
CWUI WORK GROUP

Meeting Minutes – July 1, 2026

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Contacts:

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I. CALL TO ORDER – 1:08 PM PDT

A. Welcome/Introductions – Mitchel Baker

1. Mitchel Baker opened the meeting by reading the purpose and goals of the CWUI Work Group as outlined in the group's charter and noted that several new participants had recently joined and wished to ensure clarity on the group's mission.
 - i. The work group's purpose was described as providing advice to the Office of the State Fire Marshal through communications between CAL FIRE, the Office of the State Fire Marshal, industry representatives, state agencies, the fire service, and other partners. The stated goals include improving the safety and survivability of structures in WUI areas, promoting statewide consistency and clarity in WUI regulations, ensuring regulatory changes are cost-effective and science-based, fostering innovation, and creating shared understanding of common messaging around WUI risk and mitigation strategies.
 - ii. Mitchel Baker noted that the full [charter](#) is available [online](#).

B. Agenda/Minutes Review – June 9, 2026

1. Mitchel Baker noted that meeting minutes from the previous meeting had not yet been posted and inquired as to their status.
2. Jena Garcia confirmed that the minutes had been drafted and were currently under review by the chairs, with Becca Mansergh adding that they were expected to be posted the following week.
3. Mitchel Baker indicated the minutes review would be deferred to the next full CWUI Work Group meeting

II. OLD BUSINESS

- ### A.
- Mitchel Baker noted that there was no old business to discuss.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Subgroups –

1. AB 2322 CH7A ASCE 7 – [Paul Armstrong](#), [Sunup Mathew](#), and [Shamim Rashid-Sumar](#)
2. Sunup Matthew reported he had been out of the country for the last subgroup meeting and requested that Shamim Rashid-Sumar be added as co-subgroup lead.
 - i. Shamim Rashid-Sumar reported that the group held a kickoff meeting on June 17th, which was attended by approximately 12–15 participants. The meeting covered the scope of the subgroup, a review of work completed in the prior cycle, and open discussion on items to address in the current cycle.
 - ii. The subgroup is meeting every two weeks at 2:00 PM PDT, with the next meeting scheduled for July 15th.
 - iii. In response to a question from Jena Garcia, Shamim Rashid-Sumar confirmed the group is tracking attendance and keeping meeting notes and agreed to include the work group contacts on meeting invites.
3. Scope – [Robert Raymer](#)
 - i. Robert Raymer was not present, so item was skipped.
4. Roofing – [Helene Hardy Pierce](#)
 - i. Helene Hardy Pierce reported that the subgroup met on June 22nd at the request of the larger work group to develop a definition for "bird stop." A preliminary definition was produced and distributed to the larger group.
 - ii. Discussion arose around whether to also define a performance measure for preventing ember intrusion. Wade Shepherd agreed to share the proposed language with the Tile Roofing Alliance for input.
 - iii. The next subgroup meeting is scheduled for July 20th at 1:00 PM to continue refining the bird stop definition and discuss whether to add performance measures.
5. Accessory Structures – [Milad Shabanian](#)
 - i. Milad Shabanian reported that the subgroup had not met since the prior cycle but planned to resume meetings beginning the following Friday at 1:00 PM PDT.
 - ii. The primary focus for this cycle will be on accessory structures that are not fully enclosed such as tents and gazebos, in addition to continuing work from the previous cycle on proposed code language.
6. Weathering / Ignition-Resistant Materials – [Marcelo Hirschler](#)
 - i. With Marcelo Hirschler unavailable, Milad Shabanian provided an informal summary of the subgroup's most recent meeting.
 - ii. The central discussion involved language regarding coated materials and weathering requirements. Existing language had previously been moved from a subsection of ignition-resistant building materials to the charging

- paragraph of that section. Debate continued over whether to impose a blanket provision for coated materials or develop a more targeted requirement. It was noted that most participants appeared open to making a change, but there was significant disagreement over the form that change should take.
- iii. Jason Smart confirmed that the next subgroup meeting is scheduled for July 14th at 1:00 PM PDT.
7. Vents- [Kevin Scott](#)
- i. Kevin Scott reported that the subgroup has not yet held its first meeting, as he had been waiting for the CDP access process and ICC process to conclude, and indicated he had received numerous requests from interested participants and would be sending out scheduling polls shortly.
8. Chapters 2/6 – [Larry Williams](#)
- i. Mitchel Baker noted that Larry Williams was not present but had previously indicated that the group plans to meet mid-July and has nothing to report in the meantime.
9. Chapter 4 – [Matthew McKenna](#)
- i. Matthew McKenna indicated that the group plans to meet mid-July and has nothing to report in the meantime.
10. Windows/Doors – [Daniel Gorham](#) and [Greg Andersen](#)
- i. Daniel Gorham provided an update, noting the subgroup meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 12:00 PM PDT.
 - ii. At the most recent meeting, the group reviewed and discussed a draft proposal for revisions to Section 504.8. Significant feedback was incorporated and the revised draft has been or will be redistributed to the group.
 - iii. A key issue that emerged was the current absence of a definition for "window" in the CWUI code; the subgroup is proposing to adopt an existing definition from the California Energy Code rather than create a new one.
 - iv. The group is also working on draft proposed revisions to SFM Standard 12-7A-2, which is currently referenced as a compliance option in Section 504.8.
 - v. Daniel Gorham noted the subgroup is working under the assumption that recommending revisions to the California Reference Standards Code falls within the scope of this work group and asked staff for confirmation. He also flagged that any revision to the SFM standard would require existing listed products to be retested, though noted that listings under the Building Materials Listing Program are only valid for one year regardless.
 - vi. Mitchel Baker indicated it was appropriate for the work group to propose amendments to applicable standards within the Office of the State Fire Marshal's purview, and Jena Garcia concurred.

11. Exterior Walls/Eaves/Soffits/Under Floors – [Greg Andersen](#) and [Milad Shabanian](#)

- i. Greg Andersen reported that the subgroup has been meeting actively in two-hour sessions.
- ii. Key topics under discussion include the distinction between wall assemblies and coverings, and the question of how to address structure-to-structure fire exposure when an adjacent building ignites and the fire transitions from a wildland fire to a conflagration.
- iii. The group is considering a proposal related to fire exposure ratings for exterior walls in close proximity to other structures, though the proposal requires further development. Weatherproofing barriers and their interaction with wall performance are also being examined. Additionally, the concept of adopting a tiered class system—similar to the ICC's approach—was raised, with the idea of making California's current Chapter 5 requirements the baseline (Level 3/Class 3) and developing more robust standards for higher-hazard conditions.
- iv. Mitchel Baker acknowledged this as a broader philosophical discussion that extends beyond exterior walls.
- v. A question was raised by a Payam Bozorgchami (California Energy Commission) regarding whether the subgroup is considering metal versus wood framing.
- vi. Greg Andersen clarified that the primary focus is on ignition, noting that based on CAL FIRE data, once a structure ignites, it results in a total loss 90–95% of the time regardless of framing type, though rated wall assemblies may affect fire spread to adjacent buildings.

12. Projections/Decks (including awnings, etc.) – [Paul Armstrong](#) and [Greg Andersen](#)

- i. Greg Andersen reported that Paul Armstrong was not present and the subgroup has not yet met, with scheduling challenges noted. A tentative first meeting is planned for July 7th at 1:00 PM PDT.

13. Retrofit – [Marco Mack](#)

14. Marco Mack described the subgroup's current work. He is developing a discussion document titled "[Wildfire Conflagration Retrofit Concepts](#)." The subgroup is currently communicating by email while developing a working draft. Marco described the framework he is building around the concept of creating accessible best practices for property owners, emphasizing plain language over regulatory terminology—for example, replacing "noncombustible" with phrases such as "there is nothing to ignite in this portion of the yard" or categorizing yard materials as easy or difficult to ignite. The goal is to develop a best practices document that could serve as the basis for an appendix or code reference. He indicated that once a working draft is in place, the group will move to virtual team meetings. Kevin Scott asked whether team meetings would be scheduled, and Marco Mack confirmed that was the plan once the foundational document is ready.

B. Subgroup meetings – Expectations and timeline

1. Jena Garcia addressed the group on expectations for subgroup operations.
 - i. She noted that CDA now has additional staff capacity and that a staff member from the division will attend subgroup meetings in an observational and facilitative role—to answer procedural questions and help ensure all voices are heard.
2. She requested that subgroup leads provide a generic agenda for each meeting, maintain a roster of attendees, and include Jena Garcia and Becca Mansergh on subgroup meeting invites at a minimum.
 - i. She clarified that the Office of the State Fire Marshal is not responsible for maintaining records of subgroup meetings and that responsibility belongs to the leads. Meeting notes and attendee records should be kept by the leads and reported out at the main work group meetings.
3. Mitchel Baker added that chairs and co-chairs should also be included on subgroup invites as optional attendees.
4. Kevin Reinertson asked when subgroup working documents would need to be delivered to the full work group and then to the Office of the State Fire Marshal.
 - i. Jena Garcia responded that the official triennial rulemaking timeline from the California Building Standards Commission had not yet been released but anticipated that drafted documents would need to be substantially complete by early fall.
 - ii. Mitchel Baker added that once the official timeline is released, a link would be shared with the group. He noted that pre-cycle activity is the key window during which proposals need to be ready for stakeholder discussion and encouraged subgroups to provide proposals as soon as possible.
5. *Becca Mansergh sent expectations e-mail to subgroup leads (after meeting)*
 - i. *Include Crystal.Sujeski@fire.ca.gov, Mitchel.Baker@hcd.ca.gov, John.Morgan@fire.ca.gov, Jena.Garcia@fire.ca.gov, and Becca.Mansergh@fire.ca.gov on all subgroup meeting invitations.*
 - ii. *If you need assistance with creating a meeting, CDA will create one for you, otherwise the meetings should be created and sent out by the leads.*
 - iii. *A CDA team member will be present at every subgroup meeting to answer any questions or concerns and assist with keeping the meetings focused but will not run the meetings in your stead.*
 - iv. *Attach agendas to the meeting invitations (no CAL FIRE letterhead needed, just provide a sense of what will be discussed in the meeting).*
 - v. *Provide a roster of who attends each subgroup meeting to CDA (this can be a part of the agenda).*
 - vi. *Plan for proposed code changes to be completed early Fall, an exact date will be provided once Building Standards Commission provides their timeline.*
 - vii. *If you have questions or concerns about these expectations, please reach out and CDA will help support you.*

IV. ROUNDTABLE/PUBLIC COMMENTS

- A. Definition of Noncombustible Materials (Section 501.4): Lori Fisher asked which subgroup would be the appropriate venue to discuss proposed changes to the definition of noncombustible materials in Section 501.4, noting that the definition underlies many other sections of the code. Mitchel Baker indicated that Weathering/Ignition-Resistant Materials appeared to be the most appropriate venue, with Kevin Reinertson suggesting that Accessory Structures and Exterior Walls also had overlap with the topic. Lori confirmed she is already participating in Weathering/Ignition-Resistant Materials and would continue there. Mitchel Baker also noted that separate proposals may always be submitted directly to the Office of the State Fire Marshal.
- B. Tiered Construction Standards: Kevin Reinertson raised a broader policy discussion item regarding whether California should consider tiering its WUI construction standards to correspond with the three fire hazard severity zones—moderate, high, and very high. He proposed that California's current Chapter 5 requirements could serve as the minimum standard (applicable to moderate hazard areas), with progressively more robust requirements for high and very high zones. He acknowledged this concept had been discussed as far back as the early development of Chapter 7A, but had repeatedly been displaced by other priorities, including residential fire sprinkler requirements. He noted that current code applies a single standard across all three hazard zones and raised questions about whether conflagration risk is uniform across zones and whether location-specific factors—such as a home situated on a large rural parcel with no adjacent structures—should influence the applicable standard. Marco Mack built on this, noting that such a tiered approach would also benefit the retrofit context by enabling recognition of incremental improvements and potentially providing a pathway for insurance companies to credit higher levels of hardening. He suggested coatings and other materials could play a role at various levels of such a framework.
- C. SFM Code Interpretation on Chapter 5 Scope: Kevin Reinertson asked whether there was any update on a pending information bulletin or code interpretation regarding the application and scope of Chapter 5 to LRA high and moderate fire hazard zones. Jena Garcia responded that the matter is still under executive review and she did not have a timeline for release. Mitchel Baker encouraged participants to sign up for OSFM notifications to be informed when any such bulletin is released.
- D. Objectivity in the Weathering/Ignition-Resistant Materials Subgroup: Jeremy Jones noted that his organization (American Coatings Association) had submitted a letter to the subgroup Chair, Marcelo Hirschler, raising concerns about objectivity in the Weathering/Ignition-Resistant Materials Subgroup, specifically regarding the potential exclusion of coatings from consideration. He stated that the Association's position is that the process should be standards-based, and that if a material—including a coating—can meet a robust performance standard, it should not be categorically excluded. He noted that products currently exist that meet high standards for weatherization and fire ignition resistance. Marco Mack responded supportively, noting that coatings could have a meaningful role in a retrofit framework, for example, as a treatment for structural components concealed behind a compliant exterior skin, and that testing standards would need to be developed to recognize the level of protection provided.

V. UPCOMING MEETING DATES FOR 2026

- A. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 1:00 pm PDT.
- B. Next meeting: August 5, 2026.

VI. MEETING ADJOURNMENT – 2:06 PM PDT

- A. A motion to adjourn was made by Greg Andersen, it was seconded, and the meeting was adjourned

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<https://youtu.be/08wn5jSeAPc>