



County of San Diego, Planning & Development Services

FIRESTORM 2003 POLICY DOCUMENT

BUILDING DIVISION

“What to do before you start preparing plans”

The County of San Diego understands the confusion and frustration many of our customers may experience during the rebuild process. In an effort to clarify the process, the County has developed a series of ‘how to’ guides to help victims of Fire Storm 2003 through the building permit process. This guidance document will provide you with steps to obtain important documents that will help you decide how and what you can rebuild.

In order to expedite the review of your building application, the Building Division recommends that some initial research and data collection be conducted prior to preparing your building plans. Issues such as legality of prior use, legal lot status, proximity to floodplain, and damage assessment information can significantly impact the design and location of your new home. In order to help you identify this needed information, the Building Division has identified some basic fact finding steps, which are outlined below.

Step 1 – Check County Assessor’s Office Records



Obtain a copy of the Building History Record from the County Assessor’s Office. If there were improvements on your parcel that were being taxed, they should be reflected on this document (e.g. building footprint, square footage, number of buildings, etc). This information will assist our staff to determine what portion of your rebuild is subject to waiver of building permit fees, what additional square footage may need to meet current zoning and septic requirements, and confirm what structures existed on your parcel prior to the fire.

In order to obtain this information, you must have the Assessor’s Parcel Number (APN), owner name, signature of owner, address and phone number. Please call the office listed below to confirm that the County Assessor’s Office has your records on file.

Paradise Fire
San Marcos Assessor’s Office
141 East Carmel Street
San Marcos, Ca 92078
Phone: (760) 940-6868

Cedar Fire
El Cajon Assessor’s Office
200 S. Magnolia Avenue
El Cajon, Ca 92020
Phone: (619) 401-5700

Please do not be alarmed if the Building History Record does not identify all of the structures that were on your parcel. Also, please do not assume any square footage is legal until staff completes their review of the property as identified in the steps below.

Step 2 – Check your Personal Records

If you have any records related to building permits or septic systems, please combine those records with the Building History Record. This information will further assist staff in identifying what structures existed prior to the fire.



Step 3 – Firestorm 2003 Reconstruction Record

Bring the information gathered in Steps 1 and 2 to the County Permit Center at the Building Division. Identify yourself as a Fire Victim or as assisting a Fire Victim and ask to see a Planner who will perform a permit research through our microfiche records and/or computer records and verify the damage assessment data for the Firestorm Data base. The Planner will conclude the review by preparing an authorized “Firestorm 2003 Evaluation Sheet” (PDS Form #190) that summarizes the information collected in Steps 1 through 3.

County Permit Center
5510 Overland Ave. Ste. 110
San Diego, CA 92123
(858) 565-5920

5510 OVERLAND AVE, SUITE 110, SAN DIEGO, CA 92123 • (858) 565-5920 • (888) 3367553

[HTTP://WWW.SDCPDS.ORG](http://www.sdcps.org)

Step 4 – Check with Department of Environmental Health

After you conclude your meeting, take the information gathered in steps 1 through 3 and visit the Department of Environmental Health (DEH) counter, which is also located in the Kearny Mesa Office. You can also take the information to one of our satellite offices if that is more convenient for you. Ask the DEH counter staff if they have any septic information such as a layout or repair on file. Share with them your plans for rebuilding so they can identify any major issues prior to you drawing official building plans.



If there is no file information, DEH encourages you to determine the location of the four corners of the septic tank and bring in pictures showing the following: 1) the relationship of the tank to the proposed new structure(s); 2) location of the disposal portion of the septic system and reserve area (to the best of your knowledge); and, 3) direction of flow from highest to lowest elevation and lot topography.

DEH staff will need to compare the County Tax Assessor's construction history report (Step 1) of the property if there are no documents on file for the property with DEH. It may be possible to find additional information on the septic system from parcel map or subdivision map records that created the parcel. The County's GIS Mapping application may also have an aerial photo of the subject property taken in 2000 that might help in identifying the building location on the property.

Paradise Fire
San Marcos DEH Office
151 East Carmel Street
San Marcos, CA 92078
Phone: (760) 471-0730

Cedar Fire
Kearny Mesa DEH Office
5510 Overland Ave, Ste. 110
San Diego, CA 92123
Phone: (858) 694-2949

Please keep in mind that if your septic system is undersized, impacted by seasonal high groundwater, and/or does not have 100% reserve area available, DEH cannot approve building plan designs that increase the potential occupancy of the building or increase the size of the footprint of the structure.

Step 5 – Show a Draft Plot Plan to a PDS Planner



Prepare a Plot Plan (as shown on PDS Form # 189). Bring all the documents collected in steps 1 through 4 and go to the County Permit Center. Ask to see a Planner, who will review your proposal and give you a preliminary zoning approval or other advice related to the zoning ordinance for your rebuild. Upon initial approval, the Planner will sign and date your plot plan.

Step 6 - Show a Draft Plot Plan to a DEH Counter Technician

After you conclude your meeting with the Planner, take the information to the DEH counter at the County Permit Center. Similar to the process in Step 5, the DEH counter staff will review your proposal and give you pending approval or other advice related to septic/sewer requirements.

Step 7 – Submit Building Plans

After The Planner and DEH have given their initial approval, please prepare your full sets of building plans and submit them (including the signed and dated plot plan) for plan check at the Building Division. Please call ahead if you have any questions about submittals and staff will direct you.



Kearny Mesa Office
Building Division
5510 Overland Ave, Ste. 110
San Diego, CA 92123
Phone: (858) 565-5920