

PALOS VERDES KNOW BEFORE YOU BUILD PACK

5 TIPS FOR RENOVATING OR BUILDING IN PALOS VERDES



Wet Room with flush sill, blocking in the walls for future grab bars

1. The Quick Remodel Mistake

Have you recently purchased a home and are considering a fast remodel just to make it move-in ready?

We often see homeowners meet with a contractor, review a rough budget and timeline, and move forward quickly so they can settle in as soon as possible.

Then, two or three years later — when they are ready to expand the home, add a bedroom, improve the entry sequence, or reconfigure the layout — the initial remodel becomes an obstacle.

We at Reiko Architecture look at the life of the building and imagine the seasons. What will happen when the kids are teenagers? Will they need their own hangout room? What about aging parents? How does the holiday look? Will there be visitors for an extended period of time?

Timeless architecture anticipates change. It prevents rework. Build once. Build intentionally.

This approach avoids:

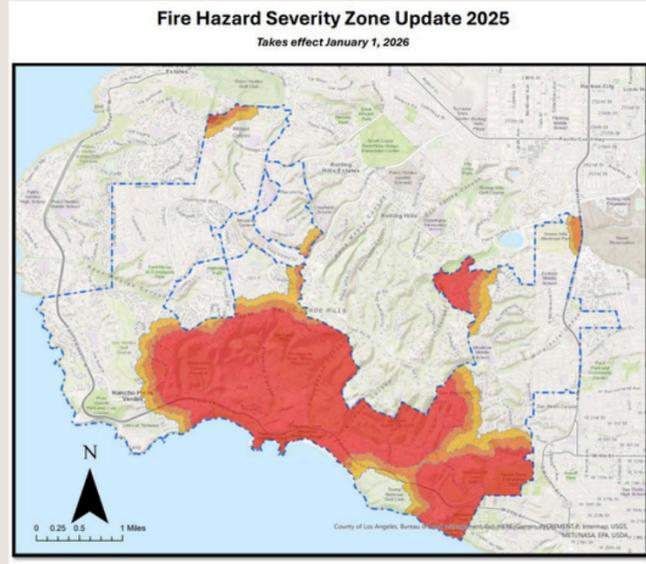
- Duplicate contractor costs
- Re-permitting
- Demolition of new finishes
- Trends that goes out of style
- Emotional fatigue

This approach supports:

- Growing families with various family situations
- Better investment - not disposable remodels
- Higher resale value and broader appeal



2. IS YOUR HOUSE IN THE FIRE ZONE?

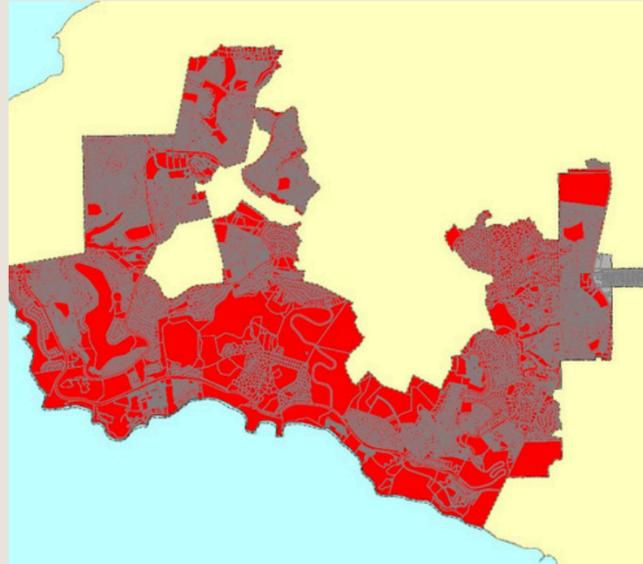


Fire Map Updated for 2025 in RPV

CAL Fire Map Got Updated!

This is the updated fire map for RPV and it shows that maybe half of the city is outside of the red zone.

In the prior year almost all of RPV was red! In fact almost the entire Peninsula was in the red zone.



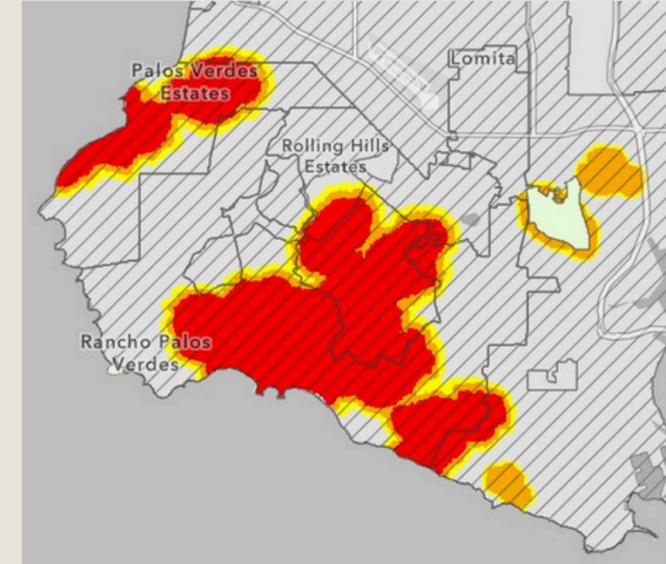
Prior Year's Fire Map for RPV

So Does That Mean Your House is Outside of the Fire Zone?

Yes and No. Per the Cal Fire Map, if your house is not located in the red, yellow or orange zone, it's located in the LRA. Meaning, the local jurisdiction is responsible for the fire protection.

If you're in **Rancho Palos Verdes**, it's still stated in their city code that the entire city must construct to VHFSZ (Very High Fire Severity Zone) construction measures.

If you're in **Rolling Hills Estates**, or anywhere that utilizes LA County Building Codes, it mandates VHFSZ construction measures.



Fire Map 2025 for PV

What Does that Mean For Construction in this Area?

For the immediate future, any new construction or addition will need to abide by current codes.

- Class A Roofing
- Non-combustible materials on exterior surfaces
- Tempered Glazing on Windows
- Eaves and soffits needs to be protected with non-combustible materials
- Vents need to be VHFSZ approved vents or unvented construction assembly
- Decks and trellises need to be non-combustible
- Defensible space landscaping





3. CAN I BUILD AN ADU?

Accessory Dwelling Units - ADU

Are you thinking of building an ADU in your backyard?

ADUs are state mandates and if the ADU is less than 800 sf, then homeowners can build an ADU in their backyard by right given certain development standards set forth by the State, such as setbacks, height and floor area.

However, if you're located in Palos Verdes Estates, the city has an ordinance in their municipal code that the ADU must not be smaller than 800 sf. Therefore any ADU to be constructed in PVE will have to abide by the development standards of the city including any lot coverage and floor area ratio.

ADUs became popular because, under state by-right law, homeowners could build an ADU in their backyard regardless of lot coverage or floor area ratio, provided the State's development standards were met.



ADU





There is a steep drop in front of this house and a hill in the back of the house.

4. Is Your House on a Slope?

On Palos Verdes Peninsula, the lot often determines the cost more than the house.

If your home sits near a slope — or the slope drops significantly below the structure — your foundation may require:

- Deep caissons (drilled concrete piers)
- Grade beams
- Reinforced retaining systems

In many cases, caissons alone can cost **\$80,000-\$150,000** before vertical construction even begins. Caissons may also be required for accessory structures, including decks.

Additionally, due to recent land movement across portions of the peninsula, geotechnical report review has become significantly more rigorous. It is not uncommon for **review cycles to take four to six months**.

What this means:

Before designing square footage, understand your soil.





5. Remodeling in RPV?

Neighborhood Compatibility

Are you thinking of remodeling in RPV?

Permitting could be very short, over the counter to a couple of months or **over a year**. If your remodel triggers neighborhood compatibility it can mean permitting for the long run.

Neighborhood Compatibility Trigger

- New Residence on a Vacant Lot
- Remodel of an existing residence where $\geq 50\%$ of the walls or floor area is demolished
- Additions that add
 - >750 sf of new floor area or
 - $>25\%$ expansion of the original total square footage of the home
 - the City counts total aggregate floor area that had been added since the house was originally constructed
- Second floor addition
- Second floor deck, balcony or roof deck that:
 - has an area of ≥ 80 sf and /or
 - projects more than 6' from the building's exterior
- Addition of a mezzanine that alters the exterior



Second Story Addition - After



Second Story Addition - Before



Next Step

Build once. Build intentionally.

If you're considering building or remodeling in Palos Verdes, I would be honored to guide the early stages of your project.

Schedule your BUILD READINESS CALL at:

 424-450-8926

 www.ReikoArchitecture.com

 Reiko@ReikoArchitecture.com

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Reiko Michlig, RA