



The California Coastal Commission is a state agency established by voter initiative in 1972 (Proposition 20) and made permanent by the Legislature in the California Coastal Act of 1976.

The California Coastal Commission works in partnership with local governments to protect shoreline public access and recreation, terrestrial and marine habitats, views of the coast and scenic coastal areas, agricultural lands, and more, by regulating proposed development along the coast and in nearby areas.

Through its forty-plus year history of ensuring that development proposals are consistent with the Coastal Act, the Commission's actions have resulted in more than 2,000 easements for public access statewide and resulted in tens of thousands of acres statewide of created or restored sensitive habitats and agricultural lands, viewsheds and sensitive habitats placed into permanent legal protection.

You too can help protect the California coastline! If you're planning a project in the Coastal Zone, or if you see development occurring in the Coastal Zone and want to find out if it has a permit, please call your local government or the local Commission district office to learn more.

## COMMISSION DISTRICT OFFICES

(Listed by county served)

### NORTH COAST

Del Norte, Humboldt, and  
Mendocino Counties  
1385 8th Street, Suite 130  
Arcata, CA 95521  
**(707) 826-8950**

### NORTH CENTRAL COAST

Sonoma, Marin, San Francisco, and  
San Mateo Counties  
45 Fremont Street, Suite 2000  
San Francisco, CA 94105-2219  
**(415) 904-5260 or  
(415) 904-5200**

### CENTRAL COAST

Santa Cruz, Monterey, and  
San Luis Obispo Counties  
725 Front Street, Suite 300  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060-4508  
**(831) 427-4863**

### SOUTH CENTRAL COAST

Santa Barbara, Ventura, and  
Los Angeles Counties  
89 South California Street, Suite 200  
Ventura, CA 93001-2801  
**(805) 585-1800**

### SOUTH COAST

Los Angeles and Orange Counties  
200 Ocean Gate, 10th Floor  
Long Beach, CA 90802-4416  
**(562) 590-5071**

### SAN DIEGO COAST

San Diego County  
7575 Metropolitan Drive Suite 103  
San Diego, CA 92108-4402  
**(619) 767-2370**

### ENERGY AND OCEAN RESOURCES

45 Fremont Street, Suite 2000  
San Francisco, CA 94105-2219  
**(415) 904-5200**



## WHEN DO YOU NEED A COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT?

DO YOUR PART TO HELP  
PROTECT SENSITIVE HABITATS,  
WATER QUALITY, SCENIC  
VIEWS, PUBLIC ACCESS  
AND OTHER  
COASTAL RESOURCES



**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

45 Fremont Street, Suite 2000  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
Phone (415) 904-5200  
Fax (415) 904-5400  
<http://www.coastal.ca.gov>

Whatever activities you may be considering, you can find out whether coastal development permits are required and how to apply by contacting your city or county planning department and/or the State Coastal Commission district office nearest your project site.

The criteria for determining whether a permit is required are set forth in the State Coastal Act, Coastal Commission regulations, and/or the applicable local government's Local Coastal Program (LCP).<sup>1</sup> These criteria help to ensure that development along the coast occurs in a way that conserves, sustains, and makes prudent use of California's natural and recreational coastal resources.

Learning about the permit requirements early in the planning phase, and before beginning work, can save you time and money. To access permit applications, or to learn more about the Coastal Commission's work, please visit our homepage at: <http://www.coastal.ca.gov>.

**Green building projects may be eligible for a 40% discount on permit application fees. For more about this offer, visit our website:**  
<http://www.coastal.ca.gov/climate/feereduction.html>

<sup>1</sup> More information on LCPs can be accessed here: <http://www.coastal.ca.gov/lcps.html>

<sup>2</sup> For a full definition, see Coastal Act Section 30106: <http://www.coastal.ca.gov/coastact.pdf>

## WHEN IS A COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT REQUIRED?

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Generally, any "development" activity in the Coastal Zone requires a Coastal Development Permit from the Coastal Commission or local government with a certified LCP. The width of the Coastal Zone varies, but it can extend up to five miles inland from the shore, including private and public property, and three miles out to sea.

"Development" is broadly defined by the Coastal Act.<sup>2</sup> Examples of development include, but are not limited to:

- Demolition, construction, replacement, or changes to the size of a structure
- Grading, removal of, or placement of rock, soil, or other materials
- Clearing of vegetation in, or that provides, sensitive habitat
- Impeding access to the beach or public recreational trails
- Altering property lines, such as through a lot line adjustment or subdivision
- Changing the intensity of use of land, such as using a single family home as a commercial wedding venue
- Repair or maintenance activities that could result in environmental impacts

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THIS PAMPHLET IS INTENDED ONLY FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES AND DOES NOT CONSTITUTE LEGAL ADVICE. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONSULT THE COASTAL ACT (IN THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE, DIVISION 20) AND THE COMMISSION'S REGULATIONS (CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 14, DIVISION 5.5)

Certain activities may be exempt from permit requirements. A few examples of types of development that are generally exempt are listed below.

- Some improvements to existing legal structures that do not pose an environmental risk and are not located in or adjacent to areas with certain sensitive coastal resources or between the shore and the first public road
- Replacement in kind of most legal structures destroyed by certain disasters, provided it meets certain criteria
- Certain repair and maintenance activities that do not enlarge or replace the original structure, do not involve substantial risk of adverse environmental impact, and are not located in or adjacent to certain sensitive coastal resource areas
- Some temporary events that meet certain requirements, such as less than a 2 week duration, and no significant impacts to certain sensitive coastal resources, including public access
- Installation, testing, placement in service, or replacement of certain utility connections within an existing service facility

**Otherwise exempt improvements are more likely to require a permit if located on or adjacent to a wetland, sensitive habitat, bluff, cliff, beach, stream, bay or ocean.**

If you have any questions about whether your project requires a Coastal Development Permit, please contact your local Commission office or city/county planning department.

Undertaking non-exempt development activities without a Coastal Development Permit is a violation of the Coastal Act and may result in an enforcement action.