



Accessing State Legislation Online

Introduction

This educational document was created by the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC) for the purpose of assisting users of building codes that may also need to access state legislation relating to the design, construction and use of buildings, and the mandates for state and local agencies involved in the development or enforcement of building standards in Title 24. This 20-page document will provide an introduction to the process of using the Internet to access California state legislation along with necessary background information.

We also have other educational materials at the CBSC website. They include:

- Guide to Title 24
- Guide to the Nonresidential CALGreen Code
- Guide for Local Amendments and Filings of Building Standards
- It's Your Building Department
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Glossary of Terms
- Accessing State Laws Online
- Accessing State Regulations Online

Please visit our website for matters relating to the activities of the California Building Standards Commission including:

- Proposed building standards
- Online access to Title 24
- Meeting and hearing schedules
- Informational bulletins and announcements
- Newsletter, called the CAL Code Quarterly, and more.

Background

If you are new to the use of state laws and legislation we recommend that you first read our "Accessing State Laws Online" available at this CBSC website. It is helpful to understand how California state laws are organized and accessed.

California state laws are enacted by the legislative process involving the Legislative and Executive Branches of State Government. The Legislative Branch consists of two houses of the state legislature; the State Senate and State Assembly. The Executive Branch consists of the Governor who may sign or veto legislative bills presented by the Legislature, or allow the legislation to become law without action. For a bill to become law, it must pass both the Assembly and Senate, and be signed by the Governor, or have the Governor not act on the bill (a rare event). Many times the news media will report that a bill has "passed the Senate", or "the Assembly has passed a bill". Such reports are misleading if you don't understand the process that requires a bill to pass both the Assembly and Senate and be acted on by the Governor, before it becomes law. A bill that merely passes one of the legislative houses is still not law.

There are 29 separately named codes of California state law as explained in our "Accessing State Laws Online". The Government Code, Health and Safety Code, Business and Professions Code, Education Code, Public Resources Code, Water Code, Penal Code and the Food and Agricultural Code, are among the 29 codes of state laws that contain provisions relating to buildings, or specific areas or feature of buildings depending on the use of the building. These state laws provide the authority for various state agencies to adopt or develop building standards (a type of state regulation) that are found in the California Building Standards Code, in Title 24, California Code of Regulations. These state laws also specify how the laws and implementing building standards are to be enforced. All the state laws that authorize or require the development or enforcement of building standards are listed in Authority and Reference citations of Sections 1.2 through 1.14 of the California Building Code (Chapter 1, Division 1, Part 2 of Title 24, California Code of Regulations).

Abbreviations and Common Terms relating to Legislation:

AB. An abbreviation for Assembly Bill. See Bill Identification Numbers.

Bill, or Legislative Bill. Common name for a written legislative proposal introduced in either the California Assembly or Senate. A bill is a proposal to amend or repeal state laws or to enact new state laws. The bill's contents are not law until the bill is passed by both the Assembly and Senate, and then acted on by the Governor, and finally, Chaptered by the Secretary of State.

Bill Identification Numbers. Identification numbers are assigned to bills in the order of their introduction. If introduced in the California Assembly, the bill will be given an Assembly Bill number. The abbreviation "AB" is commonly used for Assembly Bills. A bill introduced in the California Senate will be assigned a Senate Bill number. The abbreviation "SB" is commonly used when referring to a Senate Bill. Both AB and SB bills must be passed by both the Assembly and Senate and acted upon by the Governor to become state law. The Assembly and Senate assign sequential bill numbers in the order of the bill's introduction. There is no effort to separate bill numbers used by the Senate or by the Assembly. For example, there can be an AB 100 and an SB 100 in the same legislative session, proposing very different legislation. Bill numbers are reused. Thus there may be an AB 100 in each legislative session. The state laws enacted by AB or SB bills have equal importance.

Chaptered. Each bill that is passed by the two houses of the legislature and signed by the Governor is sent to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State assigns a permanent identification chapter number to the bill. For example, if a bill identified as AB 100 is enacted, it will be given a chapter number by the Secretary of State. Let's say that AB 100 is enacted into law and was assigned chapter number 551. That would be the five-hundred and fifty first bill to pass the current legislative session and all future printings of the bill will include both the bill identification number and the chapter number. If the passage of AB 100 was in the 2014 legislative session, this example will be referred to as Chapter 551 of the 2014 Statutes. From this point on, it is technically incorrect to refer to the bill by only its original bill number (AB100) because bill numbers are reused.

Enactment or Enacted into Law. Refers to the act or process of a bill passing and becoming law. A bill must pass through and be approved in both the Senate and Assembly before going to the Governor. The Governor may sign the bill, or allow the bill to become law without a signature (not a popular option), or veto the bill. When the Governor signs a bill, it is then sent to the Secretary of State for filing where a chapter number is assigned. Enactment is another way of saying a bill was passed.

Enrolled. A bill that is marked or said to be enrolled is a bill that has passed the two houses of the legislature and has been sent to the Governor for approval or veto. The bill will become law if signed by the Governor, or if the Governor takes no action after 30 days (not a popular option).

Legislative Session. The California Legislative Session is two-years in length. New bills may be introduced in the first and second year of the session. A bill that does not pass in the first year, but remains active, may be passed in the second year.

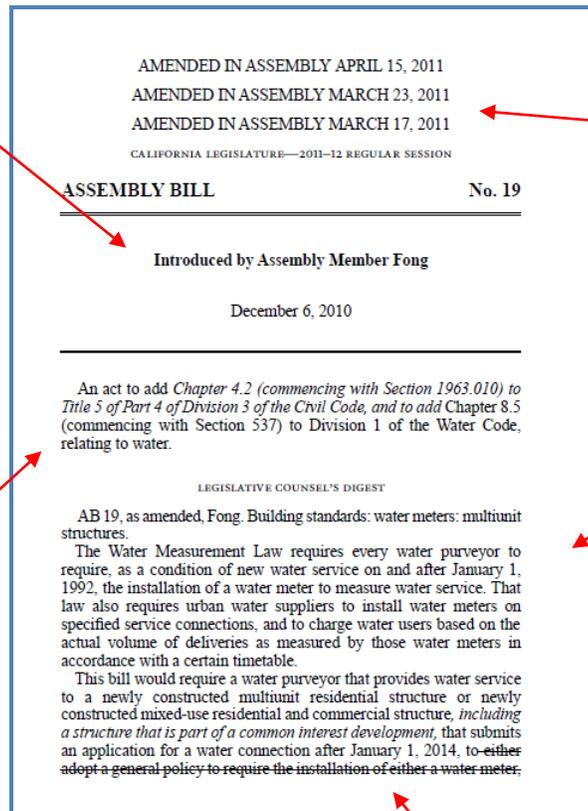
SB. Abbreviation for a Senate Bill. See Bill Identification Numbers.

Go to the "Glossary" available on the front page of the Legislature's website (shown on page 10 below) for more information about key words and terms relating to legislation.

Let's take a look at the format of a legislative bill. There are several things you must understand before we begin searching for bills. We will use AB19 of the 2011-2012 Legislative Session as our example.

Note: Many of the images used herein have been cropped in order to fit our pages and allow for our yellow information boxes.

1. This is the cover page of AB 19. It tells us the bill was introduced on December 6, 2010, by Assembly Member Fong.



2. On the date this image was taken, the bill had been amended three times, most recently being April 15, 2011. Each time a bill is amended it is reprinted and updated for access on the legislature's website.

3. Following the introduction date, the cover page provides the identification of the state laws to be amended, repealed or enacted by this bill. This bill proposes to add new provisions to the California Civil Code and California Water Code.

4. The Legislative Counsel's Digest is written by the non-partisan Office of the Legislative Counsel. It tells what the current state law relating to the proposal requires, and what the bill proposes to change or add.

5. Each time a bill is amended, the resulting bill printing will illustrate the amendments to existing law with strike-out and Italic font print. If the bill is amended again, the illustrations of the previous amendments are removed and only the new amendments are illustrated. The same is done in the text of the law as shown on the following page. This practice is explained in more detail later.

If the bill proposes new law, and not an amendment to existing law, italic font print is not used.

1. Page 2 of AB 19.

2. More of the Legislative Counsel's Digest continued from page 1.

4. Each line of the law text is numbered if you select the PDF version of a bill. Line numbers are used during legislative hearings and during written communications to quickly identify a provision for discussion.

5. All the italic font print on this page illustrates new bill provisions added with the last amendments added on April 15, 2011.

AB 19

— 2 —

~~as defined, or a submeter, as defined, to measure water supplied to each individual dwelling unit, or to inform, on an individual basis, an applicant for new water service as to whether a water meter or submeter is required to be installed for each individual dwelling unit~~ require the installation of a water meter or submeter to measure the water supplied to each individual dwelling unit as a condition of new water service. The bill would require the owner of the structure to ensure that a water submeter installed for these purposes complies with laws and regulations governing installation, approval of meter type, maintenance, reading, billing, and testing of water submeters. The bill would ~~except~~ *except* certain buildings from these requirements.

Existing law governs the hiring of dwelling units. The bill would impose prescribed requirements, including requirements for billing and disclosure, on landlords for submetered water service to individual dwelling units.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 4.2 (commencing with Section 1963.010)
2 is added to Title 5 of Part 4 of Division 3 of the Civil Code, to
3 read:

4 CHAPTER 4.2. WATER SERVICE

7 1963.010. *It is the intent of the Legislature in enacting this*
8 *chapter to do both of the following:*

9 (a) *To encourage the conservation of water in multifamily*
10 *residential rental buildings through means either within the*
11 *landlord's or the tenant's control.*

12 (b) *To ensure that the practices involving the submetering of*
13 *dwelling units for water service are just and reasonable, and*
14 *include appropriate safeguards for both tenants and landlords.*

15 1963.030. *As used in this chapter:*

16 (a) *"Billing agent" means a person or entity who contracts to*
17 *provide submetering services to a landlord, including billing.*

18 (b) *"Landlord" includes all agents of the landlord, billing*
19 *agents, successors in interest to the real property interests of the*
20 *landlord, and persons and entities with which the landlord*

3. Each major segment of a bill is identified by a section number beginning with number 1. Here, Section 1 tells us the proposal is to add new Title 5 of Part 4 of Division 3 of the Civil Code. Don't confuse these section numbers with the section numbers used in the law text.

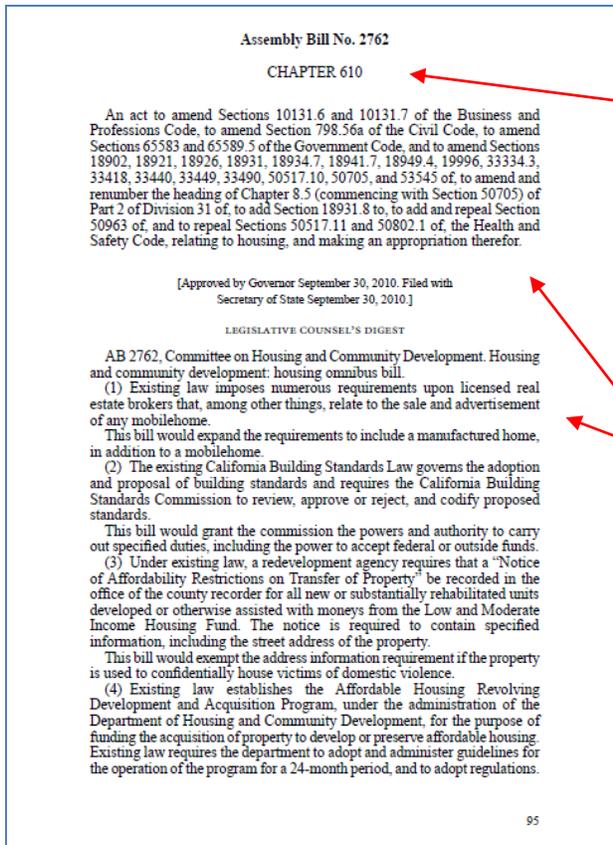
Below is page 9 of AB 19 as amended on April 15, 2011. Here proposed law text is shown in three styles.

- The standard font print for proposed law text that was unchanged by the amendments of April 15, 2011.
- Strike-out text for previously proposed law text being removed by the amendments of April 15, 2011.
- Italic font print for new proposed law text added by the amendments of April 15, 2011.

The diagram illustrates the layout of page 9 of AB 19, showing the original proposed law text and the amendments made on April 15, 2011. The page is titled "CHAPTER 8.5. MULTIUNIT STRUCTURES" and "AB 19". The text is numbered 1 through 39. Three callout boxes explain the text styles:

- 1. This proposed law text shown by the standard font print is carried over from the previous version of the bill without change.** This callout points to the text: "537. (a) The following definitions govern the construction of this chapter." (lines 4-5).
- 2. Previous proposed law text being removed by the amendments of April 15, 2011 is struck out.** This callout points to the strike-out text: "(1) 'Master meter' means a meter that measures water usage for an entire property or structure, which may include common areas, and is read by the water purveyor." (lines 5-7).
- 3. New proposed law text added by the amendments on April 15, 2011 is shown in italic font print.** This callout points to the italicized text: "(1) 'Meter' has the same meaning as 'water meter' in Section 516 of the Water Code." (lines 9-10).

Now let's look at a bill that was enacted into law. Below is AB 2762 of the 2009-2010 legislative sessions.



You can recognize that this bill was enacted because it has a chapter number (610). Once enacted and chaptered, the dates of the amended versions are removed.

The names of the state laws added, amended or repealed are shown and the final Legislative Counsel's Digest is provided here. The enacted law text follows on subsequent pages.

California legislative bills may be accessed at the State Capital, from legislative bill service companies, industry and trade organizations, and through the California Legislature's website. Let's learn how to access California legislation through the California Legislature's website. It is easier than you may think.

Accessing California Legislation through the Internet

At this time the California Legislature is maintaining two websites. Each has useful features. All features are not available on both websites at this time. We will discuss both websites and the features they provide.

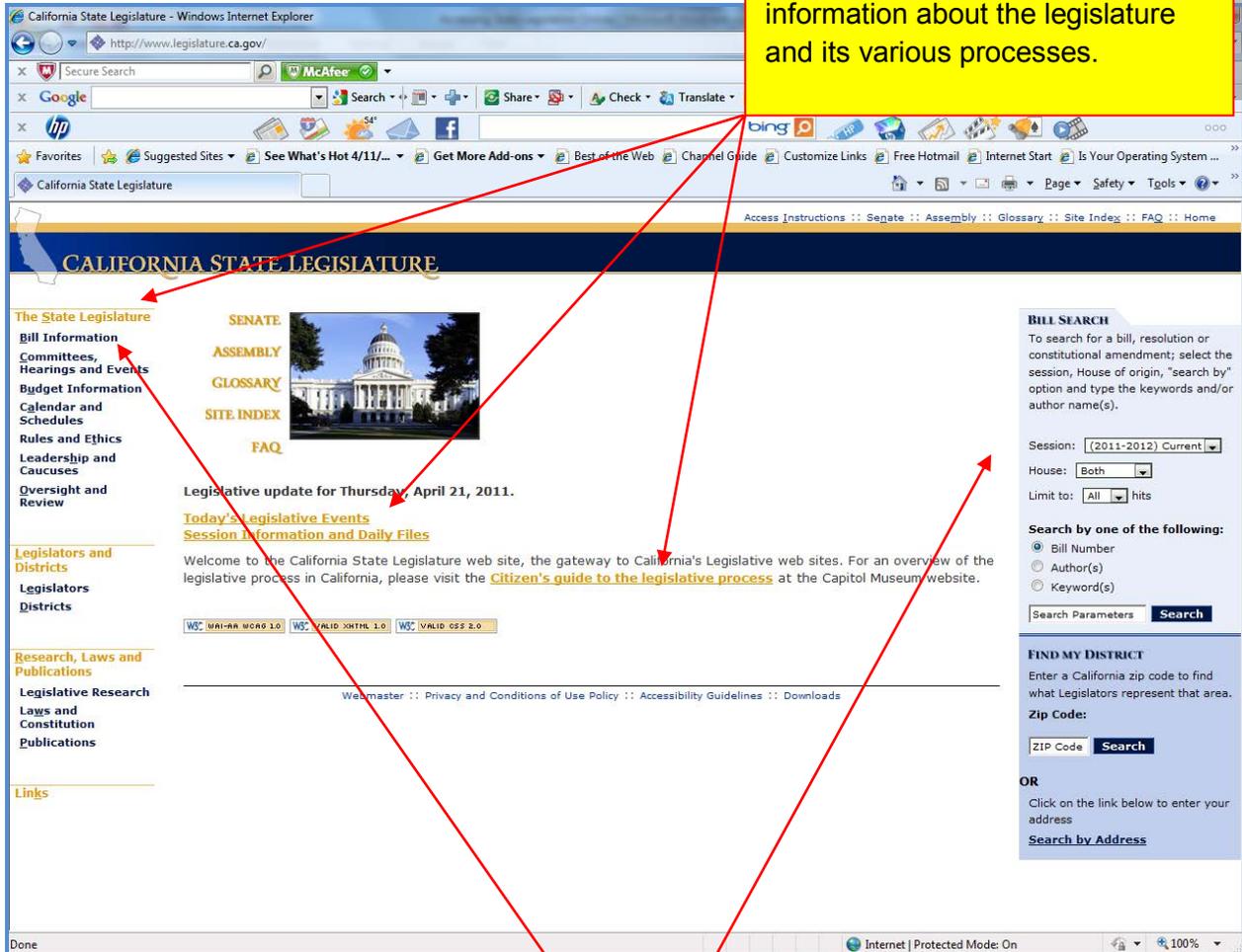
Method 1: From any Internet webpage, enter (type in, or copy and paste) the California Legislature's website address <http://www.legislature.ca.gov/>.

We have used the front page of the California Building Standards Commission website as a starting point. You can use any website you wish. Just enter the California Legislature's website address <http://www.legislature.ca.gov/>. The results will be shown on the next page.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the California Building Standards Commission. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the following links: Home, About Us, Calendar, Codes, Education, Publications, and Rulemaking. The main content area is divided into several sections. On the left, there is a large banner for 'TITLE 24 CODE! Time!' and '2013 CALIFORNIA BUILDING STANDARDS CODE'. Below this banner is a section titled '2013 Intervening Code Adoption Cycle' which contains text about the cycle and links to a bulletin and a timeline. On the right side, there are profiles for the Governor (Edmund G. Brown Jr.), Secretary (Marybel Batjer), and Acting Director (Esteban Almanza), along with the BSC Executive Director (Jim McGowan). Below these profiles are sections for 'Current Code', 'Education & Outreach', and 'Featured Links'.

This is the front page of one of the California Legislature's websites.

There are several links to information about the legislature and its various processes.



To search for a legislative bill, we can use either of these links. Our example to follow on the next page will use the "Bill Search" feature to the right.

To the right is the "Bill Search" feature shown on the previous page.

1. "Session" refers to the Legislative session and it defaults to the current session. If you wanted to search for a bill from a previous session, use the pull-down menu and select the desired session.

2. "House" refers to the Assembly or Senate. It defaults to "Both", but if you know the bill you are looking for and its house of origin then you may use the pull-down menu and select either the Senate or Assembly. Many users just leave it at "Both".

3. Here you may elect to search by the bill number, or the author's name, or by a Keyword when you don't know either the bill number or the author's name. However, searching by keywords is tedious and time consuming. We will look at this feature later.

4. To search for AB 19 of the 2011-2012 sessions, that we used on previous pages as an example bill, backspace to remove the words "Search Parameters" and enter the number 19 here. Then click on the "Search" key. The results are on the next page.

BILL SEARCH

To search for a bill, resolution or constitutional amendment; select the session, House of origin, "search by" option and type the keywords and/or author name(s).

Session: (2011-2012) Current ▾

House: Both ▾

Limit to: All ▾ hits

Search by one of the following:

Bill Number

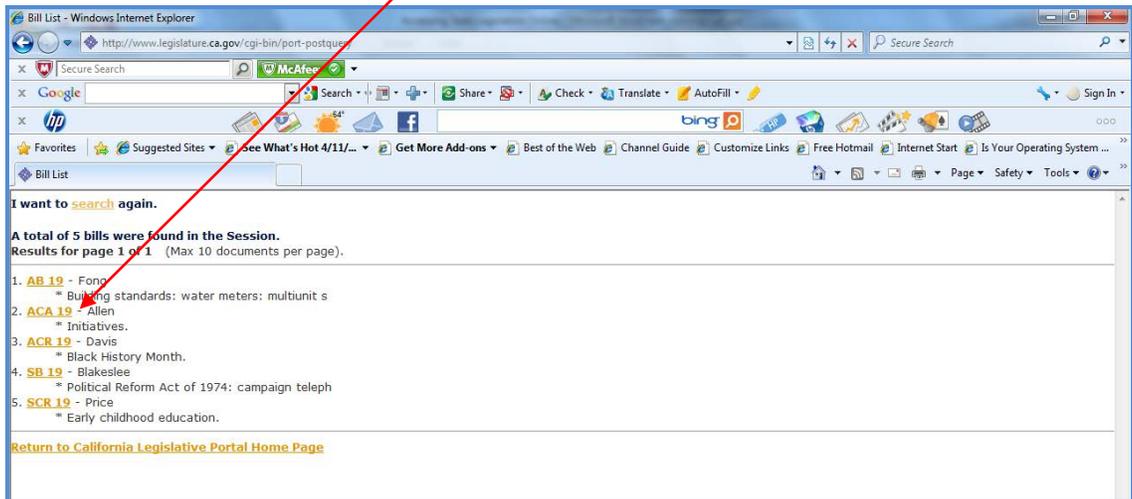
Author(s)

Keyword(s)

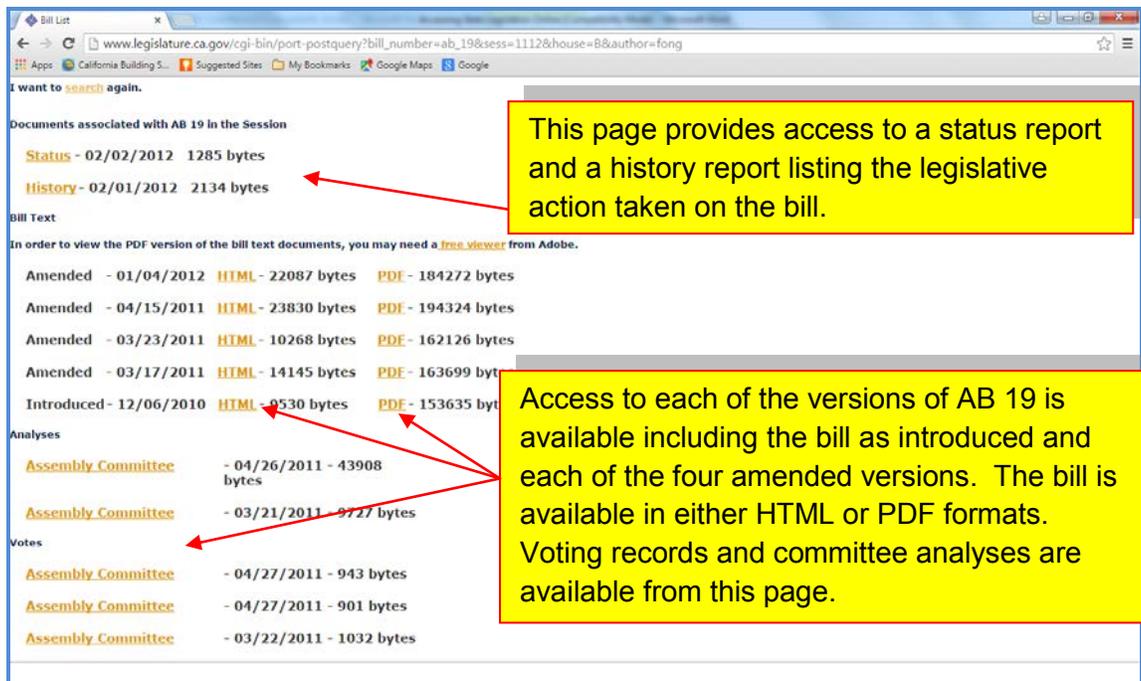
Search Parameters Search

The "Bill Information" link shown above on the left side of page 10 works in the same manner.

The search for a bill numbered "19" in the 2011-2012 session, in either the Senate or Assembly resulted in the page below. There are five bills or resolutions with the number 19. The brief description of the subject of each bill or resolution will help you find the bill you are searching for. AB 19 is said to relate to Building Standards and water meters. Next we will click on the link for AB 19.



After selecting AB 19 from the list above, the screen shown below will appear.



If we select the PDF version of the bill as amended on 04/15/2011, it will appear as shown below.

By clicking on the link to AB 19 above, the next screen provides the bill.

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 15, 2011
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 23, 2011
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 17, 2011
CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL **No. 19**

Introduced by Assembly Member Fong

December 6, 2010

An act to add Chapter 4.2 (commencing with Section 1963.010) to Title 5 of Part 4 of Division 3 of the Civil Code, and to add Chapter 8.5 (commencing with Section 537) to Division 1 of the Water Code, relating to water.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 19, as amended, Fong. Building standards: water meters: multiunit structures.

The Water Measurement Law requires every water purveyor to require, as a condition of new water service on and after January 1, 1992, the installation of a water meter to measure water service. That law also requires urban water suppliers to install water meters on specified service connections, and to charge water users based on the actual volume of deliveries as measured by those water meters in accordance with a certain timetable.

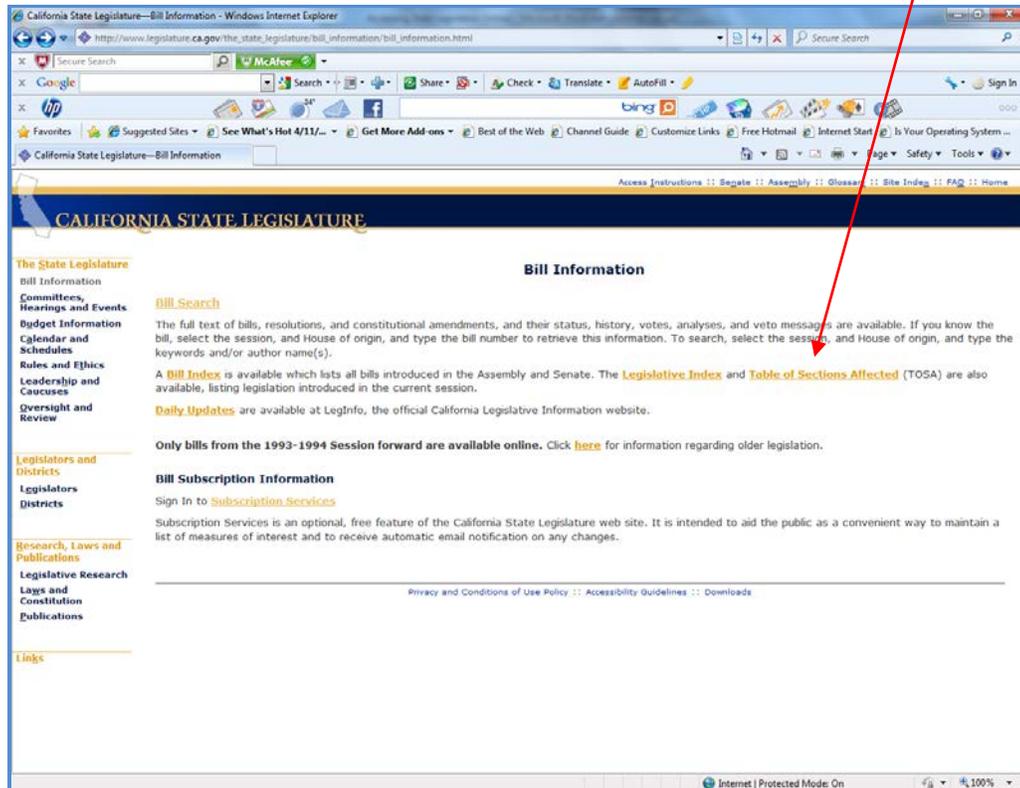
This bill would require a water purveyor that provides water service to a newly constructed multiunit residential structure or newly constructed mixed-use residential and commercial structure, *including a structure that is part of a common interest development*, that submits an application for a water connection after January 1, 2014, to ~~either adopt a general policy to require the installation of either a water meter,~~

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That is all there is to it! A little practice and you can be cruising through California's Legislative website with ease.

Let's look at another way to find a bill. If you know the area of state law that you have a particular interest in and you want to find any legislation proposing changes to that portion of law, you can use the **Table of Sections Affected** feature. First, go back to the legislature's front page (shown on page 10) and click on the link for **Bill Information**.

Here is the *Table of Sections Affected* feature on the Bill Information page of the Legislature's website.



Let's say that you are interested in any bill that would change the provisions of the California Building Standards Law, which is the name for Health and Safety Code, Division 13, Part 2.5, spanning from Section 18901 to Section 18949.31. You can click on the link to the *Table of Sections Affected* and search for bills proposing changes to the California Building Standards Law (CBSL), or any other law you are interested in. Let's try it. The next image is the results of clicking on the *Table of Sections Affected* link.

In order to view these publications, you may need a [free viewer](#) from Adobe.

[Table of Sections Affected - PDF \(BPC - BUDGET\)](#)

[Table of Sections Affected - HTML \(BPC - BUDGET ITEMS\)](#)

[Home Page](#) [Feedback](#)

In the next screen you must select either the PDF or HTML format. Let's select the PDF and see the results below.

After selecting the PDF format, you are shown a document listing the various state laws in alphabetical order. For our example, you must scroll down until you find the Health and Safety Code. Then look for a section number within the California Building Standards Law in Health and Safety Code, Division 13, Part 2.5, with Sections 18901 to Section 18949.31. Here, Section 18927 is shown to be proposed for amendment by AB 576.

Hold your cursor over the "576" and it becomes a link to the bill. Click on it to access the bill. AB 567 is shown on the next page.

A-70

TABLE OF SECTIONS AFFECTED

HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE—Continued

Section	AB	SB	Chapter	Effect	Section	AB	SB	Chapter	Effect
11750	1432	—	—	Am	17920.3	—	655	—	Am
Div. 10.5,	—	—	—	—	17921.3	723	—	—	Am
Pr. 2,	—	—	—	—	17922.14	—	7	—	Ad
Ch. 1,	—	—	—	—	18080	—	414	—	Am
Art. 2,	—	—	—	—	18551	—	434	—	Am
heading	—	—	—	—	18897	—	476	—	Am
(Sec. 11760.5	—	—	—	—	18897.1	—	476	—	R & Ad
et seq.)	731	—	—	R (as ad by	18897.8	—	476	—	Ad
				Stats. 1979,	18927	576	—	—	Am
				Ch. 620)	18940.7	764	—	—	Ad
Div. 10.5,	—	—	—	—	19952.5	662	—	—	Ad
Pr. 2,	—	—	—	—	19952.5	662	—	—	Am
Ch. 2,	—	—	—	—	Div. 20,	—	—	—	—
Art. 4,	—	—	—	—	Ch. 1.5,	—	—	—	—
heading	—	—	—	—	heading	—	—	—	—
(Sec. 11780	—	—	—	R	(Sec. 24300	—	435	—	Ad
et seq.)	731	—	—	Ad	et seq.)	—	435	—	Ad
11834.025	848	—	—	Ad	24300	—	—	—	Ad
11834.026	848	—	—	Ad	Div. 20,	—	—	—	—
11834.03	848	—	—	Am	Ch. 5,	—	—	—	—
11834.05	848	—	—	Ad & R	heading	—	—	—	—
11834.36	848	—	—	Am	(Sec. 24600	—	—	—	—
Div. 10.10,	—	—	—	—	et seq.)	216	—	—	Ad
heading	—	—	—	—	24600	216	—	—	Ad
(Sec.	—	—	—	—	25110.8.2	—	612	—	Ad
11999.30	—	—	—	R	25117	—	612	—	Am
et seq.)	731	—	—	Ad	25131	—	751	—	Am
11999.30	731	—	—	R	25141	263	—	—	Am
12519	467	—	—	Am	—	—	612	—	Am
13009	—	663	—	Am	25143.15	—	612	—	Ad
13113.95	1411	—	—	Ad	25150	263	—	—	Am
13143.3	731	—	—	Ad(RN)	25150.7	—	162	—	Am
13143.3	731	—	—	Am&RN (as	Div. 20,	—	—	—	—
				ad by Stats.	Ch. 6.5,	—	—	—	—
				1973, Ch.	Art. 5.5,	—	—	—	—
				1204)	heading	—	—	—	—
Div. 12.5,	—	—	—	—	(Sec.	25159.10	—	—	—
Ch. 3,	—	—	—	—	et seq.)	731	—	—	Am&RN (as
heading	—	—	—	—					ad by Sec. 1,
(Sec. 16500	—	—	—	Am&RN (as					Stats. 1985,
et seq.)	731	—	—	ad by Sec. 2,					Ch. 1591)
				Stats. 1989,	Div. 20,	—	—	—	—
				Ch. 953)	Ch. 6.5,	—	—	—	—
Div. 12.5,	—	—	—	—	Art. 5.6,	—	—	—	—
Ch. 3.5,	—	—	—	—	heading	—	—	—	—
heading	—	—	—	—	(Sec.	25159.10	—	—	—
(Sec. 16500	—	—	—	—	et seq.)	731	—	—	Ad(RN)
et seq.)	731	—	—	Ad(RN)	et seq.)	731	—	—	Am
16500	731	—	—	Am	25163.3	731	—	—	Am
17920	—	655	—	Am	25173	276	—	—	Am

By selecting "576", this page will appear. Then you may select to open a PDF or HTML version of the bill. Below is the PDF version of AB 576.

BILL DOCUMENTS

I want to again.

Documents associated with AB 576 in the Session

[Status](#) - 03/09/2015 1092 bytes
[History](#) - 03/09/2015 1091 bytes

In order to view the PDF version of the bill text documents, you may need a [free viewer](#) from Adobe.

[Introduced](#) - 02/24/2015 [PDF](#) - 157685 bytes [HTML](#) - 13768 bytes

This is AB 576 that we found by using the *Table of Sections Affected* available at the Legislature's website.

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL **No. 576**

Introduced by Assembly Member Ting

February 24, 2015

An act to amend Section 18927 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to housing.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 576, as introduced, Ting. California Building Standards Commission: advisory panels.

The California Building Standards Law establishes the California Building Standards Commission and requires the commission to appoint an executive director. The law authorizes the commission to appoint advisory panels from the design professions, the building and construction industry, the affected general public, and interested governmental agencies to advise the commission and its staff.

This bill would authorize the commission to also appoint individuals from the energy and resource efficiency professions to an advisory panel. This bill would state the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation that would promote the creation of energy and resource efficient homes in California.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. It is the intent of the Legislature to enact
- 2 legislation to promote the creation of energy and resource efficient
- 3 homes in California.

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Now you know how to find bills using the ***Table of Sections Affected*** available on the Bill Information page of the Legislature's website. If this bill is of particular interest and you wish to watch it through the legislative process, you may subscribe to receive email notices of activity with this bill. To do so, go to the Bill Information page (shown on page 14) and click on the ***Subscription Services***.

There are additional tools provided on the California Law website that can be helpful when you don't know the bill number or what code of state law it may be proposing for change. Go back to the screen shown on page 11 above and note the **Keyword** search function. Instructions are provided, but simply select one code, then enter a word in the keyword search box and click on the **Search** key. The system will search for bills containing that word. This is a time consuming search, but when you don't know the bill number, it may be the only way to find what you need.

Method 2: The second of the Legislature's websites may be accessed at <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billSearchClient.xhtml>, which is shown below. This site has some features the previously discussed website does not. And, there are features here that are not on the other site. It may be that in time the Legislature will bring all features to this site and retire the other.

You may access state laws and legislative bills, and subscribe for legislative alerts and save favorite bills for follow-up work.

Bill Search - Windows Internet Explorer
http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billSearchClient.xhtml

California LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION

skip to content home accessibility FAQ feedback login

Quick Search:
Bill Number go

Bill Information >> Bill Search

Bill Search Text Search

Bill Number: Session Year: 2015 - 2016 Keyword(s):
House: Both Author: All For a phrase: "Surround it with Quotes"
Statute Year: Chapter Number:

Search Clear

3 items remaining) Waiting for http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billSearchClient.xhtml... 115%

You may access bills by the bill number, author name, chapter number, or search for bills using Keywords just like with the first website discussed. Searches may be by phrases as well.

Let's practice using this site by entering bill number AB 396 of the 2015-2016 Legislative sessions. That bill as it was introduced in February 2015 is shown (in part) below.

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the California Legislature website. The page title is "Bill Text - AB-396 Housing discrimination: criminal record." The URL is "http://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160AB396&search_keywords=".

The page content includes:

- Navigation tabs: Text, Votes, History, Bill Analysis, Today's Law As Amended, Compare Versions, Status, Comments To Author.
- Share icons for Facebook and Twitter.
- Header: CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2015–2016 REGULAR SESSION
- Section: **ASSEMBLY BILL** No. 396
- Author: Introduced by Assembly Member Jones-Sawyer
- Date: February 19, 2015
- Description: An act to amend Section 12955 of, and to add Section 12955.05 to, the Government Code, relating to housing discrimination.
- Section: LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST
- Text: AB 396, as introduced, Jones-Sawyer. Housing discrimination: criminal record.
- Text: Existing law generally prohibits housing discrimination with respect to the personal characteristics of race, color, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, ancestry, familial status, source of income, disability, or genetic information. Existing law includes within this prohibition, in addition to the sale or rental of housing accommodation, related activities such as housing finance and real estate transaction services.
- Text: This bill would include a criminal record as a basis upon which housing discrimination is prohibited. The bill would specify that the prohibition is qualified by a requirement to the contrary in federal law. The bill would provide that criminal record includes a record regarding arrests and detentions that did not result in a conviction, as specified. The bill make technical, correctional changes.
- Text: Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no
- Text: THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:
- Text: SECTION 1. Section 12955 of the Government Code is amended to read:

You may read or print the bill from the screen shown on the previous page. One very useful feature at this site is ***Today's Law As Amended***.

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the California Legislature's website. The page title is "Today's Law As Amended - Windows Internet Explorer". The URL is "http://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml". The page content is for bill AB-396, titled "Housing discrimination: criminal record." (2015-2016). A navigation menu at the top includes "Bill Information", "California Law", "My Subscriptions", and "My Favorites". Below the menu, there are tabs for "Text", "Votes", "History", "Bill Analysis", "Today's Law As Amended", "Compare Versions", "Status", and "Comments To Author". The "Today's Law As Amended" tab is selected, and a red arrow points from a yellow callout box to this tab. The callout box contains the text: "By selecting *Today's Law As Amended*, this screen appears. It shows the proposed amendments to the existing law." The main content area shows the text of Section 12955 of the Government Code, with several words highlighted in red to indicate proposed changes, such as "genetic information", "criminal record", "accommodation", "housing", and "assistance".

The *Today's Law As Amended* feature is very useful because the print or screen version of a legislative bill will illustrate only the most recent amendments. So as a bill proceeds through the legislative process and is amended, only the most recent amendments are illustrated. With this feature, all amendments are identified regardless of when they were added to the bill.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Here are some good rules to remember when working with legislation.

1. A bill is only a proposal until it is enacted. To enact a bill it must be voted on and approved by both the Senate and the Assembly. Then the bill must go to the Governor who has 30 days to approve and sign the bill, or to veto the bill. If the Governor does not act to approve or veto the bill within the 30 days period, the bill becomes law without the Governor's action.
2. A vetoed bill may be acted on by the legislature to override the Governor's veto. A vetoed bill requires a 2/3 vote for passage in both the Senate and Assembly in order to become law overriding the Governor's veto. Overrides do not occur often.

3. Remember that bill numbers are reused from session to session. The chapter number is the permanent identification of an enacted bill. Here are examples of the proper way to reference a bill that has become law.

- AB 100 of the 2011 legislative session that became Chapter 551 of the 2011 Statutes, or;
- AB 100 (Chapter 551 of the 2011 Statutes).

Without the chapter numbers, you will create confusion because most likely there will be an AB 100 in every legislative session.

Note: The numbers used in these examples are fictitious.

4. When two bills enact new or amendments to the same section of law, the bill chaptered last takes precedence. Many times when there are two bills proposing amendments to the same section of law, there will be instructions in the bill language as to which bill will take precedence if both bills are enacted. When a chaptered bill is superseded by a later chaptered bill, it is said that the bill was "chaptered out".

Example: AB 100, Chapter 551 of the 2011 Statutes, and SB 200, Chapter 676 of the 2011 Statutes, both enacted new Section 12345 of the California Health and Safety Code. SB 200 was chaptered last, so it takes precedence and AB 100 was chaptered out and has no effect.

Note: The numbers used in this example are fictitious.

We recommend practicing the steps provided in this document in order to become completely familiar with the process. Explore all the links provided on the Legislature's websites. You may find information and services that are particularly helpful. Good luck.

Contact our office if additional clarification is needed.

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