
NEWSLETTER

April 29, 2022

TO: Certified Professionals Practicing in the City of Vancouver

FROM: Saul Schwebs, Chief Building Official

SUBJECT: CP Newsletter - Spring/Summer 2022

1. Introducing Our New Deputy Chief Building Official



Please welcome Mr. Leighton Williams in his new role of Deputy Chief Building Official and Assistant Director of Building and Trade Inspections. Some of you may already know him, from his role of Manager of Building Inspections. Leighton joined the City in May 2013 as a District Building Inspector did a short period as a supervisor before accepting the role as Manager. Since joining the City, Leighton has worked to stay current with advances in the design and construction industries, including earning certifications from TECA and the Passive House Institute. He has also earned the designation of Registered Building Official from the BOABC.

Prior to joining the City, Leighton worked in a number of positions in the construction industry including distribution manager for a pre-fab home manufacturer, supervisor, site superintendent, project manager and owner of his own construction company. He also had a number of interesting jobs outside of construction including delivering hearses and serving in the Royal Air Force, where he achieved the rank of sergeant.

Leighton can be reached at leighton.williams@vancouver.ca and he looks forward to being of any assistance with our CP partners.

2. Good-Bye from Hollie

The past 15 years with the City of Vancouver has been an exciting chapter in my life since I had always worked in the private sector. It is with a bit of sadness that I must say adieu, so long and bye-bye as I have chosen the time is right for me to enjoy retirement. My official last day with the city will be May 2, 2022.

I have spent the last 10 years working directly with the CP Program. As your first CP Coordinator it has been fascinating participating with such a great program that went stagnant and stalled for awhile, to a completely flourishing program, full of growth and promise. It has been a pleasure to have worked with so many of you and the CP committee over the past years. Having been a part of seeing the program grow and with the transition to the professional association's leadership, it has been like watching a toddler grow and leave home. So many more new AHJs have joined and many new CPs have come from the continued success of the certification process. I wish the continued success and expansion to the program and all of you personally. You are by far the best group of professionals I have had the pleasure to work with and I thank you all for allowing this non professional woman to be considered an equal voice at your table.

3. Services Centre

On March 29th, 2022, we unlocked our doors to allow public access to the Services Centre without requiring the use of the buzzer from the outside.

It has been two years since we limited access into the Services Centre and through this time the front line teams have gone through many iterations of business transformation to support our customers. Currently, many of our customers are experiencing previous physical transactions for enquiries, permit applications, license applications via digital portals, while the 311 team continues to intercept our phone calls. Moving forward, we will continue with the 'Digital First' approach as we have demonstrated that this can be done and appears to be a more flexible alternative than waiting in line ups. Many of our services have already transitioned to online while others are still in the process of moving to that platform.

What will be different from current state when we unlock the doors?

The Concierge will be able to provide some assistance with creating Lagan cases and be able to show customers where information can be accessed online.

The Concierge will use the Reception Log to capture requests from those customers who attend in person to continuously assess our future service model.

All other services remain as current state.

What Services are currently available?

Pick up and drop off of plans

Cashier

Building plans/Microfiche viewing by appointment

Business License review by appointment

ECO appointments after Lagan review

4. Save the Date – Friday June 3, 2022

Spring 2022 CP Update Seminar

Registration for the Spring 2022 CP Update Seminar, presented by the Architectural Institute of British Columbia and Engineers and Geoscientists BC, closes May 26th, 2022. Due to public health concerns relating to COVID-19, this seminar will be offered via Zoom only. The Spring 2022 CP Update Seminar will be held from 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. on Friday, June 3, 2022, and is open to all CPs and their staff, as well as non-CPs. Participants will receive access to the PowerPoint slides via a web link.

The Spring 2022 CP Update Seminar will include updates from BSSB on BCBC and NBC 2020, AIBC and EGBC on the revised *Guide to the Letters of Assurance* and the new Provincial CP Manual, and NRC on *NRC's National Guide for Wildland-Urban Interface Fires*. We will also introduce four new CP AHJs.

The CP Seminar will be 4 hours and AIBC registrants will earn 3.75 Core Learning Units. For Registrants of Engineers and Geoscientists BC, this activity may contribute up to 4 CE Hours. The cost of this CP Seminar is \$100.00 +GST. Everyone must register before Thursday, May 26, 2022.

Registration details will be emailed to all CPs next week. For registration questions, please contact Krista Sutherland at ksutherland@aibc.ca or 604-305-2695.

Sent on behalf of the Certified Professionals Program

5. Amendments to the Vancouver Building By-Law

On June 1, 2021, new amendments to the Vancouver Building By-law took effect.

2019 Vancouver Building By-law Amendments Update Revision 4



We are pleased to announce the consolidation of amendments to the 2019 Vancouver Building By-law (Book I and Book II) effective as of February 8, 2022 has now been published within the online content.

To view the consolidated content (Queens Printer) online go to: <http://www.bcpublications.ca> [\[linker.eshelf.org\]](#)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR ONLINE USERS:

Where can I view content prior to February 8, 2022 online?

A “Point in time” folder has been created which allows you to view the content as it read prior to February 8, 2022. The “Point in time” folders are accessible within each Part (if applicable).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR BINDER/PRINT USERS:

How do I update a binder copy?

For all binder users, the revised sections are accessible and printable on your own device. To access and print the revised sections visit:

For Vancouver Building By-law (Book I)

- https://www.bccodes.ca/VBBL_2019_Revision_4.pdf
[\[linker.eshelf.org\]](#)

For Vancouver Plumbing By-law (Book II)

- https://www.bccodes.ca/VPBL_2019_Revision_4.pdf
[\[linker.eshelf.org\]](#)

6. Mechanical Permits

The Mechanical permit is required for any heating and cooling systems being installed as of July 01st 2022. The permit application is entirely online, and the majority of permits will be automatically issued. For Part 3 buildings, a sealed schematic drawing accompanied with a heat loss calculation will be required documents.

A commissioning inspection will be the only inspection required on Part 3 buildings.

[More Information Click Here](#)

- The objective of the new permit is to ensure that all heating systems are designed, sized, installed and commissioned correctly, by qualified professionals. Specifically, a mechanical permit will provide a regulatory mechanism to help ensure that:
 - building occupants have a reliable and professionally installed heating and cooling system;
 - the heating and cooling system operates efficiently; and
 - the direct financial costs of operating a zero emissions heating system are comparable to a natural gas heating system.
- The recommendations were developed in collaboration with local industry and were refined in consultation with professional associations, consultants, contractors and building owners. Local manufacturers and industry associations support these proposals.

7. Need to find DP number for you applications

Real time information of permits can be found using [this link](#).



8. Direct Connection of Residential Suites to Storage Garages in Multifamily Residential Buildings

The CBO and Building Policy Branch has observed that it has become increasingly common practice on complex building projects to rely upon the application of Article 3.2.1.2. of the Acceptable Solutions of Building By-law in order to designate structures constructed above a concrete slab as separate for the purposes of the construction requirements of Subsection 3.2.2. This is a permitted arrangement under the Building By-law in some circumstance, but over time – the extent and nature of such proposals has changed such that many arrangements are increasingly complex, and many of which now include proposals that singly or in combination:

- Identify multiple structures constructed above the concrete slab required by 3.2.1.2. as separate Part 9 buildings,
- Include direct access from the residential suites above the 3.2.1.2. concrete slab to the storage garage below,
- Introduce large amounts of storage and service rooms on the storage garage level which are directly connected with and associated with the residential suites above, or
- Incorporate private parking stalls and their egress directly into the dwelling unit above.

Many such arrangements do not clearly comply with the provisions of Article 3.2.1.2. of the Building By-law since this code provision still requires the basement structure and the structures above it to be treated as a single building, the basement must be used primarily as a storage garage, and in the case of Part 3 buildings, the overall height from the lowest floor to the highest floors of the residential suite cannot exceed 6m unless the floor assemblies are constructed as fire separations.

In order to address the complexities that flow from these building arrangements, the Chief Building Official's office wishes to remind Certified Professionals, that Alternative Solutions will be required where code compliance cannot be achieved. It is insufficient to rely upon a rationale that structures located above a 3.2.1.2. storage garage could have been constructed as Part 9 buildings. Nor is this rationale supportable by those statements in Vancouver Certified Professional Program Practice and Procedures Manual relating to the limited application of Part 9, as these are meant to apply to applicable buildings that explicitly comply with the criteria of Division A, Article 1.3.3.3.(1) of the Building By-law.

9. Reiteration of the CP's Role in Code Compliance

The Schedule CP-1 that's submitted with every CP permit application obligates the Certified Professional to provide "design review" of the plans and supporting documents prepared by each of the "Registered Professionals of Record" for the project. "Design review" means the activities necessary to ascertain that the design of the project will substantially comply, in all material respects, with the requirements of Division A; Division B, Parts 1 and 3; and Division C of the Building By-law.

We expect that CPs are doing a thorough design review of the drawings submitted with their permit applications as required by the CP-1. There has been an alarming uptick in deficiencies noted on permit drawings recently – e.g. wall assemblies that don't provide the required fire resistance rating, Alternative Solution mitigating features that differ from the accepted AL, door widths that are insufficient for exiting and/or accessibility. Note that these are all items that were indicated as compliant in the code compliance report and drawings, but are deficient on the architectural drawings.

10. Guide to Letters Of Assurance

The Building and Safety Standards Branch published an updated Guide to the Letters of Assurance in February: see <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/construction-industry/building-codes-and-standards/guides/2018guideloa.pdf> and update your links. This version of the Guide refers to the Vancouver Building By-law for the first time, although we have followed its processes for many years.

Please note that while guidance is provided for changes of professionals at various points during the building permit process (see Section 8 of the Guide), it is also clarified that the Authority Having Jurisdiction may have different requirements. The City of Vancouver will not accept a change in registered professional of record or coordinating registered professional prior to building permit issuance without resubmission of all applicable drawings and documents by the new (incoming) professional. Changes of Certified Professional in Vancouver follow the same process as changes of other professionals.

11. BP Before DP

In September 2021 City Council amended the Zoning & Development By-law to allow issuance of Stage 1 (excavation & shoring) of a building permit prior to the corresponding development permit in certain limited circumstances as approved by the Director of Planning. See <https://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/building-permit.aspx> for more information. If your clients are interested in this option for their eligible projects, please refer them to the Project Facilitator for the development.

12. Gentle Reminders

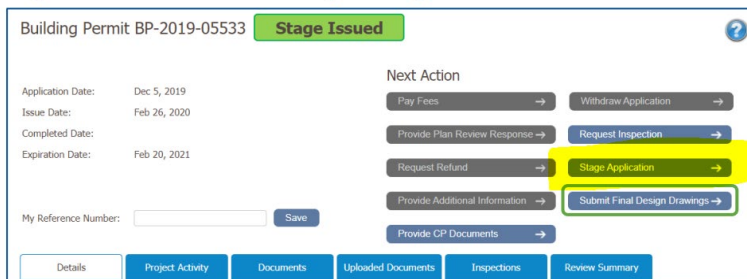
- Please remember for online submission of drawings, they must be separated by discipline and saved/uploaded as independent files with page numbering for each and named accordingly.
- When you need to update your Certificate of Liability Insurance please think of all the other active CPs in your firm and add them to your request so everyone is updated at once.
- Cheques should not be delivered to BRB with drawing submissions. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to deposit project-related cheques at the Services Centre. Note that permit fee payment via wire transfer/ e-transfer is possible; contact cp.process@vancouver.ca for instructions.
- Please do not use the Final Design Drawings as a way to capture your revisions. We need to see all revisions for anything affecting VBBL compliance – including sprinklers. If you're unsure whether a design change requires a permit revision, contact your project coordinator or building code specialist.
- In addition to their CP seal, both P.Eng and Architects must apply their professional seal to their code drawings.

- FDD online submissions should not be done in piece meal steps as it creates a review process each time you submit. Please collect all documents and submit in one go. If there is something you missed and want to add send a note to cp.process@vancouver.ca with the file and request that it be added.
- When submitting documents online, professional must add a live seal on all pages that require seals.
- Documents submitted in electronic format must have verifiable Notarius professional seals and CP stamps. See the following references for guidance:
 - <https://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/electronic-permit-applications.aspx>
 - <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/cp-practice-and-procedure-manual.pdf> -see section 4.3
 - <https://www.egbc.ca/getmedia/bf1c2174-de3b-45b2-812f-cceb6958e1e8/EGBC-Authentication-of-Documents-V3-0.pdf.aspx> -section 3.6.6
 - <https://aibc.ca/wp-content/uploads/files/2020/06/Bulletin-60-Signature-Seal-and-Delivery-of-Electronic-Documents.pdf>
- CP's project update reports are to be submitted monthly. It is crucial that all information mentioned in the CP Practice and Procedure Manual is submitted in detail in these reports. Please see item 7.4.3. of the report that states what information is required <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/cp-practice-and-procedure-manual.pdf>
- We are no longer accepting Full Structure permit stages due to their downstream impact on the review and issuance of the related trade permits.
- The Certified Professional must be the “applicant” in our permitting system for administrative and system reasons. Requests by developers or other parties to be “applicant” won't be accepted. The CP's responsibility for an application is defined by the CP-1 and the owner's responsibility is as defined by the Owner's Undertaking Letter: the POSSE “applicant” role does not confer any additional responsibility on the CP.

13. POSSE FYI

Did you know? Our permitting system won't allow us to open a subsequent permit stage while an application is still being reviewed – in other words, Stage 2 cannot be opened in POSSE prior to Stage 1 issuance. Once a permit is issued, multiple subsequent stages can be open simultaneously (e.g. Stage 3 can be opened and submitted before Stage 2 is issued) but this is not the case prior to initial issuance. Please work with your assigned project coordinator or building code specialist to coordinate Stage 2 submission and review if you are ready to initiate that process while Stage 1 is still in the works.

- When submitting documentation for the next stage of your building permit, please use the “Stage Application” button instead of “Provide CP Documents” (see the graphic below). It makes a difference of several processing steps on the City end.



14. Certified Professional Program

Our long list of AHJs continues to grow! New to the list since our last newsletter is the **District of Squamish**, and **Squamish Nation** this year. **Welcome All.**