
CWUI WORK GROUP

Meeting Minutes – August 8, 2026

Posted – August 26, 2026



Contacts:

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Co-Chair – John Morgan, OSFM-CWPM-ADD, john.morgan@fire.ca.gov (not present)

Co-Chair – Mitchel Baker, HCD representative, mitchel.baker@hcd.ca.gov

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I. CALL TO ORDER – 1:01 PM PDT (0:00)

A. Welcome/Introductions – Crystal Sujeski and Mitchel Baker

1. Crystal Sujeski, Chief of Code Development and Analysis at CAL FIRE Office of the State Fire Marshal
2. Mitchel Baker, Assistant Deputy Director of Division of Codes and Standards at California Department of Housing and Community Development
3. Crystal Sujeski introduced Code Development and Analysis support staff: Becca Mansergh (Analyst) prepares/sends the Agenda and is the primary contact if you have issues accessing the meeting or have information or documents to share; Richard Hoover (Analyst) is working on regulation and rulemaking documents; Chrishana Fields (Deputy State Fire Marshal III) is the specialist in rule making packages and the required documents for APA; and Adrienne Janowiak (Office Technician) is monitoring the meeting proceedings and records the Minutes.
4. Crystal Sujeski reminded participants of meeting protocols, including the use of the Raise Hand feature, and remaining respectful throughout the meeting.

B. Agenda/Minutes Review

1. [June 9, 2026 Minutes](#) and
2. [July 1, 2026 Minutes](#) with [Reference Document \(Discussion: Wildfire and Conflagration Retrofit Concepts\)](#)
3. Crystal Sujeski went over how to find these minutes on the website (go to the [Code Development and Analysis Work Groups](#) website page for all agendas and minutes) and how to use the YouTube link on every minutes to watch the full recording of the meeting.

II. OLD BUSINESS

- ### A. No old business was discussed.

III. NEW BUSINESS (5:47)

A. Building Standards Commission Triennial Code Cycle

1. Crystal Sujeski presented the [2027 Triennial Code Cycle timeline](#), as posted on the [Building Standards Commission \(BSC\)](#) website. The group is currently in the pre-rulemaking phase, with initial submittals to BSC expected in early 2027. The code is slated for publication on July 1, 2028, with an effective date of January 1, 2029, providing the statutorily required 180-day implementation window.

2. Discussion arose regarding the internal deadline for subgroup submissions. Richard Hoover (OSFM – Code Development and Analysis) referenced internal deadlines around December 1 for Parts 3, 4, 5, and 11, with a later date in early 2027 for other parts. Eric Banks cited a July 15 email from Tim Freeman (California Building Standards Commission) indicating that while formal submittals to BSC are not due until early 2027, working groups should realistically wrap up by mid-fall 2026 to allow agencies sufficient time to prepare submittal documents. Mitchel Baker echoed the need for early completion given HCD's multi-layered internal review requirements. After discussion, the group settled on a working target of December 2026 for subgroup submissions, with the acknowledgment that timeline specifics would be formalized at the next meeting.

B. Sub-Groups –

1. AB 2322 CH7A ASCE 7 – [Paul Armstrong](#), [Sunup Mathew](#), and [Shamim Rashid-Sumar](#) (17:21)
 - i. Shamim Rashid-Sumar (National Ready Mix Concrete Association) reported on behalf of co-chairs Paul Armstrong (American Wood Council) and Sunup Mathew (International Masonry Institute). The subgroup has been meeting bi-weekly and recently formed a task group led by Gregory Cobabe (Division of the State Architect) to develop a definition of "critical infrastructure" as it applies to WUI hazards. The definition was well-received at the July 29 meeting and will be used to refine the list of critical infrastructure facilities previously proposed in the last cycle. A second task group—the Exterior Wall Exposure Task Group—has been formed to examine appropriate hourly ratings and alternatives for protecting critical infrastructure during major wildfire events. Sunup Mathew (International Masonry Institute) noted that ASCE 7's Appendix E includes a performance-based fire design component, making the topic not entirely outside ASCE 7's scope.
 - ii. Gregory Cobabe (Division of the State Architect) emphasized the difficulty of applying ASCE 7's risk categories to a wildfire context and noted the limited availability and high cost of 2-, 3-, and 4-hour exterior wall and roof assemblies. He welcomed input from other state agencies regarding hospitals, government buildings, and other critical facilities.
 - iii. Eric Banks clarified that the statutory language in Health and Safety Code Section 13108.50.1 (amended by AB 2322) limits applicability to "nonresidential, critical infrastructure buildings," making the definition of "critical infrastructure" foundational to all further regulatory development.
 - iv. Crystal Sujeski noted that leadership's direction is to potentially develop a code-plus or appendix-based set of performance criteria for these building types, rather than mandatory prescriptive requirements, given the challenges in meeting the statute's intent.
 - v. Milad Shabanian (Stantec) from the audience noted the relevance of FEMA P-754 (Wildfire Hazard Mitigation Handbook for Public Facilities), which is currently being updated and includes planned post-fire investigation work in Washington State.

2. Scope – [Robert Raymer \(31:33\)](#)
 - i. Robert Raymer (California Building Industry Association) was absent. Milad Shabanian (Stantec) raised concern that the Scope subgroup has been inactive and that several other subgroups—including Accessory Structures and Weathering/Ignition-Resistant Materials—have scope-related items needing coordination. He indicated he would reach out to Raymer directly. Marcelo Hirschler (GBH International) noted that the Weathering subgroup had reached consensus on a minor scope change to Section 501.1, adding "or California Residential Code, as applicable" to the existing reference to the California Building Code. Crystal Sujeski suggested that this subgroup may no longer be necessary if each chapter-level subgroup handles its own scoping, and indicated she would consult with Raymer and the co-chairs on the matter.
3. Roofing – [Helene Hardy Pierce \(37:37\)](#)
 - i. Helene Hardy Pierce (Asphalt Roofing Manufacturers Association) reported that the Roofing subgroup had met on July 20 and August 4, focusing primarily on developing language for roof coverings with voids (most notably tile roofing). She noted that Section 503.2.0.3, addressing fire retardant treated roof coverings, had been raised as a coordination issue with the Weathering subgroup.
 - ii. Milad Shabanian (Stantec) explained that fire retardant treated wood shakes and shingles are currently addressed in the Ignition-Resistant Building Materials section, but reference roof assembly provisions from the California Building Code. He suggested consideration of relocating this material to the roof assembly subsection (504.2) for clarity. Marcelo Hirschler (GBH International) responded that the Weathering subgroup had agreed to consolidate two overlapping sections (503.3 and 503.54) into one, without language changes. He argued that the WUI code's existing language—requiring compliance with Section 1505 of the CBC and State Fire Marshal listing under Title 19, Section 208c—is sufficient, and that any additional weathering requirements belong in the Building or Residential Code.
 - iii. Michael Huang (OSFM - Building Material Listing Program) confirmed that the 10-year natural weathering requirement is already embedded in statute and Title 19, and that no new fire retardant treated wood roof coverings had been listed in California in approximately 15 years. Bill Hendricks (SaferWood) corroborated that the industry is small, with only two products ever passing the 10-year natural weathering test over 30 years.
 - iv. Marcelo Hirschler (GBH International) noted that whether weathering requirements should be extended to non-wood combustible roof assemblies is a topic best deferred to the next code cycle. The Roofing subgroup agreed to leave the fire retardant treated wood roof covering provisions with the Weathering subgroup and handle any needed coordination between the two groups.

4. Accessory Structures – [Milad Shabanian](#) (48:01)
- i. Milad Shabanian (Stantec) presented proposed language revisions developed over two July subgroup meetings. Key items included:
 - ii. Roof Assembly Requirements: The subgroup proposed removing a standalone Class A roof assembly requirement for structures greater than 120 square feet (as it is already captured in Sections 504.2–504.10) and clarifying that structures under 120 square feet must use noncombustible or ignition-resistant materials, or a listed Class A assembly. Marcelo Hirschler (GBH International) cautioned that requiring construction "entirely of noncombustible or ignition-resistant materials" is not feasible for roof assemblies, which commonly include foam plastic insulation. He argued the language should simply require a Class A roof assembly. Rita Torres (Polyglass) seconded this concern, noting that metal roofs still require compliant underlayments to constitute a Class A assembly. Eric Banks suggested simplifying the entire requirement to just "Class A," noting that standard residential shingles already achieve that classification.
 - iii. Expansion to Lot Line Proximity: The subgroup proposed adding a requirement for accessory structures located within a specified distance of the lot line (in addition to the existing 30-foot setback from buildings on the same lot), recognizing that sheds can serve as fire pathways to adjacent properties. The subgroup debated whether the threshold should be 15 or 30 feet from the lot line. Larry Williams (Ventura County) and Greg Andersen (Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety) cited CAL FIRE/IBHS testing showing meaningful risk reduction at 15 feet, with substantial improvement at 30 feet. Kevin Scott (KH Scott & Associates LLC) advocated for 15 feet, arguing that requiring 30 feet from the lot line would effectively place sheds 60 feet apart—a more restrictive standard than what applies to inhabited structures.
 - iv. "When Required by the Code Official" Language: Multiple participants objected to this existing phrase as creating an enforcement ambiguity. Kevin Scott (KH Scott & Associates LLC) stated plainly that it is "terrible language" and that the code should simply set a clear requirement or omit it. Greg Andersen (Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety) suggested alternative language referencing local ordinance adoption. Robert Marshall (US Solutions) and Larry Williams (Ventura County) raised the broader enforcement concern that structures under 120 square feet do not require a building permit, making post-construction enforcement difficult. Both suggested that structures built in WUI zones should require permits regardless of size, potentially through a streamlined over-the-counter process. Marco Mack proposed distinguishing between "fire separation distance" (for permitted structures) and a new "fire exposure distance" concept for non-permitted structures.
 - v. Kevin Scott (KH Scott & Associates LLC) further noted that the proposed revisions may have inadvertently removed a legacy requirement that accessory buildings within 3 feet of the main structure must match the main structure's type of construction—including walls and openings, not just the roof. He urged the subgroup to confirm whether this was an intentional deletion.

5. Weathering / Ignition-Resistant Materials – [Marcelo Hirschler](#) and [Chrishana Fields](#) (1:25:37)
- i. Marcelo Hirschler (GBH International) and co-chair Chrishana Fields (OSFM – Code Development and Analysis) presented the subgroup's progress, organized into five work items. Three items have reached consensus in principle:
 - ii. Item 1 – Scope of Chapter 5 (501.1): The subgroup agreed to add "or California Residential Code, as applicable" to align the WUI code with both the CBC and CRC. Milad Shabanian noted potential downstream effects on exceptions for Group U occupancies that will need further coordination.
 - iii. Item 2 – Noncombustible Materials (503.2.1.1 and 503.2.1.2): The subgroup completed a comprehensive review of materials that do not require testing—including steel, concrete, masonry, glass, specific aluminum alloys (3xxx, 5xxx, and 6xxx series), and fire retardant treated wood—versus those that do require testing. The group agreed to reorganize these into two clearly delineated subsections to improve clarity, and to delete a redundant ASTM E136 reference.
 - iv. Item 3 – Consolidation of Fire Retardant Treated Wood Roof Covering Sections: As noted under the Roofing subgroup, Sections 503.3 and 503.54 will be merged into a single section without substantive language changes.
 - v. Two items remain under active discussion:
 - vi. Item 4 – Ignition-Resistant Building Materials (Wood Plastic Composite and Plastic Lumber): The subgroup agreed in principle to add an exception for plastic lumber without cellulosic content (per ASTM D6662) from ASTM D2898 weathering testing, and to restructure the testing sequence (pre-weathering fire test → weathering → post-weathering fire test) into three distinct subsections for clarity. Final language has not been agreed upon.
 - vii. Item 5 – Paints, Coatings, and Surface Treatments: This is the most contested remaining topic. The subgroup has agreed to replace the current blanket prohibition on surface treatments with a framework that imposes conditions, but no consensus on exact language has been reached. The closest draft would require testing to the same fire standard before and after weathering to ASTM D2898 Method B (which includes UV, elevated temperature, and water exposure), with separate treatment of field-applied coatings and a prohibition on coatings on deck walking surfaces. The next subgroup meeting is scheduled for August 26.
6. Vents- [Kevin Scott](#) (1:36:29)
- i. Kevin Scott (KH Scott & Associates LLC) reported that no subgroup meeting had been held since the last main group meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, August 7 at 9:00 AM. One of the agenda items will be weathering requirements for vents. He invited any interested participants to contact him for an invitation.

7. Chapters 2/6 – [Larry Williams](#) (1:41:15)
 - i. Larry Williams (Ventura County) reported that the next subgroup meeting is scheduled for August 13, 11:00 AM–12:00 PM. The group will resume deferred items from the intervening cycle and plans to examine defensible space provisions in Sections 603 and 604. Williams noted that the Board of Forestry's proposed Zone 0 regulations are expected to receive approval within 30–45 days, which will inform relevant chapter 6 provisions. He highlighted that the BOF's draft regulations require structures in Zone 0 to be built to the same construction standard as the main structure or to be entirely noncombustible—a point that will need to be correlated with the WUI code once finalized.
8. Chapter 4 – [Matthew McKenna](#) and [Larry Williams](#) (1:43:41)
 - i. Matthew McKenna (Santa Clara County Fire Department) reported that the subgroup has not yet held its first meeting. He invited interested participants to contact him via email.
9. Windows/Doors – [Daniel Gorham](#) and [Greg Andersen](#) (1:44:39)
 - i. Daniel Gorham (UL Research Institutes) noted that brief written updates on the 504.8 Exterior Windows work item and the SFM 12-7a-2 work item were posted in the Teams meeting chat.
 - ii. Dan Parrish (Unique Home Designs) presented findings from radiant heat and flame exposure tests conducted on various window assemblies—with and without metal security screens—examining performance against a proposed test methodology based on ember ingress (no gaps ≥ 0.0625 inches) and interior flame ignition. Key findings included:
 - iii. Vinyl windows without screens failed relatively quickly under radiant heat (interior pane lost at approximately 3 minutes), while screens extended the time to pane loss to approximately 7 minutes. Critically, even after glass loss, the screen retained integrity and continued to block ember ingress.
 - iv. Aluminum-clad wood windows performed better, with interior panes remaining intact in radiant conditions both with and without screens, though screens delayed exterior pane cracking.
 - v. Under the higher-intensity SFM 12-7a-2 flame test (150 kW/m²), screens did not provide meaningful additional protection, as the glass failed and flames penetrated in most cases.
 - vi. One sample with thicker glass (3/16 inch vs. 1/8 inch) survived the full 10-minute flame test without flame penetration, though the glass lost structural integrity due to cracking.
 - vii. UHD Innovations is developing a new ASTM standard for testing screens in wildfire conditions.
 - viii. Kathy Krafka Harkema (Fenestration & Glazing Industry Alliance) cautioned that more research is needed before any recommendations on glass type are made, and noted that a cracked outer pane of glass should not automatically be considered a failure, as the inner pane often remains intact and continues to provide ember and flame protection.

- ix. Crystal Sujeski inquired about the applicability of findings to doors and about the status of glass block, which is currently listed as an allowance in the code. Daniel Gorham (UL Research Institutes) agreed to add glass block to the subgroup's agenda, noting a lack of supporting test data for that provision.
10. Exterior Walls/Eaves/Soffits/Under Floors – [Greg Andersen](#) and [Milad Shabanian](#) (1:56:56)
- i. Greg Andersen (Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety) reported that the subgroup has been meeting monthly and is examining: exterior wall protection against structural fire exposure, the distinction between wall assemblies and wall coverings, moisture barrier impacts, joint and intersection weaknesses, and a potential shift toward a coverings-based approach. He noted that ASTM E2957 is developing a standard for joints and intersections.
 - ii. A notable issue was raised by Greg Cobabe (Division of the State Architect), who identified a gap in Section 504.3.1 regarding rafter tails: the section addresses the roof deck on the underside of eaves, but the definition of "roof deck" explicitly excludes structural members—meaning exposed rafter tails are not covered by current requirements. Milad Shabanian (Stantec) agreed that the charging language needs to be broadened to cover all exposed elements on the underside of the eave, consistent with the IBC's more general formulation ("eaves and soffits shall be protected on the exposed underside"). The subgroup agreed to address this in forthcoming proposals.
11. Projections/Decks (including awnings, etc.) – [Paul Armstrong](#) and [Greg Andersen](#) (2:07:50)
- i. Greg Andersen (Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety) reported that the subgroup held its first meeting and discussed the need to address exterior porch ceiling criteria, which are not currently included in the code. He noted that the definitions and boundaries between "projections," "decks," and similar features (balconies, lanais) may warrant consolidation or clarification. Crystal Sujeski agreed, suggesting the subgroup look at combining or more clearly distinguishing these sections.
12. Retrofit – [Marco Mack](#) (2:12:13)
- i. Marco Mack presented a conceptual framework for a wildfire retrofit guideline, noting that the subgroup has not yet held its first meeting. He is circulating a Doodle poll for a meeting the following week.
 - ii. The framework proposes organizing retrofit into three hazard scenarios—yard-to-structure, yard-to-yard (off-site to on-site), and structure-to-structure (neighboring home to home)—and establishing tiered levels of mitigation:
 - iii. Less than code minimum: Measures that reduce on-site fire exposure intensity enough that a home can protect itself from low-to-moderate

- intensity fires (e.g., ember resistance through caulking and painting, reducing vegetation fuel load).
- iv. Code minimum: Meeting current Chapter 7A requirements.
 - v. Code plus / extra hazard mitigation: Going beyond code minimum for high-exposure conditions such as mid- or top-slope locations.
 - vi. Marco Mack introduced the concept of fire exposure resistance as distinct from fire resistance (a point Marcelo Hirschler (GBH International) reinforced, noting that "fire resistance" carries a specific regulatory meaning under ASTM E 119 and should not be conflated with reaction-to-fire properties). Marco Mack proposed classifications of "difficult to ignite" and "difficult to spread" as intermediate categories below full ignition-resistant construction.
 - vii. The stated goal is to produce a guidance document—potentially an appendix to the code—that homeowners and insurers could use to document incremental improvements toward and beyond code minimum, and which could eventually serve as the basis for insurance recognition of a recognized standard for above-code performance.
 - viii. Crystal Sujeski confirmed this aligns with leadership's direction and that a priority retrofit tool and code-plus appendix are among the desired outcomes.

IV. ROUNDTABLE/PUBLIC COMMENTS (2:35:26)

A. Crystal Sujeski introduced two additional topics raised by leadership:

1. Exterior Sprinklers: Leadership expressed interest in exploring an exterior sprinkler subgroup. Kevin Scott (KH Scott & Associates LLC) volunteered to chair this subgroup. Marcelo Hirschler (GBH International) noted that he and Kevin Scott had previously developed draft appendix language on exterior sprinklers for the IWIC, and offered to share it. He flagged the absence of a recognized testing standard for exterior wildfire sprinkler systems as a key challenge that led to the prior appendix placement rather than mandatory code language.
2. Tiered Hazard Approach: Crystal Sujeski articulated leadership's interest in building upon the current code—rather than weakening it—by developing a tiered structure corresponding to moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones for both SRA and LRA. The current code would serve as the base (moderate zone minimum), with additional requirements layered for higher hazard zones. She asked all subgroups to consider this framework in their work. Marcelo Hirschler (GBH International) observed that California's current code is largely comparable to IWIC Class 1, with the primary distinction being the allowance of untreated wood in decks and siding—and that any higher tier would logically restrict that allowance. Greg Andersen confirmed that tiered proposals are already under discussion in several subgroups. Kevin Scott (KH Scott & Associates LLC) expressed personal reservations about a tiered system unless the upper tier effectively constitutes a prohibition on building in the highest hazard zones, but acknowledged the general direction.

V. UPCOMING MEETING DATES FOR 2026 (2:36:10)

- A. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 1:00 pm PDT
- B. Next meeting: Wednesday, September 2, 2026
- C. Crystal Sujeski indicated that additional interim meetings may be scheduled as the pre-rulemaking deadline approaches, and that further clarification on the internal review and economic analysis timeline would be provided at the September meeting.

VI. MEETING ADJOURNMENT – 3:36 PM PDT (2:37:08)

- A. Crystal Sujeski thanked all participants and adjourned the meeting at 3:36 PM PDT.

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<https://youtu.be/mTID9FGFF5Q>

(0:00) CALL TO ORDER – 1:01 PM PDT
(5:47) NEW BUSINESS
(17:21) AB 2322 CH7A ASCE 7 Sub-Group
(31:33) Scope
(37:37) Roofing
(48:01) Accessory Structures
(1:25:3) Weathering / Ignition-Resistant Materials
(1:36:2) Vents
(1:41:1) Chapters 2/6
(1:43:4) Chapter 4
(1:44:3) Windows/Doors
(1:56:5) Exterior Walls/Eaves/Soffits/Under Floors
(2:07:5) Projections/Decks (including awnings, etc.)
(2:12:1) Retrofit
(2:35:2) ROUNDTABLE/PUBLIC COMMENTS
(2:36:1) UPCOMING MEETING DATES FOR 2026
(2:37:0) MEETING ADJOURNMENT – 3:36 PM PDT