



San Francisco's Water, Sewer, and Stormwater Requirements

San Francisco has adopted water, sewer, and stormwater requirements that reduce demand on drinking water supplies and protect water quality and sewer system function. To assist you in meeting these requirements, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) provides project plan review, technical assistance, and offers incentives for implementation of efficient landscape practices, plumbing fixtures, and equipment.

Construction Site Runoff

Runoff from construction sites is a major source of stormwater contaminants. Construction sites are required to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) to keep pollutants, such as dirt and debris, out of the City's sewer system and sensitive local water bodies. All construction sites must submit an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan as well as a Construction Runoff Permit Application to the SFPUC for review and approval. Sites that plan to conduct non-routine, episodic, batch, or other temporary discharges to the City's combined sewer system must obtain a Batch Wastewater Discharge Permit from the SFPUC.

Cross-Connection Control

The Cross-Connection Control Program protects the City's drinking water system from contamination caused by backflow. All properties with potential cross-connection or hazards, such as boilers, chemical feed equipment, and dedicated irrigation or interconnected fire sprinkler systems are required to install an approved backflow prevention assembly.

Fats, Oils, and Grease

The Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) Control Ordinance applies to all restaurants and food service establishments that generate grease in their wastewater discharges. The FOG Control Ordinance requires installation of grease capturing equipment such as automatic grease removal devices or gravity grease interceptors. Equipment shall be operational prior to wastewater discharge from food processing and/or

kitchen areas to prevent FOG build-up and damage to the City's sewer system.

Non-Potable Water

Large retail water users may choose to implement on-site treatment and use of non-potable water generated and/or collected at their own facilities. Non-potable water includes, but is not limited to, rainwater, graywater, foundation drainage, and blackwater. Starting November 1, 2015, non-potable water sources for toilet or urinal flushing and irrigation will be required for new buildings of 250,000 square feet or more, and water budgets will be required for new buildings of 40,000 square feet or more. The proper operation and maintenance of such systems are critical to protect public health and the City's drinking water system and requires permits from both the Department of Public Health and the Department of Building Inspection.

Water Well Use

To protect San Francisco's groundwater from contamination and unmanaged use, the City's Water Well Use Regulations require applications for all proposed groundwater withdrawals to be reviewed and approved by the SFPUC. In conjunction with this review process, an environmental determination under the California Environmental Quality Act must be conducted by the City Planning Department. Wells may only be constructed for industrial or irrigation uses. Well construction also requires an approved permit from the Department of Public Health.



For more information on compliance requirements and SFPUC incentive programs, visit sfwater.org/reqs.



Recycled Water

Projects located in the City's designated recycled water use areas are required to install recycled water systems for uses such as irrigation, cooling, and/or toilet and urinal flushing. New construction, subdivisions, or major alterations with a total cumulative area of 40,000 square feet or more, and any new, modified, or existing irrigated areas of 10,000 square feet or more are required to comply with the Recycled Water Ordinances. Condominium projects that were issued a building or site permit prior to January 1, 2008 are not required to include dual-plumbing for toilet flushing or cooling, but must include a recycled water irrigation system (if applicable). All other non-residential and residential occupancies must comply with all requirements.

San Francisco also restricts the use of potable water for soil compaction and dust control activities associated with construction or demolition projects. The SFPUC operates a recycled water truck-fill station at the Southeast Water Pollution Control Plant. For more information, please call (415) 695-7378.

Stormwater Management Ordinance

To protect the water quality of San Francisco Bay and the Pacific Ocean, and to enhance the function of the City's sewer systems, the Stormwater Management Ordinance requires all new and redevelopment projects that create and/or replace 2,500 square feet or more of impervious surface, or surface over water, to comply with the Stormwater Management Requirements and Design Guidelines (SMR) and manage a portion of their stormwater on-site. Created and/or replaced impervious surface is measured cumulatively across the development project.

The SFPUC provides grant opportunities and free technical assistance to help projects use resources more efficiently and to meet local requirements:

- Watershed Stewardship Grants
- Large Landscape Grants
- Plumbing Fixture Rebates and Equipment Grants
- Non-Potable Water Grants
- Free project plan review and consultations
- Free workshops and compliance guidebooks

Water Efficient Landscape

To ensure the efficient use of water for the City's landscapes, all projects with 500 square feet or more of new or modified landscape area are required to comply with the Water Efficient Irrigation Ordinance, as amended in March 2016. Projects must design, install, and maintain efficient irrigation systems, utilize low water-use plantings, and calculate a Maximum Applied Water Allowance, also known as a water budget.

Water Efficient Plumbing

The Residential and Commercial Water Conservation Ordinances require San Francisco properties to repair plumbing leaks and replace inefficient plumbing fixtures including toilets, urinals, faucets, and showerheads with high-efficiency models. Residential retrofits are required upon sale of the property or at the time of major improvements. Retrofits for commercial properties are required by 2017 or upon major improvements. For all properties a Certificate of Compliance is required from the Department of Building Inspection.

Hydraulic Capacity Assessment

To protect the hydraulic capacity of the local water distribution system, SFPUC City Distribution Division (CDD) requires hydraulic analysis of all new and relocated fire hydrants and all new fire service connections two inches in diameter and greater. It is the property owner's responsibility to initiate hydraulic analysis with CDD through the Customer Services Bureau (CSB). If CDD determines there is inadequate hydraulic capacity, the property owner will be responsible to pay for any system upgrades required to meet the demand increases.

Incorporating these requirements early in your project's planning and design will help to avoid delays in the permitting process at the Department of Building Inspection. Please contact the SFPUC in the early stages of your project's development. For more information on compliance triggers and the permitting process, please visit sfwater.org/reqs.



Requirements Summary and Contact Information

Use the table below to determine if your project will need to comply with any of these requirements, and how to contact us. More information on each requirement can be found at sfwater.org/reqs.

If the property or proposed project includes...	...then may need to comply with these requirements:	E-mail	Phone
Landscape work totaling 500 sf or more (including green roofs and public parks)	Water Efficient Irrigation Ordinance	landscape@sfwater.org	(415) 551-4730
Residential dwelling (including apartments, condominiums, and residential hotels) undergoing major improvements or sale/transfer of title	Residential Water Conservation Ordinance	waterconservation@sfwater.org	(415) 551-4730
Commercial building, including mobile homes and portions of buildings used for commercial or live/work purposes	Commercial Water Conservation Ordinance	waterconservation@sfwater.org	(415) 551-4730
Project located in the Designated Recycled Water Use Area with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40,000 sf or more of new construction or major alterations, or • 10,000 sf or more of new or existing landscape area 	Recycled Water Use Ordinances	recycledwater@sfwater.org	(415) 554-3271
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40,000 square feet or more of new construction • Voluntary installation of an alternate water source system (i.e., an on-site, non-potable water system) 	Non-potable Water Ordinance	nonpotable@sfwater.org	(415) 551-4734
Potential unprotected cross connection or hazard (such as a boiler, chemical feed equipment, dedicated irrigation, or interconnected fire sprinkler system)	Backflow Prevention Ordinance	backflow@sfwater.org	(650) 652-3199
Groundwater pumping/withdrawal from a well	Water Well Use Regulations	groundwater@sfwater.org	(415) 554-3271

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If the property or proposed project includes...	...then may need to comply with these requirements:	E-mail	Phone
New water service, new fire service or any upgrades to irrigation systems or plumbing that would alter the size of the meter or change the location of the meter	New Water Service Installations	info@swater.org	(415) 551-2900
New fire service connections two inches in diameter and greater	New Fire Service Connections	CDDEngineering@swater.org	(415) 550-4994
New or relocated fire hydrant	New and Relocated Fire Hydrants	CDDEngineering@swater.org	(415) 550-4994
A new connection to the water distribution system or need for additional capacity as a result of adding additional water fixtures or larger water fixtures	Water Capacity Charge	capacitycharges@swater.org	(415) 575-6941
A new connection or need for additional wastewater collection and treatment capacity as a result of new construction, new additions, developing existing space into “conditioned” square footage or a change of business use	Wastewater Capacity Charge	capacitycharges@swater.org	(415) 575-6941
Creation and/or replacement of 2,500 sf or more of the impervious surface	Stormwater Management Ordinance	stormwaterreview@swater.org	none
Soil compaction and/or dust control activities during construction or demolition	Soil Compaction and Dust Control Ordinance	mfisher@swater.org	(415) 695-7378
Restaurants or other food service establishments	Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) Control Ordinance	FOGOrdinance@swater.org	(415) 695-7310
Regular or continuous discharges into the City’s combined sewer system, such as Laundries, Food Processors, Hospitals, Restaurants, and/or Dental Offices	Industrial User Permit	ttakeshita@swater.org	(415) 695-7369
Non-routine, episodic, batch, or other temporary discharges to the City’s combined sewer system, such as dewatering, power washing, pipe or tank cleaning, etc.	Batch Wastewater Discharge Permit	ttakeshita@swater.org	(415) 695-7369