



PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
BUILDING & SAFETY DIVISION

SOILS REPORT EXEMPTION REQUIREMENTS

The 2019 California Building Code (CBC) Section 1803.2 and Residential Code Section R401.4 define when a site specific foundation and soils investigation for building and foundation systems are required. This guideline, based on Policy #13 of the ICC Tri-County Uniform Code Committee (TUCC), provides the criteria to determine what projects may be exempted from a soils investigation. It also delineates the minimum requirements for the design and construction of the foundation systems.

SOILS REPORT EXEMPTION GUIDELINES:

1. The following are general criteria to determine when foundation and soils investigations may be exempted.
 - a. A site-specific study may be exempted for buildings that are classified in risk Category I per CBC Table 1604.5 (i.e. agricultural facilities, temporary facilities, sheds, private detached garages, and pools).
 - b. Unless otherwise required by the local jurisdiction, a site-specific study may be exempted for projects meeting the following criteria:
 - i. New single family or duplex residential buildings classified as R- 3 occupancy where buildings are no more than 500 square feet gross in area, two stories in height, and have no basement.
 - ii. Additions or alterations to single family or duplex residential buildings classified as R-3 occupancy where buildings are no more than 500 square feet gross in area, two stories in height, and have no basement.

Exception: For some sites, a waiver may be granted if the CA-registered Professional Engineer or Architect responsible for the design attests that they have examined the subject site and the observed the condition of the in situ building foundations, and have determined that, in their professional opinion, a soils report is not warranted for the subject project.

Such certification shall specifically describe the findings regarding those items that would otherwise prohibit the exemption, as described below.

This exemption shall not be granted to:

- Sites w/ slopes exceeding 1:6 (16.7%) where foundations are located.
- Sites where the proposed setbacks from slope top/bottom on slopes exceeding 1:3 (33.3%) slope is not in compliance with CRC R403.1.7
- Sites identified with a liquefaction or flood hazard
- Sites where known problem soils exist (e.g. fat clays, fill, landslides, etc.)
- Sites where floors below grade occur and a high water table exists
- Sites where existing buildings on the subject site are exhibiting evidence of foundation movement or distress.



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DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS:

When a site specific foundation and soils investigation is exempted, the building and foundation systems shall comply with the following general guidelines on the basis of their location:

1. The maximum allowable foundation pressure shall not exceed 1500 psf.
2. The minimum depth of footings shall be 18 inches below the undisturbed ground surface.
3. The new foundation type shall be compatible with the existing foundation.
4. The maximum allowable lateral bearing pressure shall not exceed 100 psf/ft.
5. Allowable sliding resistance = 130 psf x footing soil contact area but not to exceed 0.5 x dead load on footing.
6. Allowable Frictional Resistance for Piers = 250 psf
7. Specified compressive strength of concrete shall not be less than 2500 psi.

***NOTE:** Exemption from the foundation and soils investigation requirements shall not be deemed to grant authorization for any work to be performed in any manner in violation of the requirements set forth in Chapter 18 of the CBC, including meeting setbacks from ascending or descending slopes per CBC section 1808.7.*