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New Green Requirements in the BC Building Code

The February 2007 Throne Speech announced the development of new green requirements in the BC Building Code, to support the Province's commitment to reduce greenhouse gases related to buildings and construction.

Greening the BC Building Code: First Steps

The first steps in Greening the BC Building Code will improve the energy efficiency of buildings and increase water efficiency through water-saving plumbing fixtures and fittings. New Building Code requirements have been developed in consultation with industry, local governments and the public:

1. *Energy Efficiency Requirements for Single Family Houses and Smaller Multi-Family Residential, Commercial and Industrial Buildings*
 - Insulation standards for houses and multi-family residential buildings under five stories have changed. There are new insulation standards for small commercial and industrial buildings.
 - For housing, builders can choose to achieve an EnerGuide rating of 77 as an alternative to meeting the insulation requirements.
2. *Energy Efficiency Requirements for High-Rise Multi-Family Residential Buildings and Larger Industrial, Commercial and Institutional Buildings*
 - Larger buildings must meet the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning Engineers 90.1(2004) standard. ASHRAE 90.1 is an internationally recognized standard for energy efficiency in buildings.
3. *Water Efficiency Requirements*
 - Ultra low-flow toilets (6 L) and other water-saving plumbing fixtures and fittings will become mandatory in new construction and renovations.

To view the new requirements go to <http://www.housing.gov.bc.ca/building/green/index.htm>

Implementation

The new green requirements in the Building Code come into effect on September 5, 2008 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 5, 2008.

The Building and Safety Policy Branch is working with industry and government stakeholders to ensure that appropriate education and training is available to Code users to support successful implementation of the new requirements. Information on education and training opportunities will be posted on the Greening the BC Building Code website as it becomes available.

Greening the BC Building Code: Next Steps

The first steps in Greening the BC Building Code will be followed by additional changes to the Code to reduce the environmental footprint of buildings throughout their lifespan.

Areas under exploration include greywater recycling, the use of lighting sensors and the reuse of existing buildings, and will involve further consultation with local governments, industry and the public.

The contents of this Bulletin are not intended to be provided as legal advice and should not be relied upon as legal advice. For further information contact the Building and Safety Policy Branch.