

BULLETIN: FIRE & LIFE SAFETY COMPLIANCE PROGRAM AND FEE SCHEDULE

PURPOSE: To ensure clients are only charged for the services they require, the Division of the State Architect (DSA) is implementing a separate fee schedule for the Fire and Life Safety Compliance program, effective December 1, 2014.

BACKGROUND: In 1992, California Government Code section 14963 (added by Stats. 1991, Ch. 865, Sec. 5), directed DSA to assume responsibility for Fire and Life Safety code compliance without additional staff or fees. Since that time, significant increases in the complexity and scope of both Structural codes and Fire and Life Safety codes have increased the time required for project review and approval.

Additionally, grouping the Structural Safety and Fire and Life Safety compliance programs under a single fee structure required clients only seeking one of these services to pay for both.

To address this situation, on October 21, 2014, the California Building Standards Commission approved 2013 California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 1, Chapter 4, Group 2, Safety of Construction of Public Schools: Fire & Life Safety, Articles 1 through 6. These building standards establish separate Fire and Life Safety Compliance regulations, along with associated fees for the plan review and approval, and oversight of construction for K through 12 public school and community college district projects over which DSA has jurisdiction. These regulations also:

- Ensure clients pay only for services they require.
- Improve transparency and accountability for the scope and cost of the Fire and Life Safety Program.
- Reinforce the statutory mandate that program fees cover operational costs.
- Present the opportunity for long-term benefits from increased oversight, including reduced loss of life and property damage from earthquakes, fires and other disasters.

EFFECTIVE DATE AND NEW FEE SCHEDULE: The Fire and Life Safety Compliance filing fee for project applications received by DSA on or after December 1, 2014 shall be calculated as follows:

- three-tenths of one percent (0.3%) of the first \$1,000,000 of the estimated project cost; plus
- two-tenths of one percent (0.2%) of the project cost greater than \$1,000,000 up to and including \$5,000,000; plus
- one-tenth of one percent (0.1%) of the project cost greater than \$5,000,000 up to and including \$25,000,000; plus
- five one-hundredths of one percent (0.05%) of the project cost greater than \$25,000,000 up to and including \$100,000,000; plus
- one one-hundredth of one percent (0.01%) of the project cost above \$100,000,000;
- except that the minimum fee in any case shall be \$300.00.

FIRE & LIFE SAFETY COMPLIANCE PROGRAM AND FEE SCHEDULE**EXAMPLES OF NEW FILING FEE CALCULATION:**

(1) Estimated project cost = \$40,000		
0.3% x \$40,000	=	\$120.00
Filing fee is the minimum charge	=	\$300.00
(2) Estimated project cost = \$925,000		
0.3% x \$925,000	=	\$2,775.00
Filing fee	=	\$2,775.00
(3) Estimated project cost = \$3,840,000		
0.3% x \$1,000,000	=	\$3,000.00
0.2% x \$2,840,000	=	<u>\$5,680.00</u>
Filing fee	=	\$8,680.00
(4) Estimated project cost = \$7,260,000		
0.3% x \$1,000,000	=	\$3,000.00
0.2% x \$4,000,000	=	\$8,000.00
0.1% x \$2,260,000	=	<u>\$2,260.00</u>
Filing fee	=	\$13,260.00
(5) Estimated project cost = \$26,500,000		
0.3% x \$1,000,000	=	\$3,000.00
0.2% x \$4,000,000	=	\$8,000.00
0.1% x \$20,000,000	=	\$20,000.00
0.05% x \$1,500,000	=	<u>\$750.00</u>
Filing fee	=	\$31,750.00

DETERMINATION OF FILING FEES: The DSA Fire and Life Safety Compliance filing fee is determined by applying the fee schedule to the estimated project cost, as reported by the project owner, at the time of application for DSA review of construction documents (i.e. plans, specifications, and other documents).

When the actual project cost exceeds the estimated cost, a further fee may be due to DSA, equal to the difference between the filing fee paid and the amount computed in accordance with the fee schedule using the actual cost of the project. The actual cost of the project is reported by the project owner using the Statement of Final Actual Project Cost (form DSA 168).

The fee schedule in effect at the time of filing shall apply throughout the duration of the project. Therefore, projects with applications filed on or before November 30, 2014 and reporting actual cost of the project on or after December 1, 2014, will not be subject to the new Fire and Life Safety Compliance fee schedule.

For a project requiring Structural, Fire and Life Safety, and Access Compliance reviews, the total fee due is the sum of these three fees. For a project requiring Fire and Life Safety and Access Compliance reviews only, the total fee due is the sum of these two fees.