



City of Lake Forest

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Building Division

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Effective Date

1/2/2026

Residential Bathroom Remodel Requirements

Applicable Code

2025 CALIFORNIA CODES

Overview:

Bathroom remodels generally require permits and compliance with applicable building codes. A bathroom remodel includes the replacement and/or relocation of vanity cabinets, toilets, sinks, tubs, & showers, replacement/changes to lighting, outlets, switches, vent fan replacement and removal/replacement of drywall and/ or wallboard.

The replacement of towel bars, mirrors, paint, and floor coverings, where no other work is included, are considered maintenance items and permits are **not** required.

If a permit is required, it must be obtained prior to the start of the remodel. This handout is for information and reference only and is not a substitute for plans prepared for each project.

Required documents for Permit submittal:

At a minimum, the existing bathroom layout and the proposed bathroom layout drawings or plans—with the details specified below clearly called out—must be submitted along with the complete Building, Electrical, Mechanical, and Plumbing permit applications for permit processing.

☒ Existing and Proposed bathroom Layouts/Plans

(Must be drawn to scale, each on a separate page, and include a legend, address, and complete scope of work)

☒ Drawings must show the location of all of the following items:

- ☒ Cabinetry
- ☒ Plumbing Fixtures (Showers, bathtubs, water closets, sinks, etc.)
- ☒ Light Fixtures, Outlets, GFCI Outlets, Switches
- ☒ Vent Fan

All fixtures and appliances listed above must be labeled on the proposed layout as follows: **(N)** for New, **(E)** for Existing, and **(R/R)** for Remove & Replace.

➔ See an example of the kitchen layouts on the back.

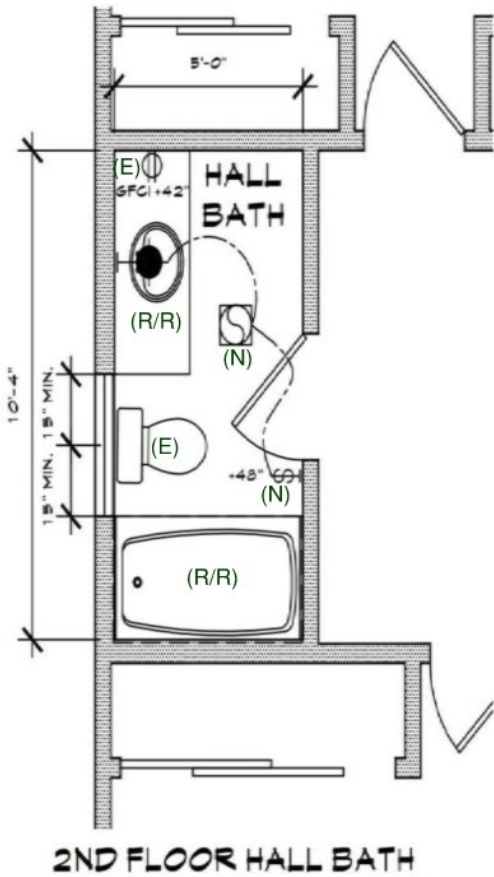
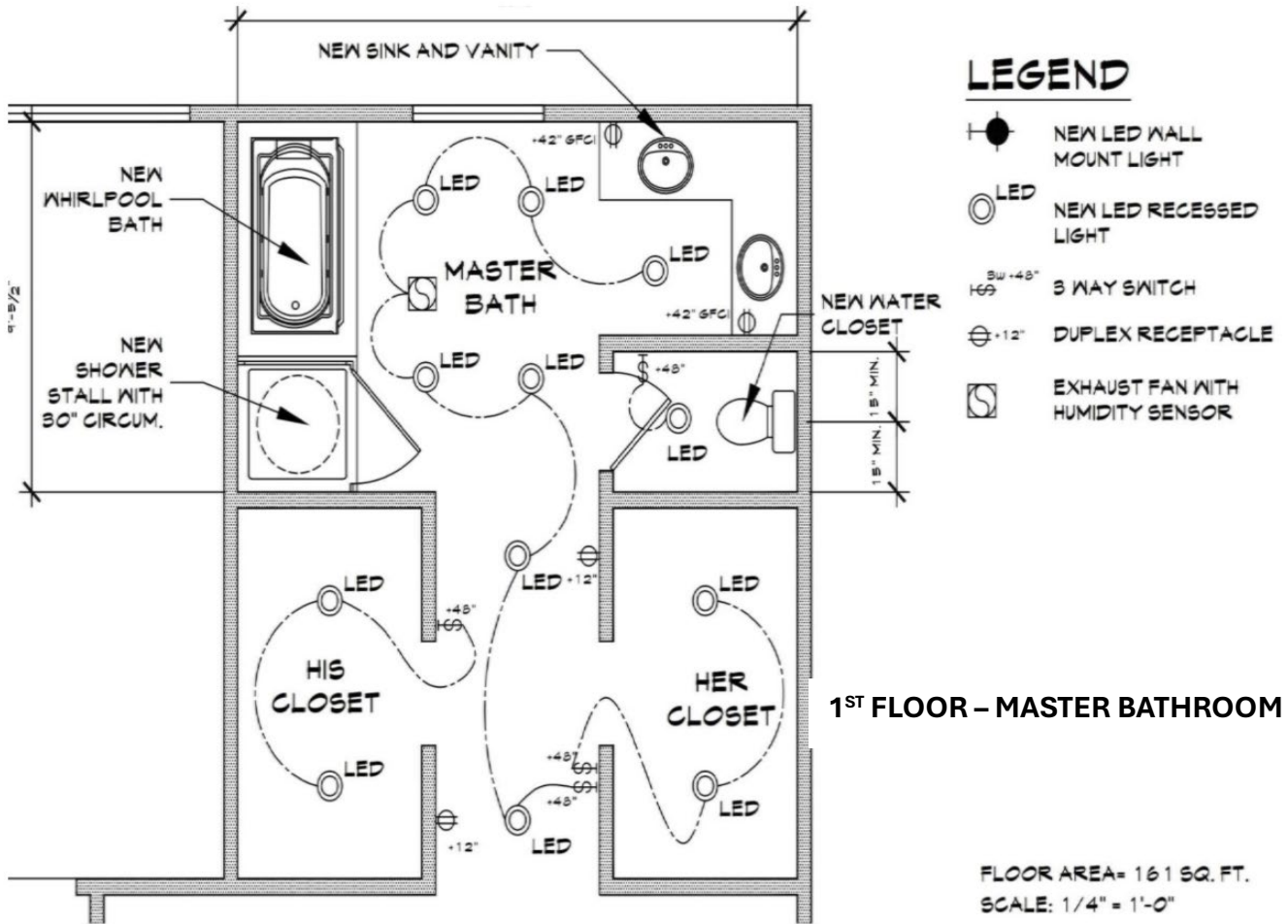
Required Inspections:

The required inspections for a bathroom remodel vary depending on the scope of work. However, in general, rough inspections in every discipline—including building, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical—must be completed prior to any final inspections.

Key rough inspections include, but are not limited to, framing, rough plumbing, rough wiring, rough mechanical (ductwork), insulation, shower pan and waterproofing, and drywall.

Once all work is complete and all fixtures (such as sinks, toilets, lights, and fans) are fully installed and functional, schedule all four final inspections.

PROPOSED BATHROOM LAYOUT



SCOPE OF WORK:

MASTER BATHROOM: Full remodel to include new plum. Fixtures, lights, outlets, switches, and vent fan

2ND FL HAL BATH: Remove/Replace bathtub and sink, (N) vent fan, light, and switch.

JOB ADDRESS

12345 Building St, Lake Forest, CA 92630

The Following is a listing of the minimum code requirements applicable to a bathroom remodel permit, based on the 2025 California Code Cycle, and the California Civil Code.

SB 407 Requirements

All plumbing fixtures for all residential buildings built and available for use on or before January 1, 1994 must be replaced with water conserving plumbing fixtures.

Lighting

- No electrical fixtures within 3' horizontally and 8' above bathtub/shower. Recessed lighting at bathtub/shower shall be suitable for damp locations and provided with a cover [CEC 410.10(D)].
- Bathrooms lighting shall have at least one high efficacy luminaires or controlled by an occupancy sensor or vacancy sensor, it shall have a manual "On" switch [CEnC 150.0(k)2. I].
- Recessed luminaires shall be high efficacy and shall not be screw based. Luminaires installed in an insulated ceiling shall be I.C. (insulation contact) rated and AT (airtight).

Mechanical

- Each bathroom shall be mechanically vented and be ENERGY STAR compliant and be ducted to terminate outside the building. Controlled by a humidity control, capable of manual or automatically adjustment of relative humidity between ≤ 50 percent to a maximum of 80 percent. Exhaust fans shall be capable of providing a minimum of 50 cfm intermittently or 20 cfm continuous ventilation [CMC Chapter 4, CGBS 4.506.1, CRC 325.2].
- Back draft dampers are required on bathroom ventilation fans; fans must vent through an approved duct and shall terminate not less than 3' from an opening or 10 feet of property line [CMC 502.2.1].

Plumbing

- Where two separate handles control the hot & cold water, the left-handed handle, when facing the fixture shall control the hot water [CPC 417.5].
- Shower head shall not be discharged directly at the entrance of the shower [CPC 408.9].
- Showers shall have a waste outlet and fixture tailpiece not less than 2 inches in diameter [CPC 408.4].
- All shower compartments shall have a minimum finished interior of 1024 square inches and shall be capable of encompassing a 30-inch diameter circle [CPC 408.7]. The curb may encroach on these size requirements. All surfaces shall be waterproof up to 72 inches above the drain inlet [CRC R327.2]. Thresholds shall be of sufficient width to accommodate a minimum 22-inch clear egress opening from the shower [CPC 408.6]. Curb-less showers require waterproofing of the whole bathroom floor as this is labeled a wet location
- Water closets are required to be a minimum 15" from center to wall, 24" clear in front of water closet (toilet) [CPC 402.5].
- Maximum 3 water closets on a 3" main sewer drain [CPC Table 703.2].
- Minimum 12"x12" minimum access to slip joint tub trap and whirlpool tub motor [CPC 402.10, 409.6].
- Lavatory sinks require a minimum of 24 inches front clearance [CPC 402.5].

Electrical

- A minimum of (1) 20-amp circuit is required for bathroom receptacles [CEC 210.11(C)3]. This circuit shall not contain other outlets, except where the 20-ampere circuit supplies a single bathroom, receptacles for other equipment within the same bathroom shall be permitted to be supplied in accordance with CEC 210.23 (B).
- At least one electrical outlet shall be installed within 3' of the outside edge of each bathroom sink and be located on wall or partition that is adjacent to the sink or sink countertop, located on the countertop, or installed on the side or face of the sink cabinet. In no case shall the receptacle be more than 12" below the countertop or sink [CEC 210.52(D)].
- All bathroom outlets must be GFCI protected [CEC 210.8 (A)(1)].

Glazing in High Hazard Areas

- Glazing in walls or enclosures containing bathtubs or showers where the bottom of the glazing is less than 60" above the walking surface shall be tempered and identification of tempered glazing shall be acid etched; laser etched or embossed [CRC 324.1, 324.4.5].

Tile & Backing

- Water-resistant gypsum board (purple board) can be used as a tile backer board in areas that are not subject to direct exposure to water or high humidity [CRC R702.3.7]. Examples would be a wall behind a toilet or above a vanity countertop. Purple board cannot be used in a shower for direct application of tile. Other acceptable materials for application of tile in showers include cement board, fiber-cement or glass mat gypsum backers [CRC R702.4.2].

water Conserving Plumbing Fixtures

Type of Fixture	Non-Compliant	Water-Conserving Compliant
Water Closet (Toilet)	More than 1.6 Gallons/flush	1.28 Gallons/flush
Showerhead	More than 2.5 Gallons/minute	1.8 Gallons/minute at 80 psi
Faucet - Bathroom	More than 2.2 Gallons/minute	1.2 Gallons/minute at 60 psi

