

From: OHCS Building & Safety Standards Branch OHCS:EX [<mailto:Building.Safety@gov.bc.ca>]
Sent: Tuesday, April 11, 2017 9:43 AM
To: OHCS Building & Safety Standards Branch OHCS:EX
Subject: Building Act Update: BC Energy Step Code

Dear Stakeholders:

I am pleased to announce the introduction of the BC Energy Step Code, as an amendment to the BC Building Code, effective immediately. The BC Energy Step Code is the result of a substantial consensus building process with a broad range of stakeholders over the past two years. Their contributions to this ongoing project have been invaluable.

As a technical regulation, the BC Energy Step Code is a voluntary compliance path within the BC Building Code (Subsections 9.36.6. and 10.2.3. of Division B). It establishes progressive performance targets (or steps) that support market transformation from the current energy-efficiency requirements in the BC Building Code to net zero energy ready buildings by 2032. The transition to net zero ready buildings by 2032 is a key commitment of the Province's Climate Leadership Plan.

The BC Energy Step Code only applies to new construction of the following building types:

- Residential (Part 9) – Province-wide.
- Multi-unit residential and commercial (business and personal services and mercantile) – only in climate zone 4 (i.e., Lower Mainland, southern Vancouver Island, southern Okanagan).

Building owners may voluntarily build to the requirements in the BC Energy Step Code. Incentives are available for achieving higher standards.

In addition to being a voluntary standard for builders, the BC Energy Step Code may also be referenced in local government bylaws and policies, enabling province-wide consistency of energy efficiency requirements across jurisdictions and replacing a patchwork of varying requirements. On December 15, 2017, section 5 of the *Building Act* will render local government bylaws with technical building requirements of no legal force, unless the bylaws concern what the *Building Act* calls 'unrestricted matters.' Local governments wishing to require higher energy-efficiency standards than those in the BC Building Code may now do so in a consistent and predictable way using the BC Energy Step Code.

Two matters have been added to the Building Act General Regulation's unrestricted matters list to support local government use of the BC Energy Step Code: the conservation of energy, and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. These two matters are unrestricted with two conditions:

- Local governments may not require buildings to be constructed except in conformance to a step in sections 9.36.6.3. or 10.2.3.3. of Division B of the British Columbia Building Code, and
- Local governments may not modify the requirements or impose requirements in addition to those in sections 9.36.6. or 10.2.3. of Division B of the British Columbia Building Code.

The Province has prepared [a guide to explain the provincial policy supporting the BC Energy Step Code](#) and its use and application by local governments and other local authorities. Additional educational materials and training opportunities will be available from the Energy Step Code Council in the coming months.

Please visit [our website](#) for more information:

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/construction-industry/building-codes-standards/energy-efficiency/energy-step-code>.

Questions about the BC Energy Step Code can be directed to the Building and Safety Standards Branch at Building.Safety@gov.bc.ca.

Please share this information as appropriate with others in your organization.

Sincerely,

Andrew Pape-Salmon, P.Eng., MRM, FCAE

Executive Director

Building and Safety Standards Branch