



# Information

## Senate Bill 721 (2018)

**Building Safety Standards:  
Decks and Balconies:  
Inspection**

October 22, 2024

# Background

## Berkeley Balcony Collapse (2015)

- 13 people standing on the balcony of the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of a multifamily building
- Failure due to dry rot, not load of weight
- Sources of moisture intrusion unclear



## New Building Safety Laws Enacted

- Senate Bill 465 (Jerry Hill, 2016)  
Launched an interagency investigation into the causes of failures of elevated exterior elements.
- Senate Bill 721 (Jerry Hill, 2018)  
Established inspection and repair requirements for exterior elevated elements.



# SB 721 Breakdown

## What are “Exterior Elevated Elements” (EEE)?

### Applies to

Buildings with 3 or more multifamily dwelling units

### Does not apply to

- Single Family Homes
- Duplexes

**Balconies**

**Decks**

**Porches**

**Stairways**

**Walkways**

**Entry Structures**

Extended beyond the **exterior** walls of a building.  
Have a walking surface that is **elevated** more than 6 feet above ground level.  
Designed for human occupancy or use.  
Relies on wood or wood-based products for structural support or stability.



# SB 721 Breakdown

## What is required?

**For Property Owners and Managers of:**

Buildings with 3 or more multifamily dwelling units

### **Before January 1, 2025<sup>[1]</sup>\***:

1. Hire a Certified Inspector
2. Review Report and Plan
3. Pull a Building Permit
4. Perform Work
5. Complete a Re-Inspection and Retain Records

**\*At any point an immediate threat is found, immediate repairs are required.**

<sup>[1]</sup> Assembly Bill 2579, signed into law on September 28, 2024, extends the deadline to **January 1, 2026**.

 Repeat steps 1 through 5 every 6 years.



# 1 Hire a Certified Inspector

## Qualifications:

- Licensed architect, or
- Licensed civil or structural engineer, or
- Building Contractor
  - License Classification “A” “B” and/or “C-5”

## Service:

- Conduct an inspection.
- 🕒 Within 45 days of inspection prepare an initial report.
  - Initial report needs to be comparable with every 6-year inspection cycle.
- 📄 Prepare a final report indicating completion of any required repairs.



# 2 Review Report and Plan

## Review the initial report

- Identify and understand:
  - Where all EEEs are located
  - Any points on the building envelope where moisture is or may penetrate and cause dry rot
  - All repairs recommended by your inspector
- 🕒 Within 120 days of receiving report, apply for building permit.

## Obtain a proposal from a qualified contractor\*

- Preparation of any necessary construction plans and reports for building repairs.
- Proposal to complete work on building repairs.

\* The contractor must be independent from the inspector



# 3 Pull a Building Permit

## Submit Building Permit Application

- Provide construction plans and any reports to City Building and Safety Department and pay fees.
- 🔔 Remember to do this within 120 days of receiving the initial inspection report.
- Revise any corrections to construction plans as deemed necessary by the City.

## Obtain Approval for Building Permit

- Approval can be granted by Building and Safety after all revisions to construction plans are addressed.
- Request Building Permit Issuance and pay fees.
- 🕒 Within 120 days of approval complete all building repairs.



# 4 Perform Work

## Once Building Permit is Issued:

### **Begin construction work.**

- Request progress inspections from City Building Inspector.
- Address any in-field inspection corrections.
- Request a final inspection to close your active building permit.

 Remember to complete all repairs within 120 days of gaining building permit approval.



# 5 Complete a Re-Inspection and Retain Records

## Contact your inspector

- Same one as hired for the initial inspection.
- Request re-inspection for completion of repairs.
- Forward any engineering observation reports to your inspector.
- Request final inspection report.
- ! Inspector must notify authorities if the owner does not meet the repair requirements within 180 days.

## Retain Records

- Keep all records (initial inspection report, final inspection report, building permits, construction plans, and structural analyses) for at least 12 years.

# Public Notification

- Included with everyone's October water utility bill.
- Attention to multifamily property owners and managers.
- Courtesy notice of information and requirements regarding SB 721.
- Additional notices will be sent
  - Reminders
  - Tenants rights

Summer 2024

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
**SENATE BILL 721 COMPLIANCE REQUIRED**

 *California*  
LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION

SB 721 is a state law that requires multifamily building owners to inspect and repair certain types of exterior elevated elements, such as balconies and decks, to ensure they are safe for use.

**ATTENTION PROPERTY OWNERS AND MANAGERS!**

**Senate Bill (SB 721) Compliance Required**

**What is SB 721?** SB 721 is a state law that mandates inspections and necessary repairs of certain exterior elevated elements, such as balconies, decks, and stairways, to ensure they are safe for use. This law is designed to prevent accidents and enhance safety in multi-family residential properties.

**Key Requirements:**

- **Inspection Deadline:** All exterior elevated elements must be inspected by a licensed structural engineer or qualified professional by January 1, 2025.
- **Repair Obligations:** Any identified hazards or deficiencies must be addressed promptly to comply with safety standards.
- **Certification:** After inspections and repairs, property owners must obtain certification of compliance.

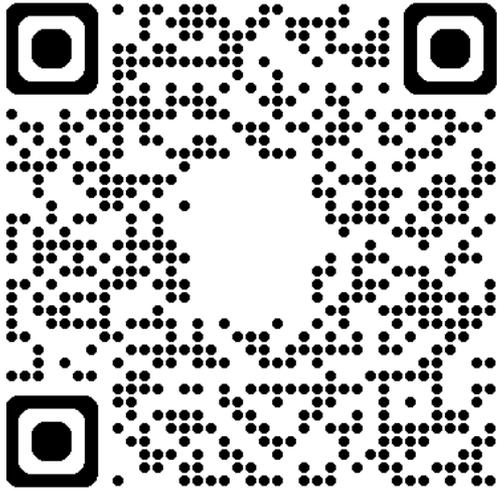
**Why is This Important?**

- **Safety First:** Prevent accidents and ensure the safety of residents.
- **Legal Compliance:** Avoid fines and legal issues by adhering to state regulations.
- **Peace of Mind:** Ensure that your property is safe and up to the code.



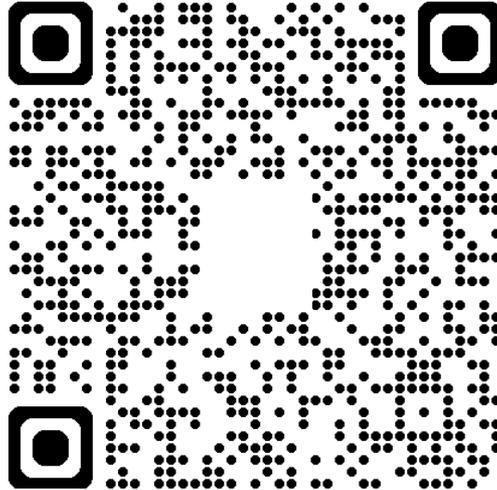
# Resources

Search for a licensed professional



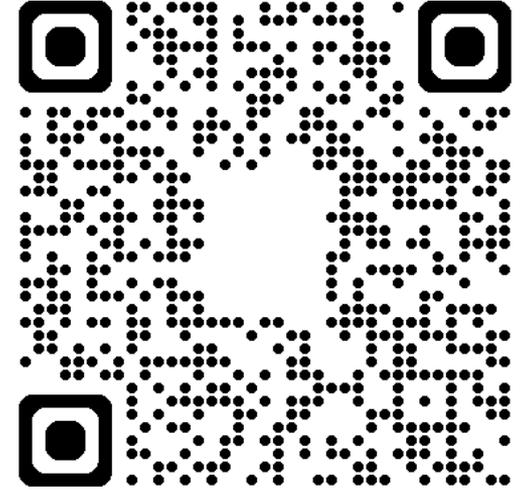
CA Dept. of Consumer Affairs

Information available on City's website



City of Sierra Madre

Review SB 721 text



CA Legislative Information



**Thank you.**