

NEWSLETTER

August 13, 2021

TO: Certified Professionals Practicing in the City of Vancouver
FROM: Saul Schwebs, Chief Building Official
SUBJECT: CP Newsletter - Summer 2021



Summer Greetings to you All

1. Introducing Our New Chief Building Official

Effective the end of April, the City of Vancouver has a new Acting Chief Building Official and Director of Inspections and Bylaw Services.

Saul Schwebs joined the City of Vancouver in March 2014 as a District Building Inspector and was Supervisor of the Housing Review Branch for a year before becoming Assistant Director of Building and Trades Inspections in March 2017 and then a Deputy Chief Building Official. He is an Architect AIBC, with experience as a construction labourer, draftsman, general contractor, construction manager, and sustainable building consultant.

Saul can be reached at saul.schwebs@vancouver.ca and looks forward to working with our CP partners.

2. We're Hiring!

Would you like to experience the CP Program from the "other side of the desk"? We have a temporary full-time (until December 2022) Building Code Specialist position available in the Building Review Branch. See <https://jobs.vancouver.ca/job/Vancouver-Building-Code-Specialist-Brit-V6A-4K6/767521200/> for information and to apply. The posting will be open until **Sunday, August 22**. If you've got questions or would like to discuss the opportunity please reach us at cp.process@vancouver.ca.

3. Services Centre

Reminder that the Services Centre is open from 8:30am until 4:30 pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and until 4pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. In-person payments

can be made and submissions dropped off and permits picked up during these hours. We expect no changes to be made to this system (if any!) until at least September.

4. Certified Professional Advisory Group

Our long list of AHJs continues to grow! New to the list since our last newsletter is the District of West Vancouver.

Speaking of growing lists, we have more CPs to add to the bunch. Congratulations to the following individuals who are newly qualified as Certified Professionals. Several others passed the exam, but are not yet registered professionals.

Brad Humphrey,
Architect AIBC

Anja Slusarzick-
Seibt, Architect
AIBC

Petar Dimov,
P.Eng

Jose Chan,
Architect AIBC

David Belfiglio,
P.Eng

Mahsa Tashakor,
Architect AIBC

Aaron Akotuah,
P.Eng

Birinder Walia,
P.Eng

Bruce Johnston,
P.Eng

Rosa Salcido-
Nieblas, Architect
AIBC

Pedram Faghani,
P.Eng

5. Rainwater Management

Rainwater Management Review is required for rezoning applications across the City as well as any direct DP applications in the Cambie Corridor. For more information on Rainwater Management Reviews, please view the Rainwater Management Bulletin at <https://bylaws.vancouver.ca/bulletin/bulletin-rainwater-management.pdf>.

The Rainwater Management Plan is reviewed at the DP stage, but re-review is necessary during the building permit process due to the lack of details available at the DP stage and the relatively high likelihood of relevant design changes between DP and BP stages. The Rainwater Management Plan is again reviewed at the occupancy permit stage to confirm compliance with construction. Any changes from the BP drawings during construction must, of course, be captured via BP amendment.

The Rainwater Management team is embedded in the Engineering Department and will be opened as a review group in POSSE at the relevant stage(s) of the BP. The team have a four-week review target. Coordinate with your project's CRP to receive the appropriate submission documents from the design team.

6. Amendments to the Vancouver Building By-Law

On June 1, 2021, new amendments to the Vancouver Building By-law took effect. These amendments can be found [here](#), and will later be added into the consolidated online version at BCCodes.ca.

These changes are generally of an administrative or clarifying nature, but users of the code should be aware of two material changes to decrease barriers to compliance in response to industry comments.

- Firefighter’s access requirements for extended travel distances over 45 m have been revised to:
 - include increased travel distances for most buildings in response to increasing densification and facilitate compliance for deep lots, and
 - include a new set of requirements for 1 and 2 family dwellings, with reduced requirements that are more achievable for houses.
- Adaptable suite requirements have been slightly revised by:
 - added to add specific requirements for special electrical boxes for future visual signaling devices, including the an option to design existing fire alarm signaling devices to accommodate future combination signaling devices in lieu of providing additional rewiring, and
 - adding clarifying notes have been added pertaining to adaptable suites to establish what is considered acceptable with respect to future low barrier showers.

Also of significance to Certified Professionals, are clarifying changes that:

- Provide additional information and diagrams related to enhanced accessibility.
- Provide direct reference to the 2 tonne greenhouse gas cap for single family residential buildings in the VBBL (rather than through a reference document).
- Provisions for locking devices on cross-over floor access now extend to certain public floor areas in addition to public corridors.
- Clarifying update to the Article 11.4.3.1. table for the conversion of ancillary residential suites.
- Clarifying update to the Article 11.5.1.1. table for spatial separation of heritage buildings

If you should have further questions or need clarification regarding the foregoing, please contact the Chief Building Official’s Office at CBO@vancouver.ca

7. Plumbing Updates

VBBL Book II (Plumbing Systems) revisions

Changes to the Vancouver Plumbing By-law (VBBL Book II) effective June 1, 2021 are now available on the provincial website (bcpublications.ca/BCPublications/). (These changes were made by By-law 12997, here: bylaws.vancouver.ca/consolidated/12997.PDF).

Hot Water Storage & Recirculation

The Vancouver Plumbing By-law (VBBL Book II) requires domestic hot water to be stored at a minimum of 60° C (140° F) within a tank, regardless of the heating mechanism.

Maintaining a minimum of 49° C (120° F) is recommended within a recirculation loop as a Legionella prevention measure. See vancouver.ca/operating-permit for resources (under “Potable water”).

Cooling Towers

A reminder that all new and existing cooling towers require Operating Permits (vancouver.ca/operating-permit). For new cooling towers, there are prescribed setbacks, and requirements for drift eliminators and a 1 year maintenance contract (see VBBL Book

I, Division B, Article 6.3.2.15.: [free.bcpublications.ca/civix/document/id/public/vbbl2019/1412765648](https://www2.bccsa.ca/free.bcpublications.ca/civix/document/id/public/vbbl2019/1412765648)). For questions about Operating Permits, contact Leora Mistry at 604.873.7549 or operatingpermit@vancouver.ca.

Building Water System Operator Certification

Effective January 1, 2022, all new and existing water-using mechanical systems with Operating Permits ([vancouver.ca/operating-permit](https://www2.bccsa.ca/vancouver.ca/operating-permit); this includes cooling towers, decorative water features, non-potable water systems and building water treatment systems) must be associated with someone holding the EOCP Building Water System Operator certification. This can be the owner of the equipment or a service provider. For more information, visit [eocp.ca/operator-digest/building-water-systems-a-new-certification](https://www2.bccsa.ca/eocp.ca/operator-digest/building-water-systems-a-new-certification)

8. Engineering Updates

Amendments to the Street and Traffic By-law and Proposed Insurance Coverage for Builders Impacting Public Property

We have updated the regulation to make it more user-friendly by:

- simplifying and clarifying this heavily used section of the Street and Traffic By-law
- establishing clear fees for use of the street, sidewalks, lanes, and traffic lanes throughout the city
- amended enforcement regulations through ticketing
- consolidating the most frequently used regulations into a single location for ease of use by moving the Street Occupancy regulations currently in the Vancouver Building Bylaw (VBBL) to the Street and Traffic By-law
- including indemnification of the city through insurance provisions for all street use and street occupancy permits (The provision for insurance currently exists in the by-law but is to be extended for all street use/occupancy permits.)

Engineering Sewer and Water Connection Permit ePlan

- As part of the Electronic Permits Plan (ePlan) Project, residential renovation applications for sewer and water connection permits may be submitted and processed online, starting **April 26, 2021**. This is in addition to residential (new) and commercial sewer and water connection permits that went live earlier in April.
- Prior to this, staff created residential renovation permits on applicants' behalf. With these changes for residential renovation permit applications, staff and applicants will experience improved usability throughout the online process.
- Like other permits that are now fully online, this supports our ongoing commitment to provide applicants with a consistent online experience across different permit types, with sewer and water connection permits no longer being submitted via email. This also reduces the reliance on paper-based work and required in-person visits (no longer needing to pay fees in person at Crossroads), increasing efficiencies and convenience for staff and applicants.

What are the key changes?

- Applicants can now apply for residential renovation permits online and will experience improved usability—updated content, instructions, and navigation, along with automatically generated emails at key points, with instructions included (e.g., upload additional documents), and access to the applicant review page to see the status of the application
- Fees for residential new and renovations permits are now being collected earlier in the POSSE workflow (at the first Completeness Check process). This aligns our permit process with other permits, where fees are collected at the beginning, prior to staff conducting detailed reviews and other permit-related work

Collection, Retention, and Infiltration of Surface Water

In recent years, the City has seen increasing site coverage on many construction projects with impermeable materials, which have led to significant disturbances to the normal water cycle. This has a number of potential environmental and civic infrastructure impacts, and it may be desirable to address this by increasing opportunities for surface water infiltration and retention of water on site.

A common method of addressing this is by the introduction of bio swales or raingardens into project landscaping to collect and retain surface water and allow the water to slowly infiltrate into the ground. However due to limited availability of suitable spaces for these to be installed, there is increasing pressure to locate these closer to buildings and other structures.

The Chief Building Official has published Bulletin 2019-008-PL “Siting Requirements for On-Site Infiltration Systems” to provide general guidance (consolidating and replacing the older Bulletins “Lot Drainage Requirements for New Homes” (2000-001-BU/PL) and “Separation of Roof Drainage and Foundation Drains” (2000-058-PL)). However, it is noted that this makes reference to Part 9 regulations.

While the VBBL only provides an explicit 5 m clearance requirements for Part 9 buildings, the same concerns and principles apply to more complex buildings. Performance based designs under Part 4 and Part 5 of the VBBL must also take these concerns into consideration, and registered professionals engaged in such design are to be aware that under the Professional Governance Act registered professionals should look to established standards to identify a suitable baseline for performance. It is the CBO’s office’s position that in this regards, the Part 9 requirements could be considered reasonable guidance towards establishing a minimum acceptable threshold for performance and so - Whether a structure is constructed under Part 9 or Part 3, the protection of the structure from water with appropriate drainage is a fundamental, minimum requirement.

If a developer wishes to propose a Part 3 structure with infiltration within the 5 m setback prescribed by Part 9, an engineering report would be required. This report is expected to describe how the developer’s proposed design complies with the intents of the 5 m setback, and detail what mitigating features are provided to prevent water accumulation within that zone and be supported by adequate technical analysis. This will be reviewed as part of the building and trades permit processes.

Further to this, EGBC’s professional design guidelines for Geotechnical Engineering Services for Building Projects and Retaining Wall Design, may also provide useful information with respect to consideration for drainage and stability. Including from the Geotechnical Engineering Services Design guide ((PDF) page 50):

4.2 Site and foundation drainage systems

“Site and foundation drainage systems refers to the arrangement of site grading and buried (subsoil) pipes, trenches, and other engineered systems that intercept surface and subsurface (both groundwater and interflow) water flow and direct it away from a building and its below-grade envelope system. In the BCBC Letters of Assurance, this item is pertinent to buildings, and ensures the codified requirements to direct water flow away from buildings are met. ...”

“For sites where infiltration of rainwater will be managed as part of a development’s drainage systems, the approach must be coordinated with site-specific geotechnical considerations. Site-specific geotechnical considerations should be based on knowledge of the governing groundwater regime (including possible seasonal and tidal effects) and the receiving geology (including hydraulic conductivities and stability of sloping sites), the stability of proximate structures including retaining walls, climate change impacts, and the maximum design groundwater elevation. Potential hydraulic connections from subsurface infiltration features to the building envelope should be considered in, and managed by, the design, such as through the use of seepage collars.”

In addition to the foregoing design considerations, the City’s Engineering group has now established a new process for the review of the design of surface water retention and run-off detention to coordinate such installations with City infrastructure. A reminder that design drawings (including landscape) must be circulated to Engineering group for review and approval along with technical documentation supporting the infiltration of surface water within 5m of the building.

9. Environmental Services Updates

Effective February 1, 2021, all sites with soil disturbance of any kind require a Site Disclosure Statement (SDS) to be reviewed by CoV Environmental Services and then potentially by the Ministry of the Environment. The SDS will typically be collected at the DP stage going forward, but there will be a transition period to capture projects with DPs dating to before February 1. See <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/site-remediation/site-identification> for more information and the fillable form to be submitted with your Stage 1 applications.

10. Fire Safety Plans

The bulletin on Fire Safety Plans was updated in October 2020 with additional documentation that must be included in the fire safety plan. Please see <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/fire-safety-plan-bulletin.pdf>. Note that this bulletin will be updated again in the near future to reflect a recent change to the requirements of the radio antenna system.

11. Electrical Clearance Forms

The City's Bulletin **2003-016-EL - Clearances from the Existing BC Hydro High Voltage Overhead Conductors and Transformers** has been withdrawn from our website for a number of years. This follow up guidance is to confirm that the evaluation of the required clearances from BC Hydro's high voltage conductors and transformers are still required and shall be evaluated and coordinated by the design team prior to the development application stage. This is especially critical at the design development process and subsequently coordinated to the building permit. This allow design consultants to anticipate potential clearance conflicts and to adjust the building design accordingly or to anticipate undergrounding these services. A land survey plan shall also include features such as power poles, overhead conductors, transformers or any other related features that would affect the project design.

The old checklist can serve as a worksheet for the design team as part of their discussions with Planners within the PDS Department and proof of design adherence at the Development Permit Application stage. This form is NOT required at the electrical plan checking stage.

Conversely, the City's Bulletin **2001-008-BU/EL - Electrical Plan Review** remains on our website and the Electrical Plan Examiner's Transmittal Form shall be completed and submitted, along with the electrical plans, to the Electrical Plan Examiner.

12. Address Assignments for FD Response Points or Secondary Doors

Request for civic address assignments solely for fire department response points are not supported unless there are extraordinary circumstance that would warrant an individual and separate address to be assigned. Addresses are assigned to primary entry doors that provide access to tenant spaces within a building. Secondary doors that provide access to the same tenant spaces shall not be assigned a separate address (e.g. door to parking garage, backdoors or similar). All unique addressing requests shall be made through the assigned Building Review Branch staff member, who will internally coordinate with Addressing and Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services. A proposed plan and addressing rationale shall accompany this address request and a meeting may potentially be coordinated.

13. Full Structural Permit Staging


The CP Program - **Building Permit Application Submission List** identifies three primary permit stages as Excavation/Shoring, Fdn/Struct Up to Grade, and Superstructure (or Full Construction). A Full Structural stage is not identified as a typical stage, but has been permitted to advance construction of the structural portion of the project. There are instances where full structural work has advance to a point that building services work are preparing to get on to the worksite. It is

cautioned that some trades permits and particularly the sprinkler permits are dependent on the finalization of the above grade floor layout in order to commence their plans examination. The Superstructure/Full Construction stage drawings need to be submitted and coordinated with your respective CP plan reviewer to confirm the layout is current for this stage permit and accepted, whereby an POSSE notation will be entered to signify that our sprinkler plan reviewer can proceed with their plan review. This step is critical to ensure that there is sufficient lead time for the sprinkler team to conduct their review, discuss unresolved items and issue this permit in general alignment with site progress.

14. Gentle Reminders

- Please remember to include your Building Permit Project Coordinator or Building Code Specialist if you coordinate meetings with Fire or Addressing.
- 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 is possible; contact cp.process@vancouver.ca for instructions.
- Note that while we require sprinkler permit applications to be submitted prior to issuance of the foundation stage of the BP, the sprinkler permit *cannot be reviewed in detail and will not be issued* prior to final review and acceptance of the architectural drawings in the full construction BP stage. This is due to the significant impact that architectural changes have on the sprinkler design (wall location, ceiling type, use of space, etc.). Please keep this in mind when planning the project schedule and staging your permits: consider in particular the impact of “full structure” stages.
- In addition to their CP seal, both PEng and Architects must apply their professional seal to their code drawings.
- 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://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>
- 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.

Thank you for your help! (Reminder: for lots of online how-tos and tips, see <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/cp-building-permit-online-application-guide.pdf>.)

Building Permit BP-2019-05533 **Stage Issued** 

Application Date: Dec 5, 2019
Issue Date: Feb 26, 2020
Completed Date:
Expiration Date: Feb 20, 2021

My Reference Number:

Next Action


- Pay Fees →
- Withdraw Application →
- Provide Plan Review Response →
- Request Inspection →
- Request Refund →
- Stage Application →**
- Provide Additional Information →
- Submit Final Design Drawings →
- Provide CP Documents →

Details | Project Activity | Documents | Uploaded Documents | Inspections | Review Summary

Details

Primary Location: 515 W 10TH AVENUE, Vancouver, BC V5Z 4A8
Specific Location:

Related Information

Type	Description
 Certified Professional	Jane Doe Phone: (604) 555-1111 Address: 1111 West Boulevard Vancouver, BC V6M3V5

15. Save the Date

Join us for the City of Vancouver's annual CP Update Seminar on **Thursday, November 4, 2021** (morning). The registration link will be forthcoming from AIBC.