

# Did you know...?

**1** That garages were built to provide required off-street parking.

**2** Generally, single-family dwellings require two off-street parking spaces behind the required front yard.

**3** You may be able to legalize your garage conversion provided you can replace required parking eliminated by the conversion.

**4** Garages observing less than the required side or rear yard cannot be converted to living purposes without a zoning variance or special permit.

**5** These requirements pertain to garages converted to bedrooms and not those garages converted to illegal dwelling units.



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO



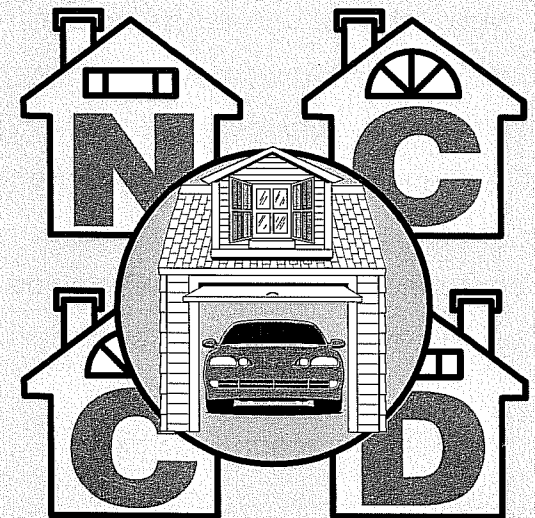
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*In Partnership With Neighborhoods*

City of San Diego



## Health and Safety Concerns Unpermitted Garage Conversions



# Garage Conversions

As the regulations for "Garage Conversions" can be somewhat complicated, the purpose of this publication is to simply give the reader an overview of the requirements. It is very important that you consult with the City on your particular situation, Neighborhood Code Compliance (NCC) and Development Services (DS). City staff are prepared to assist you with your conversion project. **Permits are required. Additionally, there are Zoning requirements that must be met.** Taking the time to research the regulations and consulting with our staff will help you avoid costly mistakes and penalties.

For information regarding obtaining a permit, call 446-5000. To report an illegal garage conversion, call 236-5500.

## Basic Requirements of Habitable Rooms

- Habitable rooms within a dwelling unit require natural light from a window. The window must be at least 10% of the floor area square footage, have a minimum of 10 square feet.
- Habitable rooms must have natural ventilation from a window or a door to the outside. The opening needs to be at least 1/20 of the floor space or a minimum of 5 square feet.
- Rooms used for sleeping must have an escape or rescue window with a minimum opening of 5.7 square feet and a finished sill height not more than 44 inches above the floor.
- Ceiling heights in habitable space must be a minimum 7' 6" (there are a few exceptions).
- Habitable rooms must be provided with heating facilities capable of maintaining room temperature to 70 degrees at a point 3 feet above the floor.
- Smoke detection device must be installed in the room/space if it is a bedroom.
- Gas water heaters cannot be placed in this room/space if it is a bedroom.
- At least one wall-controlled light switch must be installed in the room/space.
- Electrical wall outlets must be spaced so that no point along the floor line is more than 6 feet from an outlet.
- Under no Circumstances shall a private garage have any opening into a room used for sleeping purposes.

### Neighborhood Code Compliance Mission:

*"To work in partnership with communities to maintain and promote a safe, desirable, and quality city."*