



Enhancements to the Building Department

The Building Department recognizes that the development of land and buildings gets more complex each year. In response to this, we have made some substantial changes in 2020 to the way the Building Department functions and interacts with the building industry (you!). These changes are intended to improve the efficiencies of both the Building Industry and North Cowichan's Building Department. We will strive to make continuous improvements and would appreciate your feedback on the changes made so far.

Some of these changes include:

- Electronic inspection reporting, reports by email providing immediate inspection results
- Quarterly Building Department Newsletter keeping you up-to-date on construction industry and regulations, common misconceptions and practices
- Online guides for building permits including checklists for building permit applications
- Fully digital building permit applications including signing and paying fees (hard copies still accepted), allowing you to apply and receive your permit from home or office
- Implementation of a BC Energy Step Code Rebate Program (rebates from \$500-\$1250)
- A direct inspection request email and phone number

Mandatory Step Code Reminder

This is a reminder that as of May 1 2021, North Cowichan's Building Bylaw excerpt below will take effect.

a. Any new building or structure to which Part 9 of the BC Building Code applies, and is within the scope of application of the Energy Step Code, as described in the BC Building Code, must be designed and constructed to meet the performance requirements specified in Step 2 of the BC Energy Step Code.

All new residential building permit applications (renovations not included) applied for on or after May 1 2021 will, along with the current building permit application requirements, have to include the Step Code compliance documents set out in the current BC Building Code to show compliance with the bylaw.

Rebates: The North Cowichan Energy Step Code Rebate Program will still be in effect and anyone choosing to achieve Steps 3-5 will be eligible for the rebates described in the North

Perfecting your Building Site Plan

Having a single document, your Building Site Plan, that contains all the necessary information for your building project, is an essential step to the building permit process. Submitting a comprehensive Site Plan, like the example we've created [here](#), provides an almost 3-dimensional view of the proposed building and development outcomes, and makes our internal departmental reviews more streamlined and efficient.

Your Site Plan should include the following:

- All dimensions in metric units
- Plotting the proposed location of the building in relation to the required setbacks, easements, covenant areas, and required zoning, riparian areas and watercourses
- The lot coverage and gross floor area
- The location of equipment relating to the function and use of the building like heat pumps, pools, generators and hot tubs
- The location and size of all required parking areas
- The existing and final grades including retaining walls, to show how the development of the property is not going to negatively impact the adjoining properties
- Drainage method and location for the building's stormwater collection, identifying how it will not negatively impact the adjoining property or the finished building
- The location and dimensions of the driveway (6m width max at the property line on to adjoining roadway)
- The elevation from the road to the parking area or garage slab, to also be shown as a percentage of slope
- The distance from the edge of the proposed or existing driveway to the nearest property line
- The location of all available water, electrical, and gas supplies, the sanitary, and if available the stormwater connection or dry well (rock pit)
- A compass heading identifying "north" to show how the building will be impacted by the weather

View our example Site Plan, that includes all of the information listed above, here:

www.northcowichan.ca/siteplan

Cowichan Energy Step Code
Incentive rebate policy.
More information:
www.northcowichan.ca/stepcode

**Happy Holidays from all of
us in the Building
Department!**

**Questions or concerns?
Send us an email!**

building@northcowichan.ca

