

DAVIS-STIRLING ACT

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Civil Code §5551. Elevated Wooden Structure Inspections.

(a) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) “Associated waterproofing systems” include flashings, membranes, coatings, and sealants that protect the load-bearing components of exterior elevated elements from exposure to water.

(2) “Exterior elevated elements” mean the load-bearing components together with their associated waterproofing system.

(3) “Load-bearing components” means those components that extend beyond the exterior walls of the building to deliver structural loads to the building from decks, balconies, stairways, walkways, and their railings, that have a walking surface elevated more than six feet above ground level, that are designed for human occupancy or use, and that are supported in whole or in substantial part by wood or wood-based products.

(4) “Statistically significant sample” means a sufficient number of units inspected to provide 95 percent confidence that the results from the sample are reflective of the whole, with a margin of error of no greater than plus or minus 5 percent.

(5) “Visual inspection” means inspection through the least intrusive method necessary to inspect load-bearing components, including visual observation only or visual observation in conjunction with, for example, the use of moisture meters, borescopes, or infrared technology.

(b)

(1) At least once every nine years, the board of an association of a condominium project shall cause a reasonably competent and diligent visual inspection to be conducted by a licensed structural engineer or architect of a random and statistically significant sample of exterior elevated elements for which the association has maintenance or repair responsibility.

(2) The inspection shall determine whether the exterior elevated elements are in a generally safe condition and performing in accordance with applicable standards.

(c) Prior to conducting the first visual inspection, the inspector shall generate a random list of the locations of each type of exterior elevated element. The list shall include all exterior elevated elements for which the

association has maintenance or repair responsibility. The list shall be provided to the association for future use.

(d) The inspector shall perform the visual inspections in accordance with the random list generated pursuant to subdivision (c). If during the visual inspection the inspector observes building conditions indicating that unintended water or water vapor has passed into the associated waterproofing system, thereby creating the potential for damage to the load-bearing components, then the inspector may conduct a further inspection. The inspector shall exercise their best professional judgment in determining the necessity, scope, and breadth of any further inspection.

(e) Based upon the inspector's visual inspections, further inspection, and construction and materials expertise, the inspector shall issue a written report containing the following information:

(1) The identification of the building components comprising the load-bearing components and associated waterproofing system.

(2) The current physical condition of the load-bearing components and associated waterproofing system, including whether the condition presents an immediate threat to the health and safety of the residents.

(3) The expected future performance and remaining useful life of the load-bearing components and associated waterproofing system.

(4) Recommendations for any necessary repair or replacement of the load-bearing components and associated waterproofing system.

(f) The report issued pursuant to subdivision (e) shall be stamped or signed by the inspector, presented to the board, and incorporated into the study required by Section 5550.

(g)

(1) If, after inspection of any exterior elevated element, the inspector advises that the exterior elevated element poses an immediate threat to the safety of the occupants, the inspector shall provide a copy of the inspection report to the association immediately upon completion of the report, and to the local code enforcement agency within 15 days of completion of the report. Upon receiving the report, the association shall take preventive measures immediately, including preventing occupant access to the exterior elevated element until repairs have been inspected and approved by the local enforcement agency.

(2) Local enforcement agencies shall have the ability to recover enforcement costs associated with the requirements of this section from the association.

(h) Each subsequent visual inspection conducted under this section shall commence with the next exterior elevated element identified on the random list and shall proceed in order through the list.

(i) The first inspection shall be completed by January 1, 2025, and then every nine years thereafter in coordination with the reserve study inspection pursuant to Section 5550. All written reports shall be maintained for two inspection cycles as records of the association.

(j)

(1) The association shall be responsible for complying with the requirements of this section.

(2) The continued and ongoing maintenance and repair of the load-bearing components and associated waterproofing systems in a safe, functional, and sanitary condition shall be the responsibility of the association as required by the association's governing documents.

(k) The inspection of buildings for which a building permit application has been submitted on or after January 1, 2020, shall occur no later than six years following the issuance of a certificate of occupancy. The inspection shall otherwise comply with the provisions of this section.

(l) This section shall only apply to buildings containing three or more multifamily dwelling units.

(m) The association board may enact rules or bylaws imposing requirements greater than those imposed by this section.

(n) A local government or local enforcement agency may enact an ordinance or other rule imposing requirements greater than those imposed by this section.

(Added by Stats.2019, Ch. 207, Sec. 1. Effective January 1, 2020.)



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