



Junior Accessory Dwelling Units

Purpose

- To clarify fire separation requirements between Single-Family Residences and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units.
- To clarify and outline requirements for ventilation and heating for Junior Accessory Dwelling Units.

Background

A Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit (JADU) is defined in Title 20 of the San José Municipal Code, Ordinance No. 30353, Section 20.200.324. It is defined as a residential unit that is not more than 500 square feet in size and is contained entirely within an existing or proposed single-family structure.

A JADU must meet all requirements of Municipal Code Section 20.30.470, including that it has:

- An entrance that is separate from the main entrance to the primary dwelling unit;
- An interior entry to the main living area and may share sanitation facilities with the existing primary dwelling or have one bathroom that includes a lavatory, water closet, and shower or tub/shower.
- At minimum, an efficiency kitchen.

Section R302.3 of the 2019 California Residential Code (CRC) requires that dwelling units in two-family dwellings shall be separated from each other by wall and floor assemblies having not less than a 1-hour fire resistance rating where tested in accordance with ASTM E119 or UL 263.

A JADU shall not be considered as a separate or new dwelling unit for the application of State law pertaining to Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).

Findings

Junior Accessory Dwelling units shall meet all the following criteria:

- Comply with the provisions of “Junior accessory dwelling units” in Title 20 of the San Jose Municipal Code, Ordinance no. 30353, Section 20.30.470
- Constructed within the existing walls of the single-family residence (attached garage conversions included) and encompass no more than 500 sq. ft. in floor area
- Has its own exterior entrance.
- Has an interior entrance into the primary dwelling.
- Has, at a minimum, an efficiency kitchen with cooking appliances and exhaust hood.

For the purpose of fire and life-safety protection, Junior Accessory Dwelling Units meeting the above criteria shall be considered as a part of the main residence rather than a separated or a new dwelling unit in two-family dwellings. The CRC and other applicable standards are to be applied considering they are one unit; thus, there is no rated fire separation required between the primary dwelling unit and the JADU. The interconnection of smoke and CO detectors throughout the residence is required.

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For the purpose of ventilation and heating, JADUs shall meet one of the below criteria:

1. A JADU created by converting an existing bedroom:
 - a. Must provide an exhaust hood in the unit's kitchen.
 - b. May use the existing heating system.
 - c. Access to any shared bathroom and/or laundry facilities and to controls for any shared heating and ventilation systems must be provided and maintained.

2. A JADU created by converting an existing attached garage
 - a. Must provide an exhaust hood in the unit's kitchen.
 - b. Heating facilities are required. Recommend providing a separate heating system with controls.
 - c. Access to any shared bathroom and/or laundry facilities must be provided and maintained.