

Six Requirements When Selling Property

By Ernie Johnson

If you are planning on buying or selling an apartment building or single family dwelling, the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety has specific guidelines from which to follow.

1. Smoke Detectors – Smoke detectors, shall be mounted on the ceiling or wall of each existing room used for sleeping purposes and at a point centrally located on the wall or ceiling of the existing corridor or area giving access to these rooms. Where a dwelling unit has more than one story or where a dwelling unit has a basement, a detector shall be installed on each story or basement. Smoke detectors may be battery operated in Single Family Dwellings only. Smoke detectors in Two Family Dwellings, Condominiums and Apartments shall be hard wired and be equipped with a battery backup. Smoke detectors shall be located no more than 12 inches below the ceiling. (Section 91.8603. L.A.M.C. - Effective Aug 1, 1980)

2. Impact Hazard Glazing – Existing glass in every sliding glass panel of sliding-type doors, other than wardrobe doors, bathroom shower doors and French-type wooden doors shall be impact hazard glazing or an approved film may be installed on the glass. (Section 91.2406.7 L.A.M.C. Effective May 24, 1986)

3. Report of Residential Property Records (Form 9 or RPR) – Section 96.300 L.A.M.C. requires that the seller of Residential Property within the City of Los Angeles shall apply to the City for a report of Residential Property Records and Pending Special Assessment Liens (Form 9) and deliver such report to the buyer prior to entering into an agreement of sale or exchange of the Residential Property or prior to close of escrow in connection therewith. Refer to the forms section at this website for submitting a paper application or 161.149.221.222/autorens/Autores.nsf for submitting a request for RPR using the Internet.

4. Security Lighting and Locks – All apartment buildings (buildings containing three or more dwelling units) shall be provided with security lighting and locks. Exterior lighting shall be provided in parking areas, walkways, recreation areas and similar locations as well as at the entrance of each dwelling unit. Interior lighting shall be provided in recreation or service rooms and in parking garages. Locks shall be provided at all doors and windows leading into each dwelling unit. (Section 91.8607 L.A.M.C. - Effective January 12, 1998)

Commercial and Residential Buildings

5. Earthquake Gas Shut-Off Valves – Any commercial or residential building containing fuel gas piping shall require the installation of an EQSO valve. (Ordinance 171,874 - Effective February 5, 1998; Ordinance 170,158 - Effective July 1, 1995)

6. Water Conservation – Any commercial or residential building containing plumbing fixtures shall comply with the City's Water Conservation Ordinance. This program is administered by the Department of Water and Power. Please see Water Conservation Ordinance and Compliance.

Make sure your broker or real estate professional is familiar with these issues to insure a smooth close of escrow.

The above article was adapted from information from the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety by Ernie Johnson of Safe Gas Services. Safe Gas Services provides Earthquake Valve Installations and full service retrofitting services for home and apartment owners. Safe Gas Services also does their part in the LADWP Water Conservation program by installing low flow toilets and showerheads. For more information or to schedule a free estimate, give Ernie a call at 800-SAFE-002 (723-3002).