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METAL ROOFING IN WILDFIRE ZONES

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Metal Roofing in **Wildfire Zones**

Metal roofing paired with proper underlayment and ember-resistant detailing form one of the strongest wildfire-resistant roof systems available.

For homes in a Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) or a Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ), roofing is one of the most critical fire-safety features. The International Wildland-Urban Interface Code (IWUIC) and the California WUIC (previously CBC Chapter 7A) are two of the primary sets of codes that define minimum requirements that directly affect metal roofing installations.

Where These Rules Apply

Designated Wildland-Urban Interface or Fire Hazard Severity Zones typically apply to:

- New construction
- Re-roofing (often when 50% or more of the roof is replaced)
- Additions or major alterations

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).

Metal Roofing Requirements

Class A Roofing Is Required

- Roof assemblies must meet Class A fire classification. Note that a Class A fire-resistance rating is a **roof assembly rating**. Metal roofing doesn't provide a Class A rating on its own.
- UL790 or ASTM E108 Class A certification denotes a roof assembly's highest classified resistance to flame spread and burning embers.

How Metal Roofing Fits In

- Metal roofing is noncombustible and contributes to a roof assembly's Class A rating.
- While metal roofing is noncombustible, it transmits wildfire heat to roof structure, so it does not elevate a roof assembly to a Class A fire rating on its own.
- Typically, what elevates a metal roof assembly to a Class A rating is installing it over a noncombustible substrate, like steel decking or over open steel framing, or over UL Classified materials that boost metal roofing assemblies to a Class A rating. These are typically ¼" minimum gypsum board, or specialty roofing underlayment, such as GAF Versashield®, Polyglass Polystick® XFR or Owens Corning Titanium® FR underlayments.
- Metal roofing Class A certification is typically demonstrated through an ASTM E108 test report, or more commonly through an Underwriters Laboratories (UL) product listing. The latter can be found on the **UL Solutions website at Product iQ®** (UL requires a free login to access data). Product Class A fire-resistance can be found by searching a company's product and finding UL classifications starting with "TGFU".

Versashield® is a registered trademark of GAF Materials Corp., Polystick® is a registered trademark of Polyglass USA, Inc., and Titanium® is a registered trademark of Owens Corning Intellectual Capital, LLC.

Specific Roof-Area Requirements

Beyond a basic compliant metal roof, associated roof areas must also meet fire-resistance requirements:

Roof Valleys

- Requires minimum 26ga corrosion resistant metal valley flashing.
- Installed over a minimum 36-inch wide, 72# mineral cap sheet along valley.

Ridges, hips, and transitions

- Must be detailed to eliminate gaps where embers could enter.

Roof Eaves

- These are high-risk areas for combustion and have special detailing requirements.
- The CA WUIC states that open eave ends of metal roof panels shall be closed off with bird stops to prevent the entry of debris. This is primarily a condition for non-flat metal panels, such as corrugated panels or panels with ribs with open voids. IWUIC states that the ends shall be fire-stopped.
- 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 Vents

- Ridge and off-ridge roof vents in CA WUIC areas are deemed acceptable if they are noncombustible, made of corrosion resistant material, and have vent holes between 1/16” and 1/8” in size.
- All other vents (gable, eave, soffit, foundation) require venting products that are approved and listed with the CA State Fire Marshal, or vents meeting the WUI ASTM E2886 test standard requirements.
- The IWUIC allows for all venting products mentioned above to be tested in accordance with ASTM E2886 or meet the prescriptive requirements: noncombustible, 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.

Gutters

- Gutters and downspouts to be constructed of noncombustible material (metal).
- Gutters must be kept free of leaves and debris. Code states that gutters shall be provided with an approved means to prevent the accumulation of debris.

WUI and Metal Roofing- Highlights

Valley Flashing requires minimum 26ga corrosion resistant metal flashing. Must be installed over min 36" wide 72# mineral cap sheet.

Roof Assembly must meet Class A Fire Classification.

Gable, Eave, and Soffit Vents shall be approved and listed with CA State Fire Marshal, or vents passing WUI ASTM E2886 test standard (CA WUIC & IWUIC), or meet prescriptive requirements: noncombustible material, non-corrosive, and with vent holes 1/8" max. in size (IWUIC only)

Open Eave Ends of Metal Roof Panels to be closed off with bird stop/fire-stop material.

Ridge and Off Ridge Vents are acceptable if noncombustible, corrosion resistant, and have vent holes between 1/16" and 1/8".

Roof Gutters and Downspouts shall be noncombustible and provided with a means to prevent accumulation of debris.

Eave Areas such as rafter ends, fascias, and soffit areas shall be protected by noncombustible or ignition-resistant materials. Refer to WUI codes for specific requirements.

This summary page is for basic guidance only. Review WUI codes and verify requirements with local building department or fire authority (AHJ). .

What This All Means for Homeowners

Steel roofing is inherently noncombustible and can be used as a component within a Class A fire-rated roofing assembly.

Full IWUIC and California WUIC compliance depends on the full roof system:

- Metal panels
- Approved underlayment
- Proper flashing and detailing

Documentation matters:

- Product listings or test reports
- Manufacturer installation instructions

Note that local amendments may add extra requirements.

Important Note & Jurisdictional Disclaimer

This document summarizes select roofing-related provisions from the International Wildland-Urban Interface Code (IWUIC) and California WUIC as they relate to metal roofing 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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