

CHAPTER 84.26 ACCESSORY WIND ENERGY SYSTEMS

Sections:

- 84.26.010 Purpose.
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84.26.010 Purpose

The purpose of this Chapter is to provide a uniform and comprehensive set of standards for the placement of accessory wind energy systems on parcels in unincorporated areas of the County in order to encourage the generation of electricity for on-site use, thereby reducing the consumption of electrical power supplied by utility companies. These regulations are intended to ensure that accessory wind energy systems are designed and located in a manner that minimizes visual and safety impacts on the surrounding community.

Adopted Ordinance 4011 (2007); Amended Ordinance 4067 (2009); Amended Ordinance 4188 (2012)

84.26.020 Applicability

This Chapter provides development standards for accessory wind energy systems.

Adopted Ordinance 4011 (2007); Amended Ordinance 4067 (2009)

84.26.030 Development Standards

- (a) **Maximum Number of Accessory Wind Energy Systems.** The maximum number of Accessory Wind Energy Systems on a single parcel is determined by the total combined rated kW hours for all the wind turbines in a system. Wind turbines are defined in Subsection 810.010.250(m)(4) of this Title. The maximum number of Accessory Wind Energy Systems is as follows:

Table 84-14a
Maximum Number of Accessory Wind Energy Systems

	Type of System	Requirements
Maximum Number of kW	Residential	10 kW
	Non-Residential	50 kW or verified actual energy use
Maximum Number of Turbines in the System	Building-Mounted Turbines	Based on the maximum number of kW
	Tower-Mounted Turbines	Based on the maximum number of kW. Only 1 turbine shall be attached to each tower
	Combined Building Mounted and Tower Turbines	Based on the maximum number of kW. Only 1 turbine shall be attached to a tower

- (b) **Maximum tower height.** The tower height limitations in Table 84-14b (Maximum Tower Heights for Accessory Wind Energy Systems) shall apply to all accessory wind energy systems, provided that the application for a system includes evidence that the proposed height does not exceed the height recommended by the manufacturer or distributor of the system.

Table 84-14b
Maximum Tower Heights for Accessory Wind Energy Systems

Land Use Zoning District (parcel size within zoning district)	Region		
	Valley	Mountain	Desert
AG	80'	80'	120'
RC	80'	80'	120'
RL (minimum one-half acre)	65'	65'	80'
RL-5, RL-10, RL-20, RL-40	80'	80'	100'
RM (minimum one-half acre)	52.5'	52.5'	52.5'
RS (minimum one-half acre)	52.5'	52.5'	52.5'
All other land use zoning districts	65' ⁽¹⁾	65' ⁽¹⁾	80' ⁽¹⁾
Note: (1) Or the maximum structure height specified in Division 2 (Land Use Zoning Districts and Allowed Land Uses) for the land use zoning district in which the system is located, whichever is greater.			

- (c) **System Separation Requirements.** All units located on the same parcel shall be separated from each other in accordance with the manufacturer's recommended distances.
- (d) **Setbacks.** The minimum setback from any property line shall be equal to the system height.
- (e) **Climbing apparatus.** Climbing apparatus shall be located at least 12 feet above the ground, and the tower shall be designed to prevent climbing within the first 12 feet.
- (f) **Lighting.** Tower structure lighting shall be prohibited unless required by another code or regulation.
- (g) **Noise.** The noise performance standards in Section 83.01.080 (Noise) shall apply, except during short-term events (e.g., utility outages, windstorms, etc.).
- (h) **Visual effects.** An accessory wind energy system shall not substantially obstruct views of adjacent property owners.
- (i) **Location.**
- (1) An accessory wind energy system shall be placed or constructed below any major ridgeline when viewed from any designated scenic corridor as identified in the Open Space Element of the General Plan and in Chapter 82.19 (Open Space (OS) Overlay).

- (2) An accessory wind energy system shall not be:
- (A) Located within a scenic corridor as identified in the Open Space Element of the General Plan and in Chapter 82.19 (Open Space (OS) Overlay).
 - (B) Allowed where otherwise prohibited by any of the following:
 - (I) The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act.
 - (II) The terms of any easement.
 - (III) The listing of the proposed site in the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources.
- (j) **Turbine certification.** All Wind Turbines in an Accessory Wind Energy System must be approved by the California Energy Commission as eligible in the Emerging Renewables Program or certified by a national program recognized and approved by the Energy Commission including the Clean Energy States Alliance.
- (k) **Engineering analysis.** The application shall include standard drawings and an engineering analysis of the system's tower, showing compliance with the California Building Code (CBC) or the California Residential Code (CRC) and certification by a professional mechanical, structural, or civil engineer licensed by the State. However, a wet stamp shall not be required, provided that the application demonstrates that the system is designed to meet the:
- (1) CBC or CRC requirements for the applicable wind speed and exposure;
 - (2) CBC or CRC requirements for the applicable seismic design category;
 - (3) Requirements for a soil strength of not more than 1,000 pounds per square foot;
or
 - (4) Other relevant conditions normally required by a local agency.
- (l) **Compliance with aviation law.** The system shall comply with all applicable Federal Aviation Administration requirements and the State Aeronautics Act (Public Utilities Code Section 21001 et seq.).
- (m) **Compliance with electrical code.** The application shall include a line drawing of the electrical components of the system in sufficient detail to allow for a determination that the installation conforms to the California Electric Code (CEC).
- (n) **Reduction in onsite electricity consumption.** The system shall be used primarily to reduce onsite consumption of electricity.

Adopted Ordinance 4011 (2007); Amended Ordinance 4067 (2009); Amended Ordinance 4098 (2010); Amended Ordinance 4188 (2012)

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