


<b>COUNTY OF VENTURA</b> <b>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY</b> <b>Building and Safety Division</b>	<b>ORIGINAL</b> <i>May 3, 2010</i>	<b>POLICIES AND INTERPRETATIONS</b> <b>POLICY NO.</b> <b>2010-A004</b>
<b>Topic: Page 1 of 3</b> <b>Requests for Alternate Methods, Designs and Materials</b>	<b>REVISED:</b> <i>June 14, 2010</i>	<b>Jim MacDonald, CBO</b> <b>Building Official</b> 

The Ventura County Building Code authorizes the Building Official to consider, on a case by case basis, requests for the use of any alternate material, design, or construction method not specifically prescribed by the Building, Electrical, Plumbing, or Mechanical Regulations. Section §104.11 "Alternative Materials, Design, and methods of Construction and Equipment" authorizes the Building Official to approve the use of any alternate material, design, or construction method if the Building Official determines that:

1. The proposed alternate material, design, or construction method would comply with the Building, Electrical, Plumbing, or Mechanical Regulations;
2. The proposed alternate material, design, or construction method is at least equivalent to the standards prescribed in the applicable regulation in terms of suitability, quality, strength, effectiveness, fire resistance, durability, safety, and sanitation; and
3. Sufficient evidence has been submitted to substantiate any claims that may be made regarding the use of any proposed alternate material, design, or construction method.

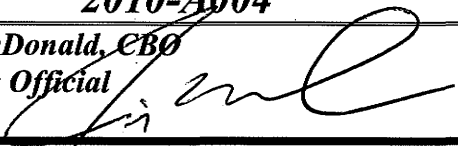
The details of any action granting approval of an alternate material, design, or construction method shall be entered into the file for the individual permit for which the issue applies and shall be permanently retained.

**I. Application**

All requests for the use of alternate materials, designs, or construction methods must be submitted on application form BS70. This form is available from either office of the Building and Safety Division. Alternatively applicants may be directed to the Building and Safety Divisions website where the application is available for download. [http://www.ventura.org/RMA/build\\_safe/information/index.htm](http://www.ventura.org/RMA/build_safe/information/index.htm)

Applications must be legible and signed by the Property/Building Owner or a Company Officer if not owned by an individual. The address and permit application number assigned by the Building and Safety Division must also be included. Additionally, contact information for the owner, designer and the contact name of the person submitting the application shall also be completed.

Where multiple alternates are requested, a separate application must be submitted for each request. This may permit approval of certain requests when it is necessary to deny one or more in a series of requests.

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Applications will be initially assigned to a plan check engineer who will retain or sub-assign the request upon initiating the review. The assigned staff member will contact the applicant (contact person identified on the application) as needed for additional information if necessary.

**II. Timing of Applications and Payment of Fees**

Applications may be submitted for consideration at any time during the plan review and inspection process. There is no specific deadline for submittal of requests and all submittals will be reviewed on a first come first served basis. Additionally, applications may be submitted for review prior to application for permit.

Advance requests will be issued an "SVC" number for Plan Review Time and charged at the Contract Hourly Rate of the reviewing staff member. Upon acceptance of an advance request, an initial fee of 4-hours shall be collected.

Requests received in conjunction with a permit application will be assessed the Contract Hourly Rate of the reviewing staff member.

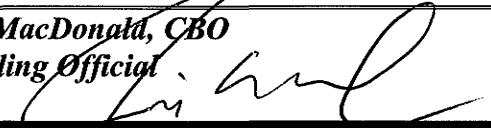
**III. Justification of Request**

The justification portion of the application must clearly state the basis for the request and substantiate the claim of equivalency to code requirements for the proposed material, design, or construction method. The justification must be prepared by a licensed architect or engineer.

Additional information substantiating any claim of equivalence such as code analyses, test reports, engineering analysis as well as other background information may be compiled in a report used as a part of the justification. Copies of documents, in part or in their entirety, referenced in the reports that are not commonly available may need to be provided.

**IV. Rejection of Application**

Applications that are not thoroughly and clearly completed and applications that have not been submitted with the required fee will be rejected without review. Additionally, applications that do not include sufficient documentation or necessary plans or analyses that substantiate claims of equivalence and compliance with the code intent will also be rejected.

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**V. Approval or Denial of Request**

When approval is granted for a particular request, the applicant will be requested to supply one clean copy of all plans and reports used to substantiate the request for permanent retention.

Plans shall include a separate sheet reflecting all approved requests for alternate as well as any conditions required by the Building Official in granting approval. Such sheet shall be labeled "AP-ALT" and be referenced from the list of sheets on the front page.

When a request is denied by the Building Official, the applicant will be notified in writing with the reasons for the disapproval clearly outlined. Applicants wishing to appeal the decision of the Building Official may do so by completing form B81, "Request for Appeals Board Hearing".

On a case by case basis, at the discretion of the Building Official, an application may be referred by the Building Official directly to the appropriate Appeal Board for consideration or ratification of the approval being granted. When the Building Official refers an application to the Board of Appeals, there will be no charge to the applicant for such referral.