit are attached.
6. The sump pump system shall be designed based upon a rainfall of 2 inches per hour (Plumbing Code requirement).
7. Obtain mechanical and electrical permits prior to the installation of the sump pump system.
8. Provide a back-up dispersal wall(s) constructed as follows:
 - a) Construction shall comply with Figure F as shown on the 2023 LABC, Code Section 7013.7.
 - b) Construction shall be as shown on _____.
 - c) The invert elevation of the continuous concrete pad behind the dispersal wall shall be level from end to end and follow the contours of the slope. Furthermore, the ends of the concrete pad shall be enclosed to prevent water from discharging out of it.
 - d) The wall length shall be equal to the length of the disturbed contours or _____ feet.
 - e) Drainage discharge from the dispersal wall shall be on undisturbed natural materials or certified compacted fill.
9. A battery back-up system and/or natural gas/propane powered generator shall be provided that will automatically power the sump pump system in the event of an electrical power failure.

Recorded at the request of and mail to:

Department of Building and Safety,
Grading Division, City of Los Angeles
221 N. Figueroa Street, Floor 12 – Suite 1200
Los Angeles, California 90012

SPACE ABOVE THIS LINE FOR RECORDER'S USE

MAINTENANCE AFFIDAVIT FOR SUMP PUMP

(Pre-printed text shall not be changed except when done by an authorized Building and Safety employee)

The undersigned hereby certify that we are the owners of real property located in the City of Los Angeles, State of California that is described by the following **LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** _____, as recorded in Map Book _____ - pages _____ of the Records of Los Angeles County. This property is located at and is known by the following **ADDRESS:** _____.

This affidavit is executed as a condition of approval of the Request for Modification of Building Ordinance File No.: _____ dated _____ from the Grading Division, Department of Building and Safety, City of Los Angeles.

I am (We are), the owner(s) of the real property identified above, fully aware that the dual sump pump system proposed on the property are to pump site water to the street in lieu of gravity drainage. Furthermore, as a condition of approval by the City of Los Angeles, I/we agree to maintain the sump pump system in proper working condition at all times. The attached Exhibit A shows the approximate location of the sump pumps.

This covenant and agreement shall run with all of the above described land and shall be binding upon ourselves and future owners, encumbrances, their successors, heirs or assignees and shall continue in effect until released by the authority of the Superintendent of Building of the City of Los Angeles upon submittal of written request, applicable fees and evidence that this covenant and agreement is no longer required by law.

Owner's Name(s): _____
(Please type or print) (Please type or print)

**SIGNATURES
MUST BE
NOTARIZED**

Signatures of Owners _____ (Sign)
Two Officer's Signatures _____ (Sign)
Required for Corporations _____ (Sign)

Name of Corporation: _____

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20____

FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY

MUST BE APPROVED BY the Department of Building and Safety prior to recording.

APPROVED BY (Print & Sign): _____

DATE: _____

LADBS, Grading Division

Recorded at the request of and mail to:

Department of Building and Safety,
Grading Division, City of Los Angeles
221 N. Figueroa Street, Floor 12 – Suite 1200
Los Angeles, California 90012

SPACE ABOVE THIS LINE FOR RECORDER'S USE

**MAINTENANCE AFFIDAVIT FOR SUMP PUMP AND BATTERY BACK-UP SYSTEM
AND/OR NATURAL GAS/PROPANE-POWERED BACK-UP GENERATOR SYSTEM**

(Pre-printed text shall not be changed except when done by an authorized Building and Safety employee)

The undersigned hereby certify that we are the owners of real property located in the City of Los Angeles, State of California that is described by the following **LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** _____, as recorded in Map Book _____ - pages _____ of the Records of Los Angeles County. This property is located at and is known by the following **ADDRESS:** _____.

This affidavit is executed as a condition of approval of the Request for Modification of Building Ordinance File No.: _____ dated _____ from the Grading Division, Department of Building and Safety, City of Los Angeles.

I am (We are), the owner(s) of the real property identified above, fully aware that the dual sump pump system proposed on the property are to pump site water to the street in lieu of gravity drainage, with an automatic battery back-up system and/or natural gas/propane-powered generator in the event of a power failure. Furthermore, as a condition of approval by the City of Los Angeles, I/we agree to maintain the sump pump system, including the battery system and/or generator, in proper working condition at all times. The attached Exhibit A shows the approximate location of the sump pumps.

This covenant and agreement shall run with all of the above described land and shall be binding upon ourselves and future owners, encumbrances, their successors, heirs or assignees and shall continue in effect until released by the authority of the Superintendent of Building of the City of Los Angeles upon submittal of written request, applicable fees and evidence that this covenant and agreement is no longer required by law.

Owner's Name(s): _____ (Please type or print) _____ (Please type or print)

**SIGNATURES
MUST BE
NOTARIZED**

Signatures of Owners _____ (Sign)
Two Officer's Signatures _____
Required for Corporations _____ (Sign)

Name of Corporation: _____

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20____

FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY

MUST BE APPROVED BY the Department of Building and Safety prior to recording.

APPROVED BY (Print & Sign): _____

DATE: _____

LADBS, Grading Division