

# Kimball, Tiry & St. John LLP

## Water-Conserving Plumbing Fixtures Required in California

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California Civil Code §1101.1-1101.9 require water-conserving plumbing fixtures be installed in residential and commercial property built before January 1, 1994.

- Single family residences must be brought into compliance beginning in January 1, 2014 (when a building permit is issued) with full compliance by January 1, 2017.
- Multifamily and commercial property must be brought into compliance beginning on January 1, 2014 (when a building permit is issued) with full compliance by January 1, 2019.

To be compliant, plumbing fixtures may not use more than the following water:

- (1) Toilets - 1.6 gallons per flush
- (2) Urinals - 1 gallon per flush
- (3) Showerheads - 2.5 gallons per minute
- (4) Interior faucets - 2.2 gallons per minute

### **Single Family Residences**

Beginning January 1, 2014, when a building permit for alterations or improvements is issued, all noncompliant plumbing fixtures must be replaced.

Beginning January 1, 2017:

- noncompliant plumbing fixtures must be replaced.
- If a property is being sold, the seller must disclose to the buyer in writing the retrofit requirements and whether the residence includes any noncompliant plumbing fixtures.

### **Multifamily Property and Commercial Property**

Beginning on January 1, 2014, noncompliant plumbing must be replaced:

- For any alterations or improvements to a room in a building that require a building permit and that room contains any noncompliant plumbing fixtures, the building permit applicant must replace all noncompliant plumbing fixtures in that room.
- For building additions in which the sum of concurrent building permits by the same permit applicant increases the floor area more than 10 percent. The building permit applicant must replace all noncompliant plumbing fixtures in the building.
- For building alterations or improvements in which the total construction cost estimated in the building permit is more than one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000), the building permit applicant must replace all noncompliant plumbing fixtures that service the specific area of the improvement.

Beginning January 1, 2019:

- noncompliant plumbing fixtures must be replaced.
- water-conserving plumbing fixtures must operate at the manufacturer's rated water consumption when the tenant takes possession.

- The tenant is responsible for notifying the landlord if the water-conserving plumbing fixtures are using more than the manufacturer's rated water consumption. The landlord is required to make repairs (unless the lease states otherwise).
- If a property is being sold, the seller must disclose to the buyer in writing the retrofit requirements and whether the residence includes any noncompliant plumbing fixtures.

There are exceptions:

- For registered historical sites;
- For up to one year if a demolition permit has been issued for the building;
- If a licensed plumber certifies that, due to the age or configuration of the property or its plumbing, installation of water-conserving plumbing fixtures is not technically feasible.
- Water service for the building has been is permanently disconnected.

Civil Code §1101.1-1101.9 is attached.

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### **Civil Code §1101.1**

The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

- (a) Adequate water supply reliability for all uses is essential to the future economic and environmental health of California.
- (b) Environmentally sound strategies to meet future water supply and wastewater treatment needs are key to protecting and restoring aquatic resources in California.
- (c) There is a pressing need to address water supply reliability issues raised by growing urban areas.
- (d) Economic analysis by urban water agencies has identified urban water conservation as a cost-effective approach to addressing water supply needs.
- (e) There are many water conservation practices that produce significant energy and other resource savings that should be encouraged as a matter of state policy.
- (f) Since the 1991 signing of the "Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Urban Water Conservation in California," many urban water and wastewater treatment agencies have gained valuable experience that can be applied to produce significant statewide savings of water, energy, and associated infrastructure costs. This experience indicates a need to regularly revise and update water conservation methodologies and practices.
- (g) To address these concerns, it is the intent of the Legislature to require that residential and commercial real property built and available for use or occupancy on or before January 1, 1994, be equipped with water-conserving plumbing fixtures.
- (h) It is further the intent of the Legislature that retail water suppliers are encouraged to provide incentives, financing mechanisms, and funding to assist property owners with these retrofit obligations.

### **Civil Code §1101.2**

Except as provided in Section 1101.7, this article shall apply to residential and commercial real property built and available for use on or before January 1, 1994.

### **Civil Code §1101.3**

For the purposes of this article:

- (a) "Commercial real property" means any real property that is improved with, or consisting of, a building that is intended for commercial use, including hotels and motels, that is not a single-family residential real property or a multifamily residential real property.
- (b) "Multifamily residential real property" means any real property that is improved with, or consisting of, a building containing more than one unit that is intended for human habitation, or any mixed residential-commercial buildings or portions thereof that are intended for human habitation. Multifamily residential real property includes residential hotels but does not include hotels and motels that are not residential hotels.
- (c) "Noncompliant plumbing fixture" means any of the following:
  - (1) Any toilet manufactured to use more than 1.6 gallons of water per flush.
  - (2) Any urinal manufactured to use more than one gallon of water per flush.
  - (3) Any showerhead manufactured to have a flow capacity of more than 2.5 gallons of water per minute.
  - (4) Any interior faucet that emits more than 2.2 gallons of water per minute.
- (d) "Single-family residential real property" means any real property that is improved with, or consisting of, a building containing not more than one unit that is intended for human habitation.
- (e) "Water-conserving plumbing fixture" means any fixture that is in compliance with current building standards applicable to a newly constructed real property of the same type.
- (f) "Sale or transfer" means the sale or transfer of an entire real property estate or the fee interest in that real property estate and does not include the sale or transfer of a partial interest, including a leasehold.

### **Civil Code §1101.4**

- (a) On and after January 1, 2014, for all building alterations or improvements to single-family residential real property, as a condition for issuance of a certificate of final completion and occupancy or final permit approval by the local building department, the permit applicant shall replace all noncompliant plumbing fixtures with water-conserving plumbing fixtures.
- (b) On or before January 1, 2017, noncompliant plumbing fixtures in any single-family residential real property shall be replaced by the property owner with water-conserving plumbing fixtures.
- (c) On and after January 1, 2017, a seller or transferor of single-family residential real property shall disclose in writing to the prospective purchaser or transferee the requirements of subdivision (b) and whether the real property includes any noncompliant plumbing fixtures.

### **Civil Code §1101.5**

- (a) On or before January 1, 2019, all noncompliant plumbing fixtures in any multifamily residential real property and in any commercial real property shall be replaced with water-conserving plumbing fixtures.

(b) An owner or the owner's agent may enter the owner's property for the purpose of installing, repairing, testing, and maintaining water-conserving plumbing fixtures required by this section, consistent with notice requirements of Section 1954.

(c) On and after January 1, 2019, the water-conserving plumbing fixtures required by this section shall be operating at the manufacturer's rated water consumption at the time that the tenant takes possession. A tenant shall be responsible for notifying the owner or owner's agent if the tenant becomes aware that a water-conserving plumbing fixture within his or her unit is not operating at the manufacturer's rated water consumption. The owner or owner's agent shall correct an inoperability in a water-conserving plumbing fixture upon notice by the tenant or if detected by the owner or the owner's agent.

(d)

(1) On and after January 1, 2014, all noncompliant plumbing fixtures in any multifamily residential real property and any commercial real property shall be replaced with water-conserving plumbing fixtures in the following circumstances:

(A) For building additions in which the sum of concurrent building permits by the same permit applicant would increase the floor area of the space in a building by more than 10 percent, the building permit applicant shall replace all noncompliant plumbing fixtures in the building.

(B) For building alterations or improvements in which the total construction cost estimated in the building permit is greater than one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000), the building permit applicant shall replace all noncompliant plumbing fixtures that service the specific area of the improvement.

(C) Notwithstanding subparagraph (A) or (B), for any alterations or improvements to a room in a building that require a building permit and that room contains any noncompliant plumbing fixtures, the building permit applicant shall replace all noncompliant plumbing fixtures in that room.

(2) Replacement of all noncompliant plumbing fixtures with water-conserving plumbing fixtures, as described in paragraph (1), shall be a condition for issuance of a certificate of final completion and occupancy or final permit approval by the local building department.

(e) On and after January 1, 2019, a seller or transferor of multifamily residential real property or of commercial real property shall disclose to the prospective purchaser or transferee, in writing, the requirements of subdivision (a) and whether the property includes any noncompliant plumbing fixtures. This disclosure may be included in other transactional documents.

#### **Civil Code §1101.6**

The duty of an owner or building permit applicant to comply with the requirements of this article shall be postponed for one year from the date of issuance of a demolition permit for the building. If the building is demolished within the one-year postponement, the requirements of this article shall not apply. If the building is not demolished after the expiration of one year, the provisions of this article shall apply, subject to appeal to the local building department, even though the demolition permit is still in effect or a new demolition permit has been issued.

#### **Civil Code §1101.7**

This article shall not apply to any of the following:

(a) Registered historical sites.

(b) Real property for which a licensed plumber certifies that, due to the age or configuration of the property or its plumbing, installation of water-conserving plumbing fixtures is not technically feasible.

(c) A building for which water service is permanently disconnected.

#### **Civil Code §1101.8**

A city, county, or city and county, or a retail water supplier may do either of the following:

(a) Enact local ordinances or establish policies that promote compliance with this article.

(b) Enact local ordinances or establish policies that will result in a greater amount of water savings than those provided for in this article.

#### **Civil Code §1101.9**

Any city, county, or city and county that has adopted an ordinance requiring retrofit of noncompliant plumbing fixtures prior to July 1, 2009, shall be exempt from the requirements of this article so long as the ordinance remains in effect.