

California Local Agencies AB 978 Recycling Requirement Basics

Effective January 1, 2026

CALCIMA

California Construction and Industrial Materials Association

Presentation Overview

- ▶ Applicability
- ▶ Background
- ▶ AB 978 Bill Text Requirements
- ▶ Benefits
- ▶ Material Guidance
 - ▶ Asphalt
 - ▶ Base & Subbase
 - ▶ Concrete

Background

- ▶ AB 978 builds upon existing law enacted in 2014 (Public Resources Code, section 42704.5, as added by AB 2355, Chapter #609-2014)
- ▶ AB 2355 required a local agency to adopt Caltrans' standards for recycled paving materials, recycled base, subbase, concrete, and pervious backfill materials

Applicability

Applies to:

- ▶ All local agencies that have jurisdiction over streets or highways

Exceptions:

- ▶ Counties with less than 100k population
- ▶ Cities with less than 25k population
- ▶ Special designated districts (sewer, water, fire...)

AB 978 Bill Text Requirements

- ▶ Beginning January 1, 2026 and with no sunset date
- ▶ Requires local agency specifications *to allow for the use of recycled materials at or above the level* allowed by Caltrans, per the most current Standard Specifications.
- ▶ Existing law requires the Department of Transportation and a local agency that has jurisdiction over a street or highway...to use advanced technologies and material recycling techniques that reduce the cost of maintaining and rehabilitating streets and highways

Local Agency Benefits

- ▶ Greater sustainability and environmental benefits
 - ▶ Waste reduction and lower GHG emissions overall
 - ▶ Conservation of natural resources
- ▶ Consistency with State Standards
 - ▶ Helps planning and procurement with other ongoing projects
- ▶ Improved long term performance through innovations
 - ▶ Recycled materials have proven performance when included responsibly
- ▶ Reduces material extraction, manufacturing, and transportation costs
- ▶ Promotes sustainable best practices for future generations



Material Guidance

Asphalt Requirements

- ▶ Material compliance with Caltrans Section 39
- ▶ Section 39-2.02B(5)
 - ▶ You may substitute RAP for part of the virgin aggregate in a quantity up to 25 percent of the aggregate blend.
- ▶ AB 978 allows local entities to permit beyond current Caltrans standards
- ▶ Future Innovations that will apply to AB 978
 - ▶ Caltrans working on 40% RAP inclusion for HMA
 - ▶ Caltrans working on 10% RAP inclusion for RHMA

Base and Subbase Requirements

▶ Caltrans Subbase Section 25-1.02A

- ▶ Aggregate for Class 1, 2, 3, and 4 AS must be clean and consist of any combination of the following:
 - ▶ Broken stone, Crushed gravel, Natural rough surfaced gravel, Sand
 - ▶ *Reclaimed processed asphalt concrete, PCC, LCB, or CTB*

▶ Caltrans Section 26 1.02A

- ▶ Aggregate must be clean and consist of any combination of the following:
 - ▶ Broken stone, Crushed gravel, Natural rough surfaced gravel, Sand
 - ▶ *Reclaimed processed asphalt concrete, PCC, LCB, or CTB*

Concrete Requirements

- ▶ Supplementary Cementitious Materials (SCM) per 90-1.02B(3)
- ▶ Reclaimed coarse aggregate per 90-1.02C(2)
 - ▶ Aggregate must still meet all performance and quality characteristics per ASTM C33 and be from a quarry on the authorized material list
- ▶ For minor concrete you may use crushed concrete, reclaimed aggregate or both, if they comply with the specification for aggregate per section 90

For more information

- ▶ Contact CalCIMA at 916-554-1000
 - ▶ Asphalt - Cameron Richardson: crichardson@calcima.org
 - ▶ Concrete and Aggregates - Charley Rea: crea@calcima.org
- ▶ Please reach out to your local material producer