

Stephanie Gold

I want to speak to item 5, your proposed requirements related to fire sprinklers. I am strongly opposed to the requirements.

1. It is not required for Limited Density Owner-Built Rural Dwellings. According Ms. Elliott's County Counsel Opinion #18-002 of January 12, 2018, "The county may have the authority to exempt such buildings from the fire sprinkler requirements in the California Building Standards Code." If the State does not require it, why would you propose to make building a home more expensive and more cumbersome, in a time when affordable housing options in our county is a dire need?
2. Requiring fire sprinklers to be installed within all limited density rural swellings greater than 1,250 square feet and on parcels greater than one acre is an absurdly arbitrary proposal. It also makes inspectors' jobs more complicated, as a measured inch here or there would vastly effect the requirements. Just remove the fire sprinkler requirement! People could still install them if they wish--it just wouldn't be required.
3. There is absolutely no national consensus that Fire Sprinklers should be installed in homes. While it's true that three states require fire sprinkles in new homes, there are 31 states with legislation that actually prohibits requiring fire sprinklers! And the remaining states are neutral on the topic.
4. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) throws a ton of money into the push for fire sprinklers, but they are a biased source. They are a trade organization that was actually formed in 1896 for the express purpose of lobbying for fire sprinkler systems.
5. Requiring fire sprinklers would add \$15,000 or more to new construction, but the State says affordable housing should be a county priority.
6. In summary, just leave the sprinkler system decisions up to owner-builders, along with solid core doors and other fire safety options. The state allows this, and owner-builders are capable of making reasonable decisions for the homes they intend to live in.