REACH CODE NEWS BRIEF: SEPTEMBER 2020

TWO MORE JURISDICTIONS GAIN REACH CODE APPROVAL





Reach codes submitted by the Town of San Anselmo and the County of San Mateo were approved by the Energy Commission at its monthly Business Meeting September 9, 2020.

The Town of San Anselmo ordinance includes requirements that newly constructed buildings shall be all-electric or, if mixed fuel, meet higher energy efficiency standards than the 2019 Energy Code. Also, pre-wiring for future electric equipment and appliances is required where gas fueled equipment and appliances are installed.

The County of San Mateo code package includes provisions that all newly constructed buildings are all-electric with exceptions allowed for laboratories, commercial kitchens, publicly owned emergency shelters and buildings for which there is no all-electric compliance pathway; requires pre-wiring for electric equipment and appliances where gas-fueled equipment and appliances are installed; and requires photovoltaic systems on all buildings not subject to the provisions of the energy code with exceptions allowed for buildings with vegetative roofs or with limited solar access.

Visitors can browse our website for detailed information about adopted reach codes throughout the state (map view or the adopted ordinances list).

UPCOMING EVENTS

October

October 7: SEEC Virtual Forum - Webinar 14: Strategic Planning for a Clean Energy Future: How to Phase, Scale & Finance Smart Cities Solutions

October 14: Technical Webinar on Residential Retrofit Cost-Effectiveness Study

October 15: SEEC Virtual Forum - Webinar 15: Keeping the Focus Local: A Conversation with SoCalREN Regional Partnerships

October 27: SEEC Virtual Forum - Webinar 16: 2020 Virtual Beacon Award Ceremony



Be sure to follow us on Twitter for the latest news and information!

NEW THIS MONTH!



BAYREN QUARTERLY FORUM RECAP

BayREN's Quarterly Forum, held on September 16, 2020, was titled No Missed Opportunities: Decarbonization of Public Buildings. This recap was provided by guest columnist Denise Lin, Sustainability Coordinator, County of San Mateo and Co-Lead of content development for the Forum.

As local jurisdictions look for ways to meet more aggressive climate goals, many consider decarbonizing existing municipal buildings. However, myths and barriers exist that keep jurisdictions from taking on projects and ensuring there are no missed opportunities.

The most recent BayREN Forum shared information and local examples to help other jurisdictions develop a more complete picture of the opportunities and challenges for decarbonizing their own portfolios.

"The Forum topic was particularly timely," notes Susan Wright, Senior Sustainability Specialist, County of San Mateo and Co-Lead of content development for the Forum. "Many local governments are beginning to look at the opportunities with existing buildings and are actively seeking strategy insights, including nuts-and-bolts type information that will help them proceed. Our polling during the event definitely showed that this topic is becoming very important to local staff."

Sessions included:

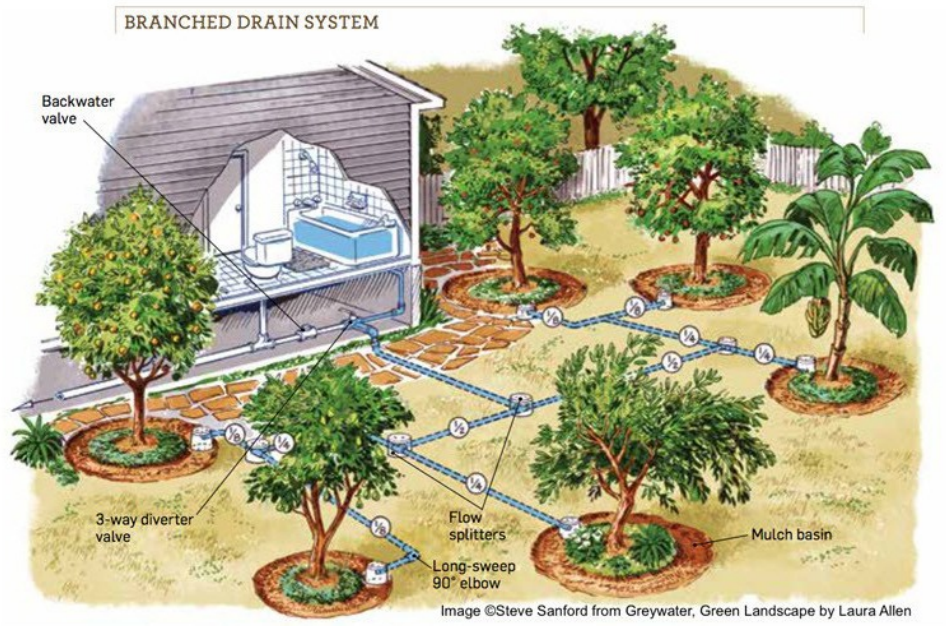
- Municipal Projects: Lessons Learned and Opportunities with Blake Herrschaft
- Considering Projects Holistically: Technological, Financial and Operational Factors with Joe Fullerton
- California's Regulatory Landscape & Implications for Local Governments on Municipal Building Projects with Sara Baldwin
- Presentations from City of San Francisco (Eden Brukman) and City of Hayward (Erik Pearson) on specific projects
- BayREN Municipal Zero Net Energy/Zero Net Carbon Assistance with Peter Pollard
- American Cities Climate Challenge with Betty Seto and Wendy Lee

Lin pointed out that attendance was robust, with more than 130 attendees. “A top takeaway for attendees was that there is more policy, education, and funding needed to drive decarbonization efforts,” she continued. “A number of participants noted that they are planning to develop decarbonization strategies and engage local government staff following the event.”

“This was one of the best organized and orchestrated webinars I’ve seen in these recent months,” one attendee remarked.

All recorded presentations and materials are available on the BayREN website free of charge. Additional Zero Net Energy/Decarbonization Resources for Local Governments are also available.

The next BayREN Forum is scheduled for November 12, 2020.



Shower/tub water here irrigates six fruit trees. Fractions show how the flow splitters divide greywater flows into halves, quarters, and eighths.

NEW DROUGHT-READY CONSTRUCTION MODEL ORDINANCE NOW AVAILABLE

Growing population, climate change, and droughts make it essential for local jurisdictions to manage their water resources as efficiently as possible. California jurisdictions like Santa Barbara and Pleasanton, among others, already include onsite water reuse strategies in their Climate Action Plans, because of the many benefits that can be realized. For instance, reducing the demand for potable water through onsite water reuse improves reliability of local water supplies, reduces impact on downstream wastewater treatment facilities, reduces energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, and provides other environmental benefits, including protecting water quality and preserving stream flows.

A collaborative effort, spearheaded by Laura Allen of Greywater Action, Regina Hirsch of California Onsite Water Association, and Sherry Bryan of Ecology Action, joined by Central Coast Greywater Alliance (CCGA) and the Alliance for Water Efficiency, focused on developing model ordinance language to simplify adoption by local jurisdictions. Ecology Action led the revival of work originally begun several years ago and was instrumental in leading the effort to completion. The Statewide Codes and Standards Reach Codes Program was pleased to participate and assist the team in finalizing and publishing the model ordinance.

The intent of the ‘Drought-Ready Construction’ model ordinance is to lower the costs and barriers for future installation and future use of alternate water source systems for non-potable uses by pre-plumbing buildings during construction or during certain remodels that expose supply or drainage piping. Jurisdictions can customize the document as required to meet their community’s specific needs. Technical assistance from the Reach Codes Program is available at no cost to jurisdictions interested in pursuing adoption.

Sherry Bryan, Program Manager for Ecology Action’s Water Division, reflects, “This model ordinance is crafted from the collective experience of expert greywater and rainwater system installers and regulators. We imagine a time, 5-10 years from now, when we are called to estimate or advise water reuse projects for buildings that already have greywater stub-out or dual water supply access point because the local jurisdiction had the foresight to adopt this ordinance.”

The model ordinance can be downloaded here. Team members, assisted by Program technical lead, Stefaniya Becking, are working on an updated, illustrated guidance document to accompany this model ordinance. The guidance document will educate policy makers, contractors and architects on dual plumbing best practices and considerations.



FINAL COST-EFFECTIVENESS STUDY FOR RESIDENTIAL RETROFITS AVAILABLE IN NOVEMBER

A preliminary cost-effectiveness study on existing residential building upgrades was published by the statewide Codes & Standards team in February 2020. At that time, the research team identified a range of additional options that merited further study. compliance documentation and process.

These included:

- Revisiting base case assumptions for different vintages
- Exploring additional HVAC upgrade options including high efficiency equipment replacement alternatives to non-preempted upgrades; air sealing and attic insulation; and improved duct insulation and leakage
- Evaluating additional building envelope improvements such as higher ceiling insulation requirements; and cool roofs
- Assessing lighting luminaire replacements in addition to lamp replacements
- Evaluating electrification and electrification-ready measures at equipment change-out
- Considering the effectiveness of PV system installation when building an addition
- Requiring additional efficiency upgrades when installing a PV system

The team will be publishing the final report, which addresses these options, in November.

In addition, the Codes & Standards program will host a technical webinar to present the findings and answer questions. The webinar is scheduled for Wednesday, October 14, at 1:30 pm PT. Interested in attending? Register here.

OTHER REACH CODE NEWS BRIEFS

October 2026 September 2026 August 2026
Archives