

AMENDED IN SENATE SEPTEMBER 6, 2001

AMENDED IN SENATE JULY 3, 2001

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 1, 2001

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2001–02 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1541

**Introduced by Assembly Member Dickerson
(Coauthor: Assembly Members Cox and Robert Pacheco)
(Coauthor: Senator Monteith)**

February 23, 2001

An act to amend Section 18009.3 of, and to add ~~Section 18033~~
Sections 18033 and 18033.1 to, the Health and Safety Code, relating to
park trailers.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1541, as amended, Dickerson. Park trailers: loft areas.

Existing law defines a recreational vehicle for purposes of the existing Mobilehome Residency Law, *the* Recreational Vehicle Park Occupancy Law, and the Mobilehome-Manufactured Housing Act of 1980 to include a park trailer. A park trailer is defined to mean a trailer designed for human habitation for recreational or seasonal use only, that, among other requirements, contains 400 square feet or less of gross floor area.

This bill would exclude loft area space ~~from consideration of the above-described requirement if the loft area space~~ *that* meets specified requirements *from the calculation of gross floor area in that definition*.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 18009.3 of the Health and Safety Code
2 is amended to read:

3 18009.3. (a) "Park trailer" means a trailer designed for
4 human habitation for recreational or seasonal use only, that meets
5 all of the following requirements:

6 (1) It contains 400 square feet or less of gross floor area,
7 excluding loft area space if that loft area space meets the
8 requirements of subdivision (b) and Section 18033. It may not
9 exceed 14 feet in width at the maximum horizontal projection.

10 (2) It is built upon a single chassis.

11 (3) It may only be transported upon the public highways with
12 a permit issued pursuant to Section 35780 of the Vehicle Code.

13 (b) For purposes of this section and Section 18033, "loft area"
14 means any area within a unit that is elevated 30 inches or more
15 above the main floor area and designed to be occupied. In order for
16 the floor of a loft area to be occupied and excluded from the
17 calculation of gross floor area for purposes of subdivision (a), the
18 loft area shall meet all of the requirements of Section 18033. Loft
19 areas not meeting the requirements of this subdivision and Section
20 18033 shall not be occupied and shall be posted with a permanent
21 label conspicuously located within 24 inches of the opening of
22 each noncomplying loft. The label language and design shall
23 provide the following:

24
25 **WARNING**

26 This area is not designed to be occupied and shall be used only
27 for storage.

28
29 Lettering on this label shall contrast with the label's background
30 and shall be not less than one-quarter inch in height, except for the
31 word "WARNING" which shall be not less than one-half inch in
32 height.

33 (c) A park trailer hitch, when designed by the manufacturer to
34 be removable, may be removed and stored beneath a park trailer.

35 (d) If any provision of this section or Section 18033 conflicts
36 with ANSI Standard A119.5 Recreational Park Trailers as it is
37 published at any time, the statutory provision shall prevail.



1 SEC. 2. Section 18033 is added to the Health and Safety Code,
2 to read:

3 18033. Each loft area excluded from the gross floor area
4 pursuant to Section 18009.3 shall comply with all of the following
5 requirements:

6 (a) A loft ceiling shall be a minimum of 54 inches above the loft
7 floor for not less than 50 percent of the total loft ceiling area, or
8 50 inches above the loft floor for not less than 70 percent of the
9 total loft ceiling area. The ceiling height shall be measured from
10 the highest point of the finished floor of the loft area to the finished
11 ceiling.

12 (b) The floor of the loft area is designed to withstand at least 30
13 pounds per square foot live load.

14 (c) The combined floor area of all loft areas shall not exceed 50
15 percent of the total gross floor area of the unit.

16 (d) Each loft shall be accessed only by use of a stairway and not
17 a ladder or any other means. The stairway shall be constructed as
18 follows:

19 (1) The stairs shall have a maximum rise of nine inches and a
20 minimum tread of seven and one-quarter inches. The riser shall be
21 an open-type riser design. The riser height and the tread run shall
22 be allowed a maximum variation of one-quarter inch between each
23 step. The stairway width shall be a minimum of 22 inches as
24 measured along the step tread.

25 (2) The stairs shall be capable of supporting 50 pounds per
26 square foot.

27 (3) Each stairway serving a loft shall be provided with a
28 handrail not less than 34 inches in height as measured horizontally
29 from the nose of the step tread. The stairway handrail must be
30 designed to withstand a 20-pound load per lineal foot applied
31 horizontally at right angles to the top rail. The handrail shall be
32 continuous the full length of the stairs.

33 (4) The handgrip portion of the handrail shall not be less than
34 one and one-quarter inches nor more than two inches in
35 cross-sectional dimension, or the shape shall provide an equivalent
36 gripping surface. The handgrip portion of the handrail shall have
37 a smooth surface with no sharp corners. The handrail projection
38 from a wall or other similar surface shall have a space of not less
39 than one and one-half inches between the wall and the handrail.
40 Handrails installed on the open side of stairways shall have



1 intermediate rails or an ornamental pattern installed as specified
2 in paragraph (1) of subdivision (e).

3 (e) Each loft area shall have guardrails located at open areas
4 and at the open side of the stairway. The guardrail shall comply
5 with all of the following:

6 (1) Guardrails shall have intermediate rails or an ornamental
7 pattern so that a sphere four inches in diameter cannot pass
8 through, except that triangular openings at the open side of a
9 stairway may be of a size that a sphere six inches in diameter
10 cannot pass through.

11 (2) Guardrails shall be capable of supporting a load of 20
12 pounds per lineal foot applied horizontally at right angles at the top
13 of the rail.

14 (3) The guard rail shall be a minimum of 34 inches in height as
15 measured from the finished floor covering of the loft area to the
16 top of the rail.

17 (f) Each loft area shall have a minimum of two exits complying
18 with ANSI Standard A119.5 Recreational Park Trailers, Chapter
19 3, one of which may be the stairway. Each alternate exit shall
20 comply with both of the following:

21 (1) Lead directly to the exterior of the park trailer.

22 (2) The location of each alternate exit shall meet all
23 requirements for access, operation, size markings, and
24 identification as specified in ANSI Standard A119.5 Recreational
25 Park Trailers, Chapter 3, for alternate exits.

26 (g) The loft area shall be provided with light and ventilation
27 consistent with ANSI Standard A119.5 Recreational Park Trailers,
28 Chapter 3. In addition to the smoke detector or detectors to serve
29 the main floor, an additional smoke detector shall be installed in
30 each loft area and shall comply with the requirements in ANSI
31 Standard A119.5 Recreational Park Trailers, Chapter 3.

32 ~~(i)~~

33 (h) The following electrical requirements shall be followed:

34 (1) At least one recessed light fixture shall be installed over the
35 stairway. Each recessed light over a stairway shall be operated by
36 a three-way switch with one switch located at the main floor and
37 one switch located in the loft area. Both light switches shall be
38 located immediately adjacent to each stairway. Additional lighting
39 in the loft area shall only be of the recessed type.



1 (2) Wiring methods and receptacle placement shall be installed
2 per the requirements in ANSI Standard A119.5 Recreational Park
3 Trailers, Chapter 1.

4 *SEC. 3. Section 18033.1 is added to the Health and Safety*
5 *Code, to read:*

6 *18033.1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares that certain*
7 *park trailer units with lofts that do not comply with Section*
8 *18009.3, as amended in 2001, and Section 18033 were designed*
9 *and manufactured for residential occupancy in the lofts, and were*
10 *sold and occupied in this state prior to January 3, 2001. On or*
11 *about January 3, 2001, the department issued an information*
12 *bulletin informing local government building code enforcement*
13 *agencies, park trailer manufacturers and dealerships, and other*
14 *interested parties that, in fact, many of these park trailers did not*
15 *comply with applicable standards with respect to the lofts and*
16 *related areas and therefore were not recreational vehicles or park*
17 *trailers, as defined by this part.*

18 *(b) (1) In order to ensure reasonable standards of public safety*
19 *while avoiding undue hardship to purchasers of park trailers with*
20 *lofts that are in substantial compliance with Section 18009.3, as*
21 *amended in 2001, and Section 18033, park trailers with lofts shall*
22 *be deemed to comply with those sections if there is compliance with*
23 *all of the following requirements of this subdivision and*
24 *subdivision (c):*

25 *(A) They were manufactured prior to January 3, 2001, and sold*
26 *prior to June 3, 2001.*

27 *(B) The notices described in subdivision (c) are provided as*
28 *specified in subdivision (c).*

29 *(2) For purposes of this subdivision, “substantial compliance”*
30 *shall require being constructed and maintained in a manner*
31 *consistent with Section 18009.3, as amended in 2001, and Section*
32 *18033, except for the following:*

33 *(A) Notwithstanding Section 18009.3, as amended in 2001, and*
34 *Section 18033, ceilings of lofts shall be a minimum height of 50*
35 *inches above the loft floor for not less than 70 percent of the total*
36 *loft ceiling area. One exit window shall be provided in all lofts used*
37 *for human habitation, providing an unobstructed opening of at*
38 *least 484 square inches, with a minimum dimension of 22 inches*
39 *in any direction. The window shall be located on a wall or roof*
40 *located opposite the access stairs to the loft area.*



1 (B) Notwithstanding Section 18009.3, as amended in 2001, and
2 Section 18033, stairs serving as access to or egress from lofts shall
3 not be required to comply with the provisions for rise and run as
4 described in paragraph (1) of subdivision (c) of Section 18009.3
5 if the stairs are provided with a complying handrail as provided in
6 paragraph (4) of subdivision (c) of Section 18009.3.

7 (c) For purposes of being deemed in compliance pursuant to
8 this section, a park trailer with one or more lofts shall comply with
9 the following paragraphs:

10 (1) Within 24 inches of the opening of each loft, a permanent
11 label shall be posted conspicuously, which states, in letters not less
12 than one-half inch in height and in a color contrasting with the
13 sign's background and wall color, the following:

14
15 “NOTICE: THIS LOFT AREA AND THE STAIRS DO NOT
16 COMPLY WITH CODES IN EFFECT ON JANUARY 1,
17 2002, AND MAY BE DIFFICULT TO EXIT FROM IN THE
18 EVENT OF A FIRE.”

19
20 (2) The manufacturer of each park trailer subject to this section
21 shall, to the extent feasible, mail the purchaser of the park trailer
22 a written notice entitled, in bold 16-point type, the following:

23
24 “WARNING: LOFT AREAS AND STAIRS IN YOUR PARK
25 TRAILER DO NOT COMPLY WITH STANDARDS IN
26 EFFECT ON OR AFTER JANUARY 1, 2002. EXTRA CARE
27 MAY BE REQUIRED TO EXIT FROM A LOFT IN THE
28 EVENT OF A FIRE.”

29
30 This notice also shall set forth the provisions of this section and
31 shall provide the name, address, and telephone number of a person
32 to whom the owner may address questions.

33 (3) If the owner rents or otherwise provides for consideration
34 the park trailer subject to this section, the owner shall provide a
35 written notice to the occupant that provides, in bold 16-point type,
36 the following:

37
38 “WARNING: LOFT AREAS AND STAIRS IN YOUR PARK
39 TRAILER DO NOT COMPLY WITH STANDARDS IN
40 EFFECT ON OR AFTER JANUARY 1, 2002. EXTRA CARE



1 MAY BE REQUIRED TO EXIT FROM A LOFT IN THE
2 EVENT OF A FIRE.”

3

4 (d) If the lofts and stairs of any park trailer do not comply with
5 the requirements of this section, Section 18009.3, as amended in
6 2001, and Section 18033, the park trailer shall be deemed not in
7 substantial compliance with this section, the loft area may not be
8 used for human habitation but only for storage, and the loft area
9 shall comply with the signage requirements prescribed by
10 subdivision (b) of Section 18009.3.

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