

Did You Know?

WHERE THE ACT APPLIES

In all parts of the province except the City of Vancouver and on federal lands such as airports.

WHO THE ACT AFFECTS

Everyone involved in the building sector, including:

- » *Local governments and other local authorities that enforce the BC Building Code;*
- » *Treaty First Nations and the Nisga'a Lisims Government;*
- » *Building officials; and*
- » *People working in the building construction industry.*

BC BUILDING CODE

The BC Building Code will continue its usual five-year cycle of updates, with minor updates in between.

British Columbia typically adopts the national model codes about two years after they are published.

The next editions of the national model codes will be published in late 2015.



For More Information

For more details please visit the website:
www.gov.bc.ca/buildingact

The *Building Act* website will be updated as sections of the act come into effect. The website hosts the Building Act Guide. The Guide is being prepared in sections as the regulations are developed and will explain:

- » What the act is;
- » How stakeholders are affected; and
- » New procedures resulting from the act.

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BUILDING ACT GUIDE SERIES: SECTION A3

The Building Act

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Office of Housing and
Construction Standards



THE BUILDING ACT

The Building Act is British Columbia's first act dedicated just to building and construction. It was introduced in spring 2015.

The act introduces three main changes to B.C.'s building regulatory system. The changes will modernize the system; increase efficiency and productivity; and support innovation.

Changes Under the Act

The *Building Act* introduces three main changes to B.C.'s building regulatory system.

1. CONSISTENCY

The act establishes the Province as the sole authority to set *building requirements*.

The objective is to create more consistent building requirements across B.C., while still providing local governments with flexibility to meet their needs.

WHAT ARE BUILDING REQUIREMENTS?

They are technical requirements for the construction, alteration, repair and demolition of buildings. A requirement can define the methods, materials, products, assemblies, dimensions or performance required by the regulation. Building requirements can be found in the BC Building Code (a provincial regulation) and other provincial building regulations.

If local governments have any existing building requirements in their bylaws that go beyond BC Building Code requirements, they will need to eliminate them.

Local governments will have two years to amend their bylaws, once these sections of the act take effect; after the two years, local building requirements will have no legal force.

In the future, if a local government has a compelling reason for a building requirement that differs from the BC Building Code, it can apply to the Province for a *variation*. If the minister approves the request, the Province will enact it as a provincial regulation.

2. COMPETENCY

The act establishes qualification requirements for building officials, to improve consistency in how the B.C. Building Code is interpreted, applied and enforced. Being qualified means building officials must:

- » Become a member of the Building Officials' Association of B.C.;
- » Pass exams according to the scope of their responsibilities; and
- » Undertake continuing professional development every year.

Building officials will have up to four years to meet the new requirements, once these sections of the act take effect.

3. INNOVATION

The act supports local governments and other local authorities through the implementation of a provincial review process to evaluate innovative building proposals. The Province will also be expanding the scope of the Building Code Appeal Board to include more complex appeals.

When Changes Take Effect

The *Building Act* comes into effect over time, with transition periods for the main changes, to give everyone time to adapt. Check the website to find out what is in effect now.

www.gov.bc.ca/buildingact