



Myth vs. Fact: Setting the Record Straight On 2010 California Green Building Standards Code

As the nation's first statewide mandatory green-building standard code, the 2010 California Green Building Standards Code establishes mandatory regulations that will achieve major reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, energy consumption, and water. These provisions of the new CALGREEN Code will now become the baseline of regulated green construction practices in the country's most populous state.

Here are the facts:

MYTH 1: "The 2010 Green Building Standards Code is not stringent enough to make a difference in the climate change efforts."

- **FACT 1:** The California Air Resources Board estimates that the mandatory provisions will reduce greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂ equivalent) by 3 million metric tons in 2020. Additionally, the provisions will reduce water use by 20 percent and divert 50 percent of construction waste from landfills.

MYTH 2: "Local jurisdictions do not have the technical expertise to verify whether builders are complying with the Green Building Code."

- **FACT 2:** The code will utilize the long-standing, successful enforcement infrastructure that the state has established to enforce its health, safety, fire, energy, and structural building codes making verification of the Green Code for local building inspectors a simple transition. Unlike many private green building certification programs, the CALGREEN Code will not require businesses or property owners to pay additional fees for certification. Additionally, the CALGREEN Code requires field inspections to ensure compliance.

MYTH 3: "California's CALGREEN label and the tier structures will create market confusion with other third party verification systems."

- **FACT 3:** The CALGREEN Code is a moniker to distinguish California's many other Building Codes from the California Green Building Standards Code. The tier structure was developed by the Commission to promote market continuity. Having a mandatory code with a tier structure in place will allow California's builders to build to a certifiable green standard without having to pay costly fees for third-party programs.

MYTH 4: "The new code will significantly impact California cities' own green building programs."

- **FACT 4:** The Code sets a sensible floor that all new structures must meet to significantly minimize the state's overall carbon output. Each individual local jurisdiction retains the administrative authority to decide what is best for their communities while meeting the mandatory provisions in the new Green Code. They are encouraged to take additional actions to green their buildings that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve energy efficiency and conserve our natural resources.