

## **NEW BUILDING CODES BECAME EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2017**

The 2016 California State Building Codes were adopted by the town council on November 15, 2016 without any amendments. What this means is that any project submitted for a Building Permit after January 1, 2017, is subject to this code. The Building Codes are revised every three years. These changes often reflect the changing built environment, technology or discoveries related to building failures.

This tri-annual revision had several environmental changes. The recognition of our nation's dwindling landfill resources resulted in an increase of construction debris recycling requirement from 50% to 65%. The Code recognized the car buying habits of the American consumer, especially here in California, are changing with more people buying electric cars. Now, every new home is required to provide infrastructure to facilitate installation of electric vehicle (EV) chargers.

Other changes in the Codes were editorial in nature and meant to simplify the administration of the code. An example of that is the smoke detector section was rewritten to allow battery operated smoke detectors in certain situations. The code was revised to encourage consistency in the application during remodeling without imposing excessive costs, while at the same time providing an acceptable level of safety with the installation of battery operated detectors in all of the locations required for new buildings.

For the home handyman or homeowner who wants to build a simple deck, the 2016 Residential Code now provides prescriptive deck joist spans, just for decks, based on the species of lumber as well as size requirements for beams and headers and prescriptive ledger and post to beam attachment details. The new information and span tables were introduced in the 2016 Code to provide a more prescriptive and easy to use guidance specific to decks.

Copies of the new codes are available for viewing on the California Building Standards Commission web page by [clicking here](#). Individual copies of the codes are available for purchase from the publisher, International Code Council by [clicking here](#).