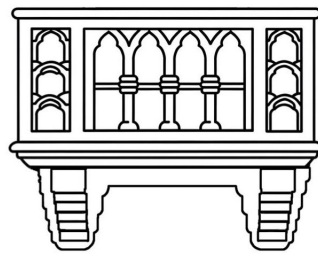


# Balcony Assurance Group Launches as California SB-721 Deadline Looms—Six Months Remain After July 1st

*The Deck & Railing Risk Management Experts behind the Balcony Assurance process launch independent firm to assist CA apartment owners/managers manage SB-721*

SAN DIEGO, CA, UNITED STATES, June 26, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Balcony Assurance Group (BAG) officially launched this month as California apartment owners face a critical countdown: just six months remain after July 1st to complete mandatory [SB-721](#) inspections before the January 1, 2026 deadline. The firm is led by the original experts behind the Balcony Assurance methodology—a specialized inspection process developed in response to the tragic 2015 Berkeley balcony collapse that killed seven people and led to California's balcony inspection laws.



## Balcony Assurance Group

Balcony Assurance Group: The Deck & Railing Risk Management Experts

“

Property owners receive clear, actionable intelligence about their assets' true condition, allowing informed decisions about repairs, budgeting, and long-term asset management.”

*Steve Hill*

The Berkeley tragedy exposed the hidden dangers of wood-framed exterior elevated elements (EEOs), where water intrusion can cause catastrophic structural failure without visible warning signs. This prompted California legislators to pass SB-721 in 2018, requiring apartment owners to inspect at least 15% of balconies, decks, stairways, and elevated walkways at properties with three or more units.

"We've been refining our approach for nearly a decade, serving clients who recognized the critical safety risks long

before compliance became mandatory," said Brian Hill, Director of Balcony Assurance at BAG and creator of the proprietary [Balcony Assurance process](#). "With only six months remaining,

property owners need experienced partners who can deliver both compliance and actionable insights efficiently."

Brian Hill began developing the Balcony Assurance methodology even before SB-721 was enacted, recognizing that traditional visual inspections were insufficient for detecting concealed structural deterioration. His evidence-based approach has become the industry standard for evaluating wood-framed EEEs, particularly those with challenging configurations like Juliet balconies and railings.

The BAG leadership team—including Brian Hill, Senior Consultant and Licensed General Contractor Steve Hill, and Senior Project Manager Scott Riffenburgh—brings unparalleled experience from leading the Balcony Assurance division at The VERTEX Companies. Together, they have investigated tens of thousands of Exterior Elevated Elements across thousands of California buildings, from small apartment complexes to major institutional properties including UC San Diego's student housing.

"This extensive field experience includes particular expertise in addressing Juliet balconies and railings, whose structural attachments to wood framing are often buried within multiple layers of waterproofing and exterior cladding materials," explained Steve Hill, who leverages decades of experience personally inspecting and, where necessary, destructively testing EEEs.

BAG's exclusive three-phase Balcony Assurance process, developed specifically for SB-721 compliance, provides apartment owners with unprecedented control over compliance timelines and costs:

**Phase 1: Strategic Assessment** – Comprehensive pre-inspection analysis to identify all EEEs subject to the law, optimize sampling strategies, and minimize required inspections while ensuring full legal compliance. This phase can save property owners tens of thousands of dollars per evaluation cycle.

**Phase 2: Evidence-Based Screening** – Advanced diagnostic techniques, including borescope technology, thermal analysis, and minimally invasive testing methods to assess concealed structural components without extensive destructive testing. The process leaves no trace of inspection activity.

**Phase 3: Actionable Reporting** – Detailed findings with prioritized recommendations, repair specifications, and ongoing maintenance guidance to extend asset life and reduce future compliance costs. Reports meet all SB-721 documentation requirements.

"Our evidence-based approach eliminates guesswork," explained Steve Hill. "Property owners receive clear, actionable intelligence about their assets' true condition, allowing informed decisions about repairs, budgeting, and long-term asset management."

The urgency cannot be overstated. SB-721 requires property owners who receive reports recommending repairs to obtain permits within 120 days and complete repairs within an additional 120 days, or face daily fines. Emergency conditions must be addressed immediately, including restricting access to dangerous EEEs.

"The longer property owners wait, the fewer options they'll have for scheduling inspections and securing qualified contractors," said Scott Riffenburgh, who oversees BAG's operations. "We're seeing increased demand as the deadline approaches, and the shortage of qualified inspectors will intensify."

BAG serves apartment owners, property managers, and institutional clients including universities, senior housing facilities, and affordable housing providers—all subject to SB-721 requirements.

#### About Balcony Assurance Group LLC

Balcony Assurance Group (BAG) is a specialized advisory and inspection firm providing expert guidance on safety, compliance, and risk management of exterior elevated elements for property owners nationwide. Founded by a team with extensive experience leading EEE assurance services, BAG offers regulatory compliance advisory, hands-on inspection services, proactive risk management, and repair project oversight, delivering expert solutions to ensure long-term safety and integrity of EEEs.

Brian L. Hill

Balcony Assurance Group LLC

+1 619-800-2540

[contact@balconyassurance.com](mailto:contact@balconyassurance.com)

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