



# DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (HCD) FACTORY-BUILT HOUSING (FBH)

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### FBH: WHAT IS IT AND WHERE CAN IT BE INSTALLED?

**Q** - What is FBH?

**A** Factory-Built Housing (FBH) is a factory-constructed version of a site-built residential structure. FBH products, by definition, may include single or multifamily dwellings, apartments, condominiums, hotels, motels, dormitories, or components of those structures. FBH dwellings are always installed on a foundation designed to the Title 24, California Code of Regulations (California Building Standards Code), requirements and are under the jurisdiction of the local building department for installation permits and assembly of the structure once onsite. Once assembled onsite, there is no difference between FBH and site-built residential structures. (See Health and Safety Code §19971)

**Q** - Where can FBH be installed?

**A** FBH can be installed where other similar types of housing units are built or exist. Local requirements imposed on FBH may not differ substantially from requirements imposed on other residential buildings of the same size. FBH also may be installed on foundation systems in mobilehome parks. [See Health and Safety Code, §§18611 and 19993(b)]

**Q** - What are the HCD requirements for FBH manufacturers?

**A** Every manufacturer of FBH subject to requirements of Title 25, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3, Subchapter 1 shall obtain plan approval for each model, and shall obtain insignia for each unit manufactured. The manufacturer must have an HCD-approved Quality Assurance Agency and Design Approval Agency contract. The manufacturer shall maintain a quality control program, and the units shall be manufactured in accordance with the approved plans and shall be inspected as required by provisions of this subchapter. (See Title 25, California Code of Regulations, §3020)

## CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS, ALTERNATIVE METHODS AND LOCAL REQUIREMENTS

Q - What standards are FBH products designed to statewide?

A The design and fabrication of FBH shall be in accordance with the applicable building standards contained in the California Building Standards Code, Parts 2, 2.5, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 (Title 24, California Code of Regulations). (See Title 25, California Code of Regulations, §3070)

Q - As a manufacturer, is it possible to request an alternative means of construction for my FBH?

A Yes, the Alternative Approval (AA) process involves a manufacturer working with a contracted Design Approval Agency (HCD-approved third-party agency). The manufacturer submits plans (as approved by CA-registered engineer/architect) and supporting documentation for a third-party agency to adequately review the request for potential approval/concurrence. The manufacturer shall submit an AA request to its third-party agency which shall outline exactly the proposed design and how it meets or exceeds standards and provides all needed background information. (See Title 25, California Code of Regulations, §3071)

If the applicant receives approval from an HCD-approved third-party agency all materials (i.e., research, evaluation reports, plans, and other supporting documents) and fees shall be submitted to HCD, including a letter from the third-party agency on company letterhead noting their approval of the alternate means of construction. Submittal of these items to HCD shall be accompanied by a permit application, form [HCD 415](#). Submittal should be sent to the FBH Program at:

Department of Housing and Community Development  
Division of Codes and Standards  
Factory-Built Housing Program  
P.O. Box 31  
Sacramento, CA 95812-0031

When reviewing an AA, including the material submitted and evidence provided, both the HCD-approved third-party agency and HCD will verify that the material, appliance, installation, device, arrangement, method, or work offered is equivalent to what is prescribed in rules and regulations. It shall be equal in quality, strength, effectiveness, fire resistance, durability, and safety.

Q - What requirements are entirely reserved for the Local Enforcement Agency to impose on FBH projects?

A The following are specifically and entirely reserved to the local jurisdiction: Local use zone requirements, local snow load requirements, local wind pressure requirements, local fire zones, building setback, side and rear yard requirements, site development and property line requirements, as well as the review and regulation of architectural and aesthetic requirements. Local requirements imposed on FBH, pursuant to the authority granted by Health and Safety Code §19993(a), shall not vary substantially from the requirements imposed on other residential buildings of similar size. (See Health and Safety Code §19993)

## PLAN REVIEW AND INSPECTION

Q - Who reviews and approves FBH plans?

A A Design Approval Agency is a private organization approved by HCD to perform evaluation of FBH plans and specifications. (See Health and Safety Code, §§19969.3 and 19991.3)

Q - May the Local Enforcement Agency charge to review the HCD-approved FBH Plans?

A No. The Local Enforcement Agency may not require submittal of plans for review of any FBH manufactured, or to be manufactured, for determining compliance with any local construction requirement, except as provided in Health and Safety Code, Section 19993.  
(See Health and Safety Code §19981)

Q - May the Local Enforcement Agency charge to inspect the installation of FBH?

A The Local Enforcement Agency may, by ordinance, establish an inspection fee for the inspection of the installation of FBH. (See Health and Safety Code §19992)

Q - How does the Local Enforcement Agency assure that FBH plans and manuals are approved by HCD?

A The approval of the plans and quality control manual shall be verified by the stamp of approval of HCD or of the HCD-approved Design Approval Agency (third-party agency) on each plan or manual approved. (See Title 25, California Code of Regulations, §3046)

Q - Who inspects FBH during construction in the manufacturing facility?

A A Quality Assurance Agency is a private organization (third-party agency) approved by HCD to perform in-plant inspections of the construction of FBH.  
(See Health and Safety Code §19976.05)

#### THE LOCAL ENFORCEMENT AGENCY AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Q - Is there a document that helps identify the Local Enforcement Agency and HCD jurisdictional boundaries?

A Yes, HCD has created a “Handbook for Local Enforcement Agencies, Builders and the General Public” which covers such topics as jurisdictional boundaries. This handbook may be accessed through the following web link: <http://www.hcd.ca.gov/codes/factory-built-housing/> or by contacting the Department at (916) 445-3338.

Q - Who inspects the installation of FBH on-site?

A The local building department, not HCD, is responsible for inspecting the assembly and installation of FBH products on-site. FBH units must be assembled on-site in accordance with the approved installation instructions provided to the local building department.  
(See Health and Safety Code §19992)

Q - Is the Local Enforcement Agency required to inspect the installation of FBH?

A Local Enforcement Agencies shall enforce and inspect the installation of FBH.  
(See Health and Safety Code §19992)

Q - How does the Local Enforcement Agency know what to inspect during the installation of FBH?

A The installer of FBH shall submit at least one complete set of approved plans to the Local Enforcement Agency prior to installation. The approved plans will contain a resume of the installation work to be done on-site, and they will indicate the location on the unit where the department insignia of approval can be found for verification.  
(See Title 25, California Code of Regulations, §3081)

Q - How does the Local Enforcement Agency know FBH structures have been inspected and approved?

A FBH will bear an Insignia of Approval on each FBH product approved by HCD or the HCD-approved third-party agency. The Insignia of Approval signifies that the FBH structure, as identified in Title 25, California Code of Regulations, §3039, is deemed to comply with the requirements of all ordinances or regulations enacted by any city, city and county, county, or district which may be applicable to the construction of housing.  
(See Health and Safety Code §19981)

Q - Where will the FBH Insignia of Approval be applied?

A The approved plans will indicate the location on the unit(s) where the department Insignia of Approval can be found for verification. (See Title 25, California Code of Regulations, §3081)

#### ISSUES WITH FACTORY-BUILT HOUSING AFTER INSTALLATION

Q - What should I do if I have an FBH complaint?

A Complaints after the completion of FBH on-site are to be directed to the Local Enforcement Agency. Otherwise, contact the FBH Program at 916-445-3338.

Q - Can FBH be altered during or after installation on-site?

A FBH products shall not be in any way modified during or after installation unless approval for such modification is first obtained from the Local Enforcement Agency. (See Title 25, California Code of Regulations, §3082)

#### OTHER RESOURCES

Q - Where can I find more information on FBH Products?

A HCD has an FBH program webpage with useful information on FBH products and the laws and Regulations that govern the FBH Program at the following link: [www.hcd.ca.gov/codes/factory-built-housing/](http://www.hcd.ca.gov/codes/factory-built-housing/)

Q - How can I stay up-to-date on FBH news and information from HCD?

A Subscribe to the HCD News on the HCD website at [www.hcd.ca.gov](http://www.hcd.ca.gov)

A You may also access the FBH Information Bulletins page at the following: <http://www.hcd.ca.gov/codes/factory-built-housing/infobull.htm>. The FBH information Bulletins page is periodically updated with information applicable to FBH.