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New Letters of Assurance in the BC Building Code

On July 19, 2010, Minister of Housing Rich Coleman announced changes to Building Code Letters of Assurance, which come into effect September 1, 2010. Letters of Assurance were introduced in the 1992 Building Code as an accountability mechanism, to provide assurance that building design and construction are substantially in compliance with the Code and that the necessary field reviews have been completed. The set of standard Schedules and the "Guide to the Letters of Assurance in the BC Building Code" were developed by a technical committee made up of representatives from the Architectural Institute of BC, the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC, the Building Officials Association of BC, the Union of BC Municipalities, and the Provincial branch responsible for building regulations.

As construction practices, technologies, and processes evolve, they require that building regulatory tools, such as the Letters of Assurance, change as well. The Province of BC reconvened a technical committee comprising the original associations who created the Letters of Assurance to propose changes that:

- clarify the roles and responsibilities of individuals who sign Letters of Assurance;
- address energy and water efficiency in Letters of Assurance Requirements; and
- extending application to include some geotechnical components and some sprinkler and standpipe systems in Part 9 buildings.

Letters of Assurance, located in Division C of the BC Building Code, consist of the following Schedules:

- Schedule A: Confirmation of Commitment by Owner and a Coordinating Registered Professional
- Schedule B: Assurance of Professional Design and Commitment for Field Review & Summary of Design and Field Review Requirements
- Schedule C-A: Assurance of Coordination of Professional Field Review
- Schedule C-B: Assurance of Professional Field Review and Compliance

The new Letters of Assurance requirements come into effect on September 1, 2010 and will apply to all new construction and renovations in BC. The new requirements will apply to building permit applications submitted on or after September 1, 2010.

More information on the changes and revised schedules is available at <http://www.housing.gov.bc.ca/building/consultation/loa/index.htm>.