



ENERGY STEPCODE

BUILDING BEYOND THE STANDARD

Builders: New Energy-Performance Rules are Coming

The Province of British Columbia has set new timelines and requirements for increased building energy-efficiency performance in the BC Building Code. But help is close at hand.

A New Focus on Performance

In the coming years, the Province of British Columbia will begin steadily ramping up energy-performance requirements for new construction. Here's what's coming down the pipe:

- In 2022, your projects will need to be 20 per cent more energy efficient than those built to meet the requirements of the 2018 BC Building Code.
- By 2027, five years later, the requirements will increase again, and your projects will need to be 40 per cent more efficient.
- Finally, by 2032, new buildings will be up to 80 per cent more energy efficient than those built to the 2018 code.

To deliver on these new requirements, British Columbia's builders will need to refresh their skills. They'll need to pay extra attention to airtightness, ventilation, windows and doors, insulation, and more.



Enter the BC Energy Step Code

The **BC Energy Step Code** is British Columbia's roadmap to meeting the new performance requirements.

The provincial regulation rolls together a variety of energy-efficiency metrics and ranks them on a virtual staircase. The metrics vary by region, and measure a building's airtightness, heating needs, and mechanical system efficiency.

The **BC Energy Step Code** puts you in the driver's seat. Rather than telling you what to do on energy as the **BC Building Code** now does, it sets targets and leaves it up to you to determine the most cost-effective way to meet them.

For more information, please download and review the BC Energy Step Code Best Practices Guide for Local Governments, available via energystepcode.ca.



What They're Saying

“ Kimberley is committed to lowering its carbon footprint with capital projects and incentives. We've offered our builders an Energy Efficient Building Incentive Program since 2014, and we recently adapted it with changes that align it with the BC Energy Step Code.

Andy Christie, building inspector, City of Kimberley

“ The BC Energy Step Code moves us from having inconsistent standards across BC to a new, coordinated benchmark that is aligned with future net-zero provincial requirements.

Anne McMullin, CEO, Urban Development Institute (BC)

Voluntary, or Compulsory?

Local governments may use the **BC Energy Step Code** today – if they wish – to incentivize or require builders to deliver a level of energy-efficiency performance that exceeds code minimums. A growing number are choosing to do so. Builders may also use the **BC Energy Step Code** voluntarily, to demonstrate that their projects are meeting existing code requirements.

For now, the decision to use the **BC Energy Step Code** is in the hands of your local government. But that will change starting in 2022, when the base **BC Building Code** will require every new building to deliver a level of energy-efficiency performance equivalent to Step 3.

In other words, higher energy-performance requirements are just around the corner.



Most Lower Steps in the BC Energy Step Code can be achieved for only marginally higher construction costs when compared with conventional construction.



Don't Get Stressed, Get out in Front

As a builder, here are three key actions you can take today to get ready for the coming changes:

- 1 Hit the Web:** You'll find a wealth of resources at energystepcode.ca, including BC Housing's Illustrated Guide to Achieving Airtight Buildings and BC Energy Step Code Design Guide, and a directory of builder-incentive programs.
- 2 Sign Up For a Course:** British Columbia's training institutions are ramping up course offerings to teach the skills and strategies needed to build to a higher performance level. Check out the offerings at energystepcode.ca/training.
- 3 Talk to an Energy Advisor:** Energy advisors coach and mentor builders on how they can make smarter choices to improve the energy performance of their projects. Find one near you via efficiencyBC.ca.

By taking advantage of the training, resources, and incentives available to you today, you'll be well-positioned to meet tomorrow's requirements – while continuing to offer the competitive, high-quality product that your customers expect.

The Community Energy Association produced this publication with assistance from BC Hydro to help support industry in the transition to higher performance buildings.