



# METAL SIDING IN WILDFIRE ZONES



**Must Know Information  
To Help Protect Your Home**



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# Metal Wall Systems in Wildfire Zones

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**Non-combustible metal wall panels paired with proper ember-resistant detailing form one of the strongest wildfire-resistant building systems available.**

In wildfire-prone areas, exterior walls are a critical line of defense against radiant heat from fires and wind-driven embers. The International Wildland-Urban Interface Code (IWUIC) and the California WUIC (previously CBC Chapter 7A) are two of the primary sets of codes that directly affect exterior wall materials and construction in high fire risk areas.





## Where These Rules Apply

Designated Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) or Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) requirements typically apply to:

- New construction
- Additions or major alterations
- Siding replacements

Note that local jurisdictions may adopt stricter rules than state or model codes. Always verify requirements with the local building department or fire authority (AHJ).



## Exterior Wall Fire Performance Requirements

- Exterior walls in WUIC areas must be built utilizing a fire-resistant construction. There are a number of recognized assembly methods. Consult WUIC codes and/or local jurisdiction for proper guidance.
- To greatly simplify meeting code requirements, utilizing exterior wall facings of non-combustible materials, like metal siding, is an excellent solution.



## Why Metal Walls Perform Well

- Metal wall panels are noncombustible. They do not ignite or contribute to flame spread and provide compliance to IWUIC and CA WUIC wall constructions.
- Properly installed metal wall systems excel at meeting the wildfire-resistance intent.
- Depending on local jurisdiction requirements, even metal siding may require proof of non-combustibility through certification or test reports.
- Be aware that beyond WUIC requirements, state and local codes may require 1-hr or 2-hr fire-resistance ratings for exterior walls based on fire separation distances at property lines.



## Specific Roof-Area Requirements

Beyond a compliant metal siding, associated wall areas must also meet fire-resistance requirements:

### Soffit and Eave Areas

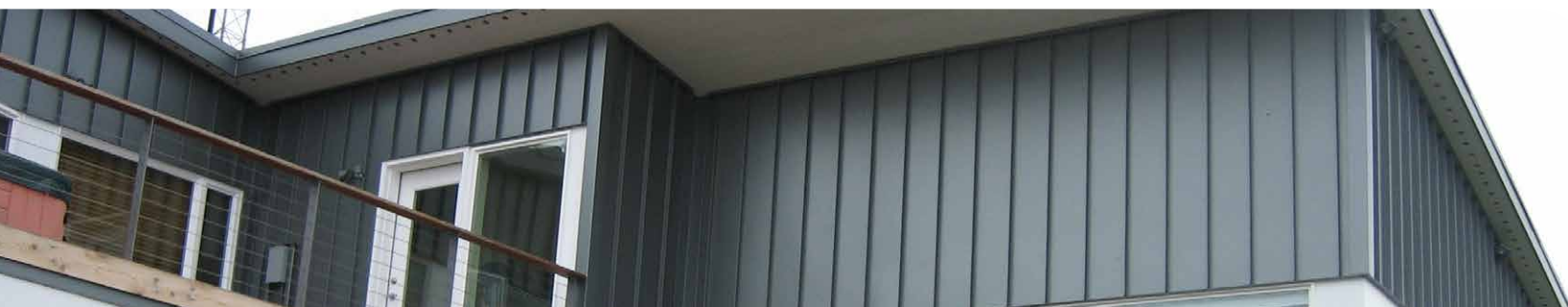
- These are high-risk areas for combustion and have special detailing requirements.
- Both open and enclosed eave areas (rafter ends, fascias, soffit areas) shall be protected by noncombustible or ignition-resistant materials. Refer to codes for specific requirements and allowances.

### Attic and Foundation Vents

- For CA WUIC all wall and soffit area venting (gable, eave, soffit, and foundation vents) require venting products that are approved and listed with the CA State Fire Marshall, or vents tested to the WUI ASTM E2886 test standard.
- The IWUIC has less strict requirements, that allows for all venting products mentioned above to be tested in accordance with ASTM E2886 or meet the prescriptive requirements: non-combustible, non-corrosive, and vent holes less than or equal to 1/8" in size.
- Note that building inspectors are trained to look for venting compliance, as preventing ember intrusion is a critical factor in wildfire resistance.

### Wall Openings and Penetrations

- WUIC states that exterior windows, window walls and glazed doors, windows within exterior doors, and skylights shall be tempered glass, multilayered glazed panels, glass block or have a fire protection rating of not less than 20 minutes.
- WUIC requires that exterior doors shall be approved noncombustible construction, solid core wood not less than 1 3/4 inches thick or have a fire protection rating of not less than 20 minutes.
- For CA WUIC, garage doors shall resist intrusion of embers, by eliminating perimeter gaps greater than 1/8".
- While not explicitly stated in WUIC codes, filling gaps greater than 1/8" around wall penetrations, in eave areas, and in transition areas is strongly encouraged inherently non-combustible and can be used as a component within a Class A fire-rated roofing assembly.





# What This All Means for Homeowners

## What This Means for Homeowners

Metal wall siding is a highly effective exterior building material in wildfire zones. Overall IWUIC or CA WUIC compliance depends on the full wall assembly. Not just metal wall panels, but also the proper detailing at joints, penetrations, and interfaces.

Documentation that may be required:

- Documented material classifications (noncombustible / ignition-resistant)
- Manufacturer installation instructions

*Note that local jurisdictions (AHJ) may impose additional requirements.*



## Important Notes & Jurisdictional Disclaimers

This document summarizes select wall-related provisions from the International Wildland-Urban Interface Code (IWUIC) and California WUIC as they relate to metal wall panels in wildfire-prone areas. It is not a comprehensive summary of all applicable fire, building, or zoning codes.

Other states, counties, cities, or fire districts may adopt:

- Different editions of IWUIC
- State-specific amendments
- Additional or more restrictive local requirements

Readers are strongly advised to verify all requirements with the local Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) prior to design, permitting, or installation.

This document is provided for informational purposes only and does not replace adopted codes, manufacturer installation instructions, or professional code compliance review.



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