

INFRASTRUCTURE POWERING SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA'S ECONOMY



Southern California is one of the nation's most important trade and logistics hubs. Warehouses and industrial facilities are an essential part of the supply chain to keep goods moving and support one in nine jobs in the region.



Hospitals depend on warehouses to ensure vaccines and medical supplies are available when patients need them.



Schools rely on a steady supply of healthy food for students' lunches.



Farmers up and down California's Central Valley use warehouses to store and move almonds, dairy, fruits, and other produce to markets around the world.

In each case, warehouses help make sure the goods people depend on are where they need to be, when they need them.

AN ECONOMIC ENGINE FOR SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

1.45M

Total jobs supported
(direct, indirect, induced)

\$196B

Total contribution to
regional value added (GDP)

~11%

Share of 4-county GDP
anchored in industrial space

SUPPORTING AN INTERCONNECTED REGIONAL ECOSYSTEM

Where supply chain infrastructure is located, matters; proximity to ports, major transportation corridors, suppliers, and labor markets as well as businesses, schools, and communities help goods move efficiently and reliably. Locating warehouses near customers also ensures a redundant and resilient system.

Proximity of warehouses to ports, rail lines, highways, and transportation corridors ensures reliable access to food, medicine, medical supplies, and other essential products.

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of the nation's
containerized trade flows
through the Port of Los
Angeles and Long Beach.



*The Industrial Ecosystem's Economic Contributions to Southern California, Beacon Economics and Pepperdine University, June 2026.

Map: US Census TIGER 2024; OpenStreetMap contributors.

NOT ALL WAREHOUSES ARE THE SAME

The word “warehouse” describes a wide range of facilities with different purposes, operations, and safety considerations. Understanding those differences is important when evaluating safety standards and public policy.



DISTRIBUTION CENTERS

Receive and store goods in bulk before distribution to retailers, wholesalers, or other destinations.



E-COMMERCE FULFILLMENT CENTERS

Store, package, and ship individual products directly to consumers.



COLD STORAGE & FOOD-GRADE FACILITIES

Maintain temperature-controlled environments for food, pharmaceuticals, vaccines, and other perishables.

ENSURING A SAFE, RELIABLE SUPPLY CHAIN

Warehouse properties are subject to extensive state and local regulations by **more than 20 agencies** that require ongoing review to ensure the safety of workers, neighboring communities, and the environment.

TYPE OF REGULATION	STATE	LOCAL	ANNUAL INSPECTION
Land Use & Zoning: Determine where warehouse facilities may be located and what uses are allowed.	✓	✓	
Building & Fire Safety: Building departments and fire agencies oversee construction, occupancy, fire protection systems, and ongoing safety requirements.	✓	✓	✓
Environmental Review: Oversee applicable environmental review, stormwater, and hazardous-materials requirements.	✓	✓	✓
Workplace Safety: Establish and enforce requirements designed to protect employees and promote safe working conditions.	✓		✓
Transportation: Review issues including truck access, designated truck routes, loading facilities, and traffic impacts.	✓	✓	
Air Quality: Regulate applicable emissions and air-quality requirements.	✓	✓	✓

SPECIALIZED FEATURES TRIGGER ADDITIONAL OVERSIGHT

Cold Storage & Refrigeration: Temperature-controlled facilities serving food, pharmaceuticals, vaccines, and other perishables may face additional refrigeration-system, fire/life-safety, hazardous-materials, and workplace-safety requirements. Facilities using ammonia above applicable threshold quantities may be subject to the California Accidental Release Prevention (CalARP) Program, including preparation and submission of a Risk Management Plan addressing accidental-release prevention and emergency response.

Rooftop Solar: Commercial solar projects typically move through feasibility, engineering and design, plan check, construction/inspection, and utility interconnection. Review can include structural and electrical engineering, fire-access requirements, rapid-shutdown systems, field inspection, and utility Permission to Operate.

Hazardous Materials: Storage of regulated materials can trigger hazardous-materials business plans, CUPA oversight, fire permits, and additional reporting or risk-management requirements.

High-Piled Storage: Storage height and commodity classification can trigger specialized fire permits and ongoing requirements; changes to commodities, rack layouts, or storage heights can prompt re-inspection.

EXTENSIVE OVERSIGHT ENSURES SAFE WAREHOUSE OPERATIONS

Warehouses operate under regulatory oversight designed to ensure they are built, maintained, and operated safely. From the earliest stages of development, warehouse projects navigate a matrix of state, local and regional laws, permits and requirements, often involving multiple agencies with different areas of jurisdiction. Once operational, facilities are subject to ongoing inspections, safety standards, environmental requirements, fire and life-safety codes, building regulations and other rules that govern how they operate. Additional requirements may apply for food, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, hazardous materials, and other specialized products stored within the facility.

Compliance does not end when a warehouse opens its doors; facilities must remain in compliance throughout their operating life, with inspections, maintenance, monitoring and regulatory requirements helping ensure safe and reliable operations.

REGULATORY AGENCIES INVOLVED IN PERMITTING AND INSPECTING WAREHOUSES

More than 20 state and local agencies oversee warehouse development and operations in Los Angeles County.*

FEDERAL	STATE AGENCIES	REGIONAL	LOS ANGELES COUNTY	CITY OF LOS ANGELES
■ Environmental Protection Agency ■ US Army Corps of Engineers ■ Department of Labor / OSHA ■ Department of Transportation	■ California Air Resources Board ■ California Coastal Commission ■ California Department of Fish and Wildlife ■ Caltrans ■ Department of Industrial Relations – Cal/OSHA ■ State Department of Conservation ■ State Water Resources Control Board ■ CalEPA	■ South Coast Air Quality Management District ■ Regional Water Quality Control Boards	■ Building and Safety Division ■ Department of Regional Planning ■ Environmental Programs Division ■ Fire Department / Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) ■ Geotechnical and Materials Engineering Division ■ Land Development Division ■ Planning Division ■ Public Works ■ Stormwater Engineering Division	■ Building and Safety ■ Bureau of Engineering ■ Bureau of Sanitation ■ Department of Water and Power ■ Fire Department / Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) ■ Planning ■ Public Works ■ Transportation

*Partial list.