

ACTIVE OIL WELL SETBACK REQUIREMENTS



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT FIRE PREVENTION DIVISION

01/04

CONSTRUCTION ADJACENT TO OIL WELLS

The 2013 Los Angeles County Fire Code Section 5706.3 requires the buildings not necessary to the operation of the well shall not be constructed within 100 feet of the oil well and 300 feet if the building is used as a place of assembly, institution or school. The Fire Code allows the Chief to approve the use of alternate materials and methods, provided that he finds that the proposed design meets the intent of the code and is at least equivalent to that which is prescribed by the code. Due to the uniqueness of the oil field and pumping operations in the City of Signal Hill the following alternate methods of protection are approved. Mitigation may be provided at the well or at the structure as listed below:

Mitigation at the well (all occupancies)

- Maintain a minimum 50-foot setback from the building to the oil well wellhead.
- Install an in ground concrete cellar box around each wellhead.
- Install steel plate covers on the cellar boxes with a maximum open area around the wellhead of 3 feet by 3 feet.
- Install float controlled automatic shut off switches in the cellar boxes to turn off the oil well pump should a leak develop. In the event the pump should become shut off reactivation of the pump must occur at the pump location.
- Activation of the float-controlled shut off switch shall initiate an alarm at an approved central station or a constantly attended location. The float control switch shall be tested at least once a month.
- A six-foot high concrete block wall shall be constructed between the oil well and the proposed structure.
- The well shall not be located in any required yard used for allowable area increase.

Mitigation at the structure (R-1 and R-3 occupancies)

- Maintain a minimum 50-foot setback from the building to the oil well wellhead.
- The exterior wall facing the oil well shall be one-hour fire resistive construction.

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- All openings on the exterior wall shall be protected by ¾ hour fire assemblies.

- The building shall be fire sprinklered throughout.

Mitigation at the structure (all other occupancies)

Location between 75 and 100 feet from the well:

- The exterior wall facing the oil well shall be one-hour fire resistive construction.
- All openings on the exterior wall shall be protected by ¾ hour fire assemblies.

Location between 50 and 75 feet from the well:

- The exterior wall facing the oil well shall be two-hour fire resistive construction.
- No glazed openings allowed. All other openings shall be protected by 1-1/2 hour fire assemblies.
- The building shall be fire sprinklered throughout.
- No combustible storage (or vegetation over 36" high) shall be allowed between the building and the oil well.
- The well shall not be located in any required yard used for allowable area increase.

Location between 35 and 50 feet from the well:

- Use all the "Mitigation at the well" measures listed above.
- The exterior wall facing the oil well shall be non-combustible four-hour fire resistive construction.
- No openings allowed.
- The building shall be fire sprinklered throughout.
- The well shall not be located in any required yard used for allowable area increase.
- There shall be a minimum distance between the well and pumping unit to the structure equal to 125% of the height of the exterior wall.