

CALIFORNIA CODES
REVENUE AND TAXATION CODE
SECTION 70-74.6

* See Section 73 for references to solar energy

70. (a) "Newly constructed" and "new construction" means:

(1) Any addition to real property, whether land or improvements (including fixtures), since the last lien date; and

(2) Any alteration of land or of any improvement (including fixtures) since the last lien date that constitutes a major rehabilitation thereof or that converts the property to a different use.

(b) Any rehabilitation, renovation, or modernization that converts an improvement or fixture to the substantial equivalent of a new improvement or fixture is a major rehabilitation of that improvement or fixture.

(c) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivisions (a) and (b), where real property has been damaged or destroyed by misfortune or calamity, "newly constructed" and "new construction" does not mean any timely reconstruction of the real property, or portion thereof, where the property after reconstruction is substantially equivalent to the property prior to damage or destruction. Any reconstruction of real property, or portion thereof, that is not substantially equivalent to the damaged or destroyed property, shall be deemed to be new construction and only that portion that exceeds substantially equivalent reconstruction shall have a new base year value determined pursuant to Section 110.1.

(d) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivisions (a) and (b), where a structure must be improved to comply with local ordinances on seismic safety, "newly constructed" and "new construction" does not mean the portion of reconstruction or improvement to a structure, constructed of unreinforced masonry bearing wall construction, necessary to comply with the local ordinance. This exclusion shall remain in effect during the first 15 years following that reconstruction or improvement (unless the property is purchased or changes ownership during that period, in which case the provisions of Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 60) of this division shall apply).

(2) In the sixteenth year following the reconstruction or improvement referred to in paragraph (1), the assessor shall place on the roll the current full cash value of the portion of reconstruction or improvement to the structure that was excluded pursuant to this subdivision.

(3) The governing body that enacted the local ordinance shall issue a certificate of compliance upon the request of the owner who, pursuant to a notice or permit issued by the governing body that specified that the reconstruction or improvement is necessary to comply with a seismic safety ordinance, so reconstructs or improves his or her structure in accordance with the ordinance. The certificate of compliance shall be filed by the property owner with the county assessor not later than six months after the completion of

the project. The failure to file a certificate of completion within the prescribed filing period shall be deemed a waiver of the exclusion for that year.

(e) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivisions (a) and (b), where a tank must be improved, upgraded, or replaced to comply with federal, state, and local regulations on underground storage tanks, "newly constructed" and "new construction" does not mean the improvement, upgrade, or replacement of a tank to meet compliance standards, and the improvement, upgrade, or replacement shall be considered to have been performed for the purpose of normal maintenance and repair.

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivisions (a) and (b), where a structure, or any portion thereof, was reconstructed, as a consequence of completing work on an underground storage tank to comply with federal, state, and local regulations on these tanks, timely reconstruction of the structure shall be considered to have been performed for the purpose of normal maintenance and repair where the structure, or portion thereof, after reconstruction is substantially equivalent to the prior structure in size, utility, and function.

71. The assessor shall determine the new base year value for the portion of any taxable real property which has been newly constructed. The base year value of the remainder of the property assessed, which did not undergo new construction, shall not be changed. New construction in progress on the lien date shall be appraised at its full value on such date and each lien date thereafter until the date of completion, at which time the entire portion of property which is newly constructed shall be reappraised at its full value.

72. (a) A copy of any building permit issued by any city, county, or city and county shall be transmitted by each such entity to the county assessor as soon as possible after the date of issuance.

(b) A copy of any certificate of occupancy or other document showing date of completion of new construction issued or finalized by any city, county, or city and county, shall be transmitted by each entity to the county assessor within 30 days after the date of issuance or finalization.

(c) At the time an assessee files, or causes to be filed, an approved set of building plans with the city, county, or city and county, a scale copy of the floor plans and exterior dimensions of the building designated for the county assessor shall be filed by the assessee or his or her designee. The scale copy shall be in sufficient detail to allow the assessor to determine the square footage of the building and, in the case of a residential building, the intended use of each room. An assessee, or his or her designee, where multiple units are to be constructed from the same set of building plans, may file only one scale copy of floor plans and exterior dimensions, so long as each application for a building permit with respect to those building plans specifically identifies

the scale copy filed pursuant to this section. However, where the square footage of any one of the multiple units is altered, an assessee, or his or her designee, shall file a scale copy of the floor plan and exterior dimensions that specifically identifies the alteration from the previously filed scale copy. The receiving authority shall transmit that copy to the county assessor as soon as possible after the final plans are approved.

73. (a) Pursuant to the authority granted to the Legislature pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (c) of Section 2 of Article XIIIa of the California Constitution, the term "newly constructed," as used in subdivision (a) of Section 2 of Article XIIIa of the California Constitution, does not include the construction or addition of any active solar energy system, as defined in subdivision (b).

(b) (1) "Active solar energy system" means a system that uses solar devices, which are thermally isolated from living space or any other area where the energy is used, to provide for the collection, storage, or distribution of solar energy.

(2) "Active solar energy system" does not include solar swimming pool heaters or hot tub heaters.

(3) Active solar energy systems may be used for any of the following:

- (A) Domestic, recreational, therapeutic, or service water heating.
- (B) Space conditioning.
- (C) Production of electricity.
- (D) Process heat.
- (E) Solar mechanical energy.

(c) (1) (A) The Legislature finds and declares that the definition of spare parts in this paragraph is declarative of the intent of the Legislature, in prior statutory enactments of this section that excluded active solar energy systems from the term "newly constructed," as used in the California Constitution, thereby creating a tax appraisal exclusion.

(B) An active solar energy system that uses solar energy in the production of electricity includes storage devices, power conditioning equipment, transfer equipment, and parts related to the functioning of those items. In general, the use of solar energy in the production of electricity involves the transformation of sunlight into electricity through the use of devices such as solar cells or other collectors. However, an active solar energy system used in the production of electricity includes only equipment used up to, but not including, the stage of the transmission or use of the electricity. For the purpose of this paragraph, the term "parts" includes spare parts that are owned by the owner of, or the maintenance contractor for, an active solar energy system that uses solar energy in the production of electricity and which spare parts were specifically purchased, designed, or fabricated by or for that owner or maintenance contractor for installation in an active solar energy system that uses solar energy in the production of

electricity, thereby including those parts in the tax appraisal exclusion created by this section.

(2) An active solar energy system that uses solar energy in the production of electricity also includes pipes and ducts that are used exclusively to carry energy derived from solar energy. Pipes and ducts that are used to carry both energy derived from solar energy and from energy derived from other sources are active solar energy system property only to the extent of 75 percent of their full cash value.

(3) An active solar energy system that uses solar energy in the production of electricity does not include auxiliary equipment, such as furnaces and hot water heaters, that use a source of power other than solar energy to provide usable energy. An active solar energy system that uses solar energy in the production of electricity does include equipment, such as ducts and hot water tanks, that is utilized by both auxiliary equipment and solar energy equipment, that is, dual use equipment. That equipment is active solar energy system property only to the extent of 75 percent of its full cash value.

(d) This section shall apply to property tax lien dates for the 1999-2000 to 2004-05 fiscal years, inclusive. For purposes of supplemental assessment, this section shall apply only to qualifying construction or additions completed on or after January 1, 1999.

(e) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2006, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute that is enacted before January 1, 2006, deletes or extends that date.

74. (a) For purposes of subdivision (a) of Section 2 of Article XIII A of the Constitution, "newly constructed" does not include the construction or installation of any fire sprinkler system, other fire extinguishing system, fire detection system, or fire-related egress improvement that is constructed or installed on or after November 7, 1984.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter or Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 75), neither "newly constructed" nor "new construction" includes the construction or installation of any fire sprinkler system, other fire extinguishing system, fire detection system, or fire-related egress improvement that is constructed or installed on or after November 7, 1984.

(c) For purposes of this section:

(1) "Fire sprinkler system" means any system intended to discharge water for the purpose of suppressing or extinguishing a fire, and includes a fire sprinkler system that derives its water from the domestic water supply of the building or structure of which it is a part.

(2) "Other fire extinguishing system" means any system intended to suppress or to extinguish a fire other than by discharging water upon the fire. An "other fire extinguishing system" includes, but is not limited to, a component or application that, solely or primarily for the purposes of fire suppression or extinguishment, is made part

of the heating, ventilating, or air-conditioning system of a building or structure, a wet chemical system, or a dry chemical system.

(3) "Fire detection system" means any system or appliance intended to detect combustion, or the products thereof, and to activate an alarm or signal, whether audio, visual, or otherwise, including all equipment used to transmit fire alarm activations and related signals to a remote location. A fire detection system includes any system that serves additional functions, but this section shall only apply with respect to that portion of a system that is for fire detection purposes. No portion of a fire detection system as described in this paragraph shall be deemed to be personal property, or shall be deemed to be excluded from that fire detection system, by reason of being owned or controlled by a person other than the owner of property upon which the fire detection system was constructed or installed.

(4) "Fire-related egress improvement" means any improvement intended to do either of the following:

(A) Provide any new, or improve any existing, means of egress for individuals from a structure, or any portion thereof, in which a fire is in progress, as to which there is an imminent threat that a fire may soon be in progress, or as to which individuals therein might be subjected to health hazards or the risk of physical injury due to a fire elsewhere.

(B) With respect to individuals who for any reason cannot evacuate a structure in which a fire is in progress, provide a means of safeguarding, or increasing the safety of, those individuals until the time that the rescue of those individuals can be effected.

(5) "Existing building" means any building or structure already erected at the time that a fire sprinkler system, other fire extinguishing system, fire detection system, or fire-related egress improvement is constructed or installed in that building or structure.

(d) Any system or improvement referred to in this section shall be deemed to have been constructed or installed on or after November 7, 1984, if the actual construction or installation thereof is completed on or after November 7, 1984, regardless of when the actual construction or installation thereof was commenced or any building permit pertaining thereto was issued.

(e) This section applies only to fire sprinkler systems, other fire extinguishing systems, fire detection systems, and fire-related egress improvements, as defined in this section, that are constructed or installed in an existing building.

74.3. (a) For purposes of subdivision (a) of Section 2 of Article XIIIa of the California Constitution, "newly constructed" does not include the construction, installation, or modification of any portion or structural component of an existing single- or multiple-family dwelling that is eligible for the homeowner's exemption as described in Section 218, if the construction, installation, or modification is for the purpose of making the

dwelling more accessible to a severely and permanently disabled person who is a permanent resident of the dwelling.

(b) For purposes of this section, "a severely and permanently disabled person" is any person who has a physical disability or impairment, whether from birth or by reason of accident or disease, that results in a functional limitation as to employment or substantially limits one or more major life activities of that person, and that has been diagnosed as permanently affecting the person's ability to function, including, but not limited to, any disability or impairment that affects sight, speech, hearing, or the use of any limbs.

(c) For purposes of this section, "accessible" means that combination of elements with regard to any dwelling that provides for access to, circulation throughout, and the full use of, the dwelling and any fixture, facility, or item therein. The construction of an entirely new addition, such as a bedroom or bath, that duplicates existing facilities in the dwelling that are not otherwise available to the disabled resident solely because of his or her disability, shall be deemed to make the dwelling more accessible within the meaning and for the purposes of this section.

(d) The exclusion provided by this section shall apply only to those improvements or features that specially adapt a dwelling accessibility by a severely and permanently disabled person. The value of any improvement, addition, or modification excluded pursuant to this section shall not include any other functional improvement, addition, or modification to the property unless it is merely incidental to the qualified improvements or features.

(e) The exclusion provided by this section shall not apply to the construction of an entirely new dwelling.

(f) The construction, installation, or modification, with regard to an existing building, for purposes of making the structure more accessible to a disabled person, shall be eligible for exclusion pursuant to this section only if the disabled person, or his or her spouse or legal guardian, submits to the assessor both of the following:

(1) A statement signed by a licensed physician or surgeon, of appropriate specialty which certifies that the person is severely and permanently disabled as defined in subdivision (b), and identifies specific disability-related requirements necessitating accessibility improvements or features.

(2) A statement that identifies the construction, installation, or modification that was in fact necessary to make the structure more accessible to the disabled person.

(g) The assessor may charge a fee to the disabled person or his or her spouse or legal guardian sufficient to reimburse the assessor for the costs of processing and administering the statement required by subdivision (f).

(h) This section shall apply to construction, installations, or modifications completed on or after June 6, 1990.

74.5. (a) For purposes of paragraph (4) of subdivision (c) of

Section 2 of Article XIII A of the California Constitution, "newly constructed" and "new construction" does not include seismic retrofitting improvements and improvements utilizing earthquake hazard mitigation technologies, to an existing building or structure.

(b) For purposes of this section:

(1) "Seismic retrofitting improvements" means retrofitting or reconstruction of an existing building or structure, to abate falling hazards from structural or nonstructural components of any building or structure including, but not limited to, parapets, appendages, cornices, hanging objects, and building cladding that pose serious danger. "Seismic retrofitting improvements" also means either structural strengthening or providing the means necessary to resist seismic force levels that would otherwise be experienced by an existing building or structure during an earthquake, so as to significantly reduce hazards to life and safety while also providing for the substantially safe ingress and egress of building occupants during and immediately after an earthquake. "Seismic retrofitting improvements" does not include alterations, such as new plumbing, electrical, or other added finishing materials, made in addition to seismic-related work performed on an existing structure. "Seismic retrofitting" includes, but is not limited to, those items referenced in Appendix Chapters 5 and 6 of the Uniform Code for Building Conservation of the International Conference of Building Officials.

(2) "Improvements utilizing earthquake hazard mitigation technologies" means improvements to existing buildings identified by a local government as being hazardous to life in the event of an earthquake. These improvements shall involve strategies for earthquake protection of structures. These improvements shall use technologies such as those referenced in Part 2 (commencing with Section 101) of Title 24 of the California Building Code and similar seismic provisions in the Uniform Building Code.

(c) The property owner, primary contractor, civil or structural engineer, or architect shall certify to the building department those portions of the project that are seismic retrofitting improvements or improvements utilizing earthquake hazard mitigation technologies. Upon completion of the project, the building department shall report the value of those portions of the project that are seismic retrofitting improvements and improvements utilizing earthquake hazard mitigation technologies to the county assessor.

(d) In order to receive the exclusion, the property owner shall notify the assessor prior to, or within 30 days of, completion of the project that he or she intends to claim the exclusion for seismic retrofitting improvements or improvements utilizing earthquake hazard mitigation technologies. The State Board of Equalization shall prescribe the manner and form for claiming the exclusion. All documents necessary to support the exclusion shall be filed by the property owner with the assessor not later than six months after the completion of the project.

(e) The exclusion from "newly constructed" and "new construction" under this section is not applicable to seismic safety reconstruction and improvements that qualify for the exclusion provided in subdivision (d) of Section 70.

(f) This section shall only apply to projects completed on or after January 1, 1991.

74.6. (a) For purposes of paragraph (5) of subdivision (c) of Section 2 of Article XIII of the California Constitution, "newly constructed" and "new construction" does not include the construction, installation, removal, or modification of any portion or structural component of an existing building or structure to the extent that it is done for the purpose of making the building or structure more accessible to, or more usable by, a disabled person.

(b) For the purposes of this section, "disabled person" means a person who suffers from a physical impairment that substantially limits one or more of that person's major life activities.

(c) The exclusion provided for in subdivision (a) shall apply to all buildings or structures except for those buildings or structures that qualify for the exclusion provided for in subdivision (a) of Section 74.3.

(d) The exclusion provided for in this section does not apply to the construction of an entirely new building or structure, or to the construction of an entirely new addition to an existing building or structure.

(e) For purposes of the exclusion provided for in subdivision (a), the property owner, primary contractor, civil engineer, or architect shall submit to the assessor a statement that shall identify those specific portions of the project that constitute construction, installation, removal, or modification improvements to the building or structure to make the building or structure more accessible to, or usable by, a disabled person.

(f) For the purposes of the exclusion provided for in subdivision (a), the construction, improvement, modification, or alteration of an existing building or structure may include, but is not limited to, access ramps, widening of doorways and hallways, barrier removal, access modifications to restroom facilities, elevators, and any other accessibility modification of a building or structure that would cause it to meet or exceed the accessibility standards of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (Public Law 101-336) and the most recent edition to the California Building Standards Code that is in effect on the date of the application for a building permit.

(g) In order to receive the exclusion provided for in this section, the property owner shall notify the assessor prior to, or within 30 days of, completion of any project covered by this section that he or she intends to claim the exclusion for making improvements of the type specified in subdivision (a). The State Board of Equalization shall prescribe the manner and form for claiming the exclusion. All documents necessary to support the exclusion shall be filed by the property owner with the assessor not later than six months after the completion of the project.

(h) This section applies to any construction, installation, removal, or modification completed on or after June 7, 1994.

