

No. B14-02
September 17, 2014

What's New? – Updates to the BC Building Code Effective December 19, 2014

In July and September 2014, two Minister's Orders were signed updating the 2012 BC Building Code. These updates consist primarily of revisions already adopted by the model National Building Code that need to be adopted into the 2012 BC Building Code. In addition, several B.C. variations are included.

Bulletins B14-03 through B14-07 provide some background for each of the B.C. specific changes. Some background is also provided for significant changes to the National Building Code that are being adopted into the BC Building Code. The first bulletin (B14-03) outlines miscellaneous changes and explains adjustments to selected National Building Code revisions. The other four bulletins each outline changes related to specific topics: daycare facilities, ventilation, "rainscreen" assemblies and radon. On December 19, 2014 these new requirements for the BC Building Code will come into effect. Below is a brief description of each bulletin.

B14-03: Miscellaneous Changes – This bulletin outlines miscellaneous code changes, lists errata and clarifies the intent of some requirements.

B14-04: Daycare Facilities – The requirements for infant daycares in the 2012 BC Building Code was unclear, which led to inconsistent interpretation amongst local governments. This bulletin explains changes to achieve consistent and acceptable levels of building safety for infant daycare facilities. The new code clarifies small wood-frame buildings (A2) as an acceptable building type for daycares and that those requirements will apply regardless of the age of the children. In addition, there are further requirements where 1 or more infants are accommodated (an infant is any child under the age of 30 months). All other applicable requirements of the BC Building Code must still be followed. The changes allow for more building options for daycare providers while maintaining an acceptable level of safety.

B14-05: 9.32. Ventilation – This bulletin introduces new requirements for the ventilation of residential dwelling units, such as: houses, apartments and secondary suites. Instead of relying solely on uncontrolled air infiltration to supply fresh air, these new requirements are designed to ensure adequate ventilation by helping to improve airflow in dwelling units. By requiring an exhaust fan as well as ducted supply air, fresh air will be continuously distributed to every bedroom and exhausted continuously from a principle exhaust fan.

B14-06: Calculating the Effective Thermal Resistance of “Rainscreen” Wall Assemblies – This bulletin clarifies how to calculate the thermal performance of “rainscreen” assemblies. The appendix to Section 9.36. Energy Efficiency does not provide sufficient information to calculate the performance of these common assemblies, and this bulletin provides code users with the required information to apply Section 9.36. to these assemblies. The Homeowner Protection Office has also created educational, illustrated guides to help explain the new energy efficiency requirements for houses in BC. The guides can be found here: <http://www.hpo.bc.ca/energy-efficiency-requirements>.

B14-07: New Radon Rough-in Requirements – Radon gas is an odourless, colourless and tasteless, naturally occurring radioactive substance produced by the decay of uranium in soil and rocks. Previously, British Columbians living in areas with a known elevated risk of radon were required to install a capped rough-in in preparation for the future installation of a radon mitigation system. The Province is now changing the rough-in requirements for future radon mitigation to include a radon vent pipe that extends to the outside (through the roof or wall of the home) in areas known to have elevated indoor concentrations of radon.

All changes to the BC Building Code are adopted by Ministerial Order and can be found here: <http://www.housing.gov.bc.ca/building/code/revisions.htm>. The online version of the code will be updated on December 19, 2014 to reflect all the changes in the Minister’s Orders. Registered purchasers of paper codes will receive email notification containing replacement pages which may be printed and inserted into existing code binders.