

CALIFORNIA

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

In California, a revision of the state building standards is helping to promote urban forestry through policy. By implementing urban forestry elements, a revised policy is helping to increase shade cover for schools and improve campus health while mitigating heat. This is an exciting example of how a statewide regulatory program is having a positive effect on advancing California's Urban & Community Forestry (U&CF) program health objectives. Many of California's existing projects utilize school sites, and this change in standards will further enhance U&CF education and outreach messaging to students and faculty at these sites.

Existing California building standards focused on construction related to public elementary schools, secondary schools and community colleges are being amended under the Division of the State Architect.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Urban & Community Forestry developed a relationship with the Division of the State Architect through a separate partnership, the Health in All Policies Task Force, via the California Department of Public Health. As a result, CAL FIRE and other urban forestry partners (Sacramento Tree Foundation and California ReLeaf) have been able to work with the Division of the State Architect to update the standards to include urban forestry elements.

California building standards include mandatory and voluntary measures to encourage sustainable building practices. These measures are intended to improve public health, safety and general welfare by promoting the use of building concepts which minimize the building's impact on the environment, promote a more sustainable design and creation of high-performance educational facilities. Specific callouts for shade trees are codified in this amendment.

Buildings shall now be designed to include mandatory design elements that specifically relate to health benefits that are solved by requiring urban forestry applications cited in amended code. The amended school building standards state that shade trees "shall" be installed and supporting irrigation "shall" be installed in targeted areas; uncovered parking areas require that 50% of total parking area "will" be in shade within 15 years; and campus landscape and hardscape require that 20% of the total square footage area "will" be in shade within 15 years.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Specific language of the amendment can be found online at http://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/dsa/green/Proposed_ExpressTerms-T24Pt11.pdf.

A timeline to enact the new standards can be found online at <http://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/bsc/2018TriCycle/2018TriCycleTimeline-v01-03-2017.pdf>.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), Urban & Community Forestry Program
http://calfire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_urbanforestry