



SAN JUAN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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POLICY

Kitchen (Food Preparation Area)

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Deputy Director/Chief Building Official

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BP-2006-03_CreationKit

Sam Gibboney, Director
Fred Schaller/Interim Chief Building Official

Revised **6/10/2015**

ISSUE: The San Juan County adopted codes and ordinances do not enumerate specific conditions that create a kitchen (food preparation area). This has caused confusion, misunderstanding, and disagreements regarding the regulatory requirements associated with what constitutes the creation of a dwelling unit.

ANALYSIS: It is generally agreed that the permanent installation of a cooking appliance constitutes the creation of a kitchen. However, a kitchen is simply defined as “. . . an area used, or designed to be used, for the preparation of food;” per Section R202 of the IRC; or “. . . a room used for cooking or preparing food;” per Section 18.20.110 of the SJCC. Neither of these definitions limits a kitchen to an area which contains a permanently installed cooking appliance. Additionally, the National Electrical code has specific requirements for location of outlets associated with kitchen counters.

POLICY: The following policy shall apply in the determination and classification of a kitchen (food preparation area).

A kitchen exists where:

1. A permanently installed cooking appliance (kitchen range, oven, or cook top, etc.) is installed or designed to be installed. Installation of dedicated electrical circuits or fuel gas piping for these appliances shall indicate a design for installation, and
2. The cooking appliance is located in an area not designed as a laundry room, toilet room, bathing room, and/or utility room, etc. and the area contains a sink and a counter that are installed or which are designed to be installed as indicated by the design or placement of electrical outlets that are located within:
 - a. 24 inches above the counter; and/or
 - b. 12 inches below the counter or to either side of counter; and/or
 - c. 8 feet of each other;

This revised policy shall supersede all other previous policies relative to this issue, shall take effect on June 10, 2015, and shall apply to all permit application submittals (or to revisions submitted to previously submitted permits and/or approved permits) submitted on or after this date.

Where special conditions exist, the Director, Deputy Director or Chief Building Official shall be permitted to approve modifications to this policy.