



INFORMATION BULLETIN / PUBLIC - BUILDING CODE

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STATE HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE REQUIREMENTS FOR MAUSOLEUMS AND COLUMBARIUMS

Section 9525, Part 5 of Division 8 of the Health and Safety Code of the State of California charges this Department with enforcement of the State's *Mausoleum and Columbarium Law*. To aid enforcement, the following information has been extracted from the *Health and Safety Code*. Accordingly, all mausoleum and columbarium construction within the City of Los Angeles shall conform to these requirements and the requirements of the *Mausoleum and Columbarium Law*, whichever is more restrictive.

A. DEFINITIONS.

COLUMBARIUM (*Section 9506 of the Health and Safety Code.*) - Any building or structure used or intended to be used for the interment of cremated human remains.

COMPANION CRYPTS or NEST OF CRYPTS - (*Section 9505 of the Health and Safety Code.*) Two or more crypts entered through a single opening.

MAUSOLEUM - (*Section 9504 of the Health and Safety Code.*) Any building or structure used or intended to be used for the interment of human remains. A columbarium may be built within a mausoleum.

PRIVATE MAUSOLEUM OR COLUMBARIUM - (*Section 9504.5 of the Health and Safety Code.*) A freestanding structure which:

1. Is constructed for use by the members of any one group, and not for the sale of space therein to any other person,
2. Does not contain crypts for the interment of more than 12 uncremated human remains, and a columbarium, niches for the interment of not more than 20 cremated human remains,
3. Is not constructed for occupancy by any person except in the course of making an interment.

B. DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION.

1. **General.** *(Sections 9601 through 9603 and 9625 of the Health and Safety Code.)*

Every mausoleum or columbarium shall be designed to conform to the structural (earthquake) provisions and shall be constructed in conformance with Type I Construction as specified in the Los Angeles Building Code (LABC), except as otherwise provided in this Section. Every mausoleum or columbarium shall also comply with Los Angeles Electrical and Plumbing Codes.

2. **Incombustible Materials.** *(Section 9626 of the Health and Safety Code.)*

All materials of construction shall be incombustible, except crypt vents, temporary openings or partitions, interior doors, fixtures, furniture, and furnishing.

3. **Structural Frame Work; Footings, Bearing Walls, Floor Slabs, and Roofs.** *(Section 9627 of the Health and Safety Code.)*

All structural frame work shall be of cast-in-place reinforced concrete, structural steel sections, or of concrete over metal decking; provided, however, all footings, bearing walls, floor slabs, and roofs shall be of cast-in-place reinforced concrete or of concrete over metal decking only.

4. **Floor Slabs.** *(Section 9630 of the Health and Safety Code.)*

Floor slabs placed on earth shall be constructed of reinforced concrete designed by a licensed structural or civil engineer to include control joints at appropriate intervals to minimize cracks as well as appropriate vapor and moisture barriers as specified by a licensed geotechnical engineer.

5. **Waterproofing Walls.** *(Section 9631 of the Health and Safety Code.)*

Where any wall is constructed against a bank of earth, rock, or other porous material or where crypts are adjacent to an outside building wall below grade, the wall shall be adequately waterproofed.

Before backfilling, a waterproofed wall shall have a protection board placed against it to prevent damage to the waterproofing during backfilling.

6. **Crypt Walls and Crypt Floor Slabs.** *(Section 9632 of the Health and Safety Code.)*

Except as provided in Subsection 7, all crypt walls and crypt floor slabs shall be constructed of cast-in-place, reinforced concrete. Crypt walls shall conform to

structural design, but shall not be less than three and one-half inches in thickness. Crypt floor slabs shall not be less than three inches in thickness.

7. **Separations.** *(Section 9633 of the Health and Safety Code.)*

Horizontal and vertical separation of crypts, comprising companion crypts, or nest of crypts shall be constructed of precast reinforced concrete. The horizontal separation shall not be less than 1-1/2 inch (38 mm) in thickness, the vertical nonbearing partitions shall not be less than 1-inch (25 mm) in thickness, and the vertical bearing partitions shall not be less than 3 inches (76 mm) in thickness, provided that the crypt walls enclosing the nest of crypts are constructed as required in Subsection 6. Crypts shall be vented at roof level of the structure and vents shall continue to a gravel filled trench below the floor of the bottom crypt to provide adequate circulation of air. Nonstructural horizontal and vertical partitions separating columbarium niches may be constructed of precast reinforced concrete or another incombustible material.

8. **Design Loads.** *(Sections 9628, 9629 and 9634 of the Health and Safety Code.)*

- a. Floors – 100 psf (4.80 kN/m²) live load.
- b. Crypts - Total load of 600 pounds (2.70 kN) live load.
- c. Footings shall be designed and constructed to conform to the requirements of Chapter 18 of the LABC.

9. **Sealing Individual Crypt Openings.** *(Section 9635 of the Health and Safety Code.)*

All individual crypt openings shall be sealed with a solid panel of precast concrete, not less than 1-1/2 inches (38 mm) thick, fiber reinforced cement board not less than 7/16 inch (11 mm) thick, or other incombustible material that meets all of the following requirements:

- a. A minimum density of 80 pounds per cubic foot (1280 kg/m³).
- b. A minimum modulus of rupture of 270 psi (1.86 Mpa).
- c. A minimum compressive strength of 2500 psi (17.2 Mpa).
- d. A rating that conforms to Underwriters Laboratories Fire Hazard Class 1.

All panels shall be securely set in with a high quality, nonflammable, resilient, and non-hardening urethane, silicone base, or other appropriate sealant for permanent sealing after interment is made in the crypt. Seal panels shall be set independent of crypt fronts.

10. **Marble Floors.** *(Section 9636 of the Health and Safety Code.)*

All marble floors shall be constructed on a bed of mortar or mastic placed on the floor subslab, with an approved additive to retard efflorescence.

11. **Interior and Exterior Veneers and Exterior Trim.** *(Section 9637 and 9638 of the Health and Safety Code.)*

All interior or exterior veneers shall be of stone, cast stone, granite, travertine, marble, or other material allowed in the LABC for Type I Construction and shall comply with Section 91.1403. Material for exterior trim, including exterior crypt and niche fronts, shall be travertine, serpentine marble, or Grade A exterior type marble or granite only.

12. **Mortar Joints.** *(Section 9639 of the Health and Safety Code.)*

Joints shall be of uniform thickness and when mortar is used it shall be raked out as work progresses and on completion of installation joints shall be brushed, thoroughly cleaned, wet, and carefully filled and pointed.

13. **Base, Architraves, Wainscoting, and Other Vertical Work.** *(Section 9642 of the Health and Safety Code.)*

All base, architraves, wainscoting and all other vertical work other than crypt fronts shall be securely anchored in place with rods, clips, or other suitable anchoring devices of materials as specified in Subsection 14. All clips shall be countersunk into the joint surface and set in non-staining cement or epoxy.

14. **Interior and Exterior Fastenings.** *(Sections 9643 and 9644 of the Health and Safety Code.)*

Fastenings (hinges, veneer ties, hangers, clips, doors, etc.) shall be copper, aluminum or copper base alloy, or stainless steel of adequate gauges and shall be installed to meet or exceed the seismic requirements of the code. All exterior materials used for doors, window frames, skylights, gutters, downspouts, flashings, or embellishments shall be of copper, copper base alloy, aluminum, stainless steel, or other corrosion resistant material of gauges structurally determined.

15. **Roof and Skylight Frames.** *(Sections 9646 and 9647 of the Health and Safety Code.)*

Roofs shall be constructed of cast-in-place reinforced concrete and any roof coverings shall be fire retardant in conformity with the requirements of Type I Construction. All skylight frames shall be fabricated in conformance with structural requirements and shall contain wire glass, tempered glass or plastic of comparable strength and durability.

C. ADDITIONAL CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS.

1. Openings in exterior walls with a fire separation distance less than 30 feet (9144 mm) shall comply with Table 705.8 for the maximum opening area and openings shall be protected per Table 716.1(2) when protected opening is required.
2. Basements more than 1500 square feet (140 m²) in area shall be sprinklered.
3. No wall openings permitted within 3 feet (914 mm) of a property line.

D. MODIFICATION OF REQUIREMENTS.

There is no provision in this State Law that would permit a deviation from or a modification of these requirements.