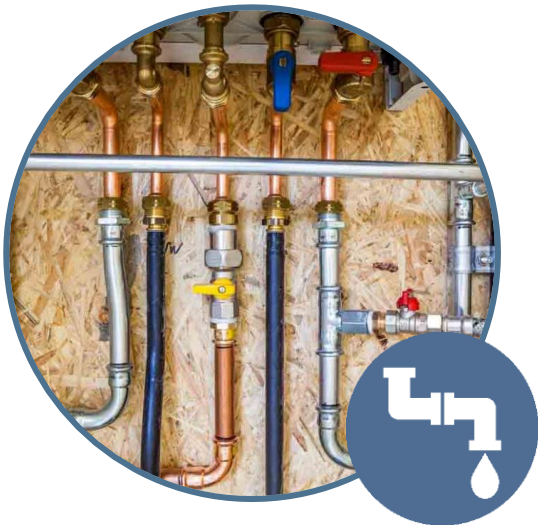
Residential Inspections Guide

Updated: April 22, 2025

BUILDING



PLUMBING

Permit Inspections

Inspections help ensure that renovation or construction work complies with the appropriate bylaws, and matches the work authorized by the permit. Inspections also help the District advance its goals concerning life safety, accessibility, green buildings, and more. The complexity of modern buildings and technologies often means that several inspections of a building are required, including inspections of the plumbing, mechanical, structural, health, safety, and environmental systems.

Book Your Building or Plumbing Inspection

When your project is ready for a required building or plumbing inspection, you must book an inspection of the work by going online to your MySaanich account, or by calling 250-475-5458. Inspections must be booked before 3:00 p.m. on the business day **before** the required inspection to be inspected the next business day.

If you phone to arrange for an inspection, be ready to provide:

- Permit number
- Address of the site
- Type of inspection required
- Date of requested inspection

If you need to cancel a scheduled inspection, please go online to your MySaanich account or call 250-475-5458.

Re-inspection Fee Policy

The Inspections Division is committed to collaborating with our customers and providing support throughout the building process. To that end, the District has developed this guide to enable customers to educate themselves and be prepared for required inspections. This policy is meant to remind contractors that they have a responsibility to ensure construction is carried out according to the procedure outlined and to resolve deficiencies noted by the inspector. Inspection fees are included in the overall permit fees and cover one inspection and one re-inspection at each stage.

Where multiple re-inspections are required due to non-compliant work, an additional non-refundable re-inspection fee will apply as per section 10.43 (a) of the Building Bylaw for the following:

- $100.00 for the third re-inspection,
- $200.00 for the fourth re-inspection,
- $500.00 for a fifth re-inspection, and
- $400.00 for a sixth (or greater) re-inspection

The non-refundable fee for inspection in circumstances set out in section 10.43(b) and (c) of the Building Bylaw is $100.00.

Required Inspections for Single Detached House, Houseplex, or Accessory Building

The Building and Plumbing Inspectors will need to inspect your project at several stages during construction. All of the following stages apply to a new building, and some stages apply to renovations and additions as applicable. It is important to note that at every inspection stage, inspectors shall refuse an inspection if the site is in an unsafe or untidy condition.

If you submitted your building permit application with paper plans, you will need to ensure that the approved plans and permit package are available for the inspector at the site of the work during working hours.

Contents

1. DEMOLITION INSPECTION

A demolition inspection is required when an existing structure on the property is demolished entirely, typically to make room for a new building. This inspection is not required for renovation projects where only partial or interior demolition has occurred.

When to schedule:

After demolition is complete and all debris has been removed from the site.

2. EXCAVATION AND FOOTINGS INSPECTION

The excavation and footings inspections can take place simultaneously or in two stages. A professional engineer's approval and/or design will be required for any excavation that does not meet Part 9 requirements. Up to 50mm (2") of granular material can be placed over the bearing soil **after** the excavation has been approved, without requiring professional supervision.

A sealed bearing letter, from a licensed professional engineer, qualified in geotechnical engineering, is acceptable to confirm the bearing capacity of undisturbed soil. Letters of Assurance must be included with any field reviews related to geotechnical design work or site monitoring, e.g., when structural fill is required.

When to schedule:

After excavating and setting footing forms but prior to placing concrete.

Key BC Building Code (BCBC) References:

- Section 9.12.
- Section 9.15.
- Section 4.2.

Excavation Checklist:

☐ Meets WorkSafe BC excavation requirements
☐ Undisturbed bearing soil is exposed and visible (no fill), unless Registered Professional has approved soil bearing capacity
☐ Organic material and standing water have been removed
☐ Minimum bearing capacity of 75 kPa, or as specified on structural drawings, if applicable
☐ Minimum excavation depth of 450mm (18") to underside of footings

Footings Checklist:

☐ Footing sizes and locations match approved plans
☐ Part 9 footings comply with British Columbia Building Code (BCBC) 9.15.
☐ Professionally designed footings comply with approved structural drawings

Required Documents:

☐ Professional's sealed bearing letter, if applicable
☐ Professional's field review, if applicable

Commonly Missed:

- Bearing soil not visible (not applicable to excavations with professional supervision)
- Professionals have not approved or provided field reviews
- Footing location does not match approved drawings

3. FOUNDATION FORMS INSPECTION

The foundation forms inspection generally takes place after the excavation and footings inspection has been completed. The forms inspection may be booked at the same time as excavation and footings, if required.

Wall and pier forms are to be in place for the inspection. Bracing and falsework are not required to be complete.

When to schedule:

After setting foundation wall forms but before placing concrete.

Key BCBC References:

- Section 9.15.
- Section 4.2.

Forms Checklist:

☐ Previous required inspections and deficiencies completed
☐ Previous required field reviews submitted
☐ Form size and layout match approved drawings
☐ Part 9 forms comply with BCBC 9.15.
☐ Professionally designed forms comply with approved structural drawings

Required Documents:

☐ Professional's field review, if applicable

Commonly Missed:

- Professionals have not approved or provided field reviews
- Basement/crawlspace area does not match approved plans

4. UNDERSLAB RADON INSPECTION

As of March 08, 2024, all conditioned buildings regulated by the BCBC require a rough-in for a subfloor radon depressurization system.

This inspection will take place in two stages. Subfloor components must be inspected prior to covering. Above-ground radon vent piping must be inspected at or prior to the frame inspection.

NOTE: This requirement applies to all conditioned buildings, including conditioned accessory buildings such as home offices. Garages and unheated buildings such as workshops and sheds are not considered conditioned.

NOTE: Road base is not approved for radon. Granular material must not have more than 10% material that would pass through a 4 mm sieve for the gas-permeable layer. If drainage piping is bedded in the same plane as the radon system, all piping must be bedded in drain rock.

When to schedule:

After installation of under-slab radon piping and granular layer, but before installing sealed air barrier. (The air barrier will be inspected separately at the slab insulation inspection.)

Key BCBC References:

- Subsection 9.13.4.

Radon Checklist:

☐ Previous required inspections and deficiencies completed
☐ Previous required field reviews submitted
☐ 100mm (4”) of gas-permeable granular material (drain rock) beneath all slab areas separating the ground from conditioned space
☐ Granular layers separated by footings are interconnected by installing a minimum 100mm (4”) opening through the footing or they have their own radon pipe.
☐ Radon-pipe inlet is located at or near the center of the granular layer, with at least 100mm (4”) clearance between the pipe and any other solid object (footings etc.)

Commonly Missed:

- Granular layer is not continuous under entire slab

5. UNDERSLAB PLUMBING INSPECTION

The groundwork inspection must take place either before or after the underslab radon inspection. It is not permitted to install a sealed air barrier over unapproved Drain, Waste, and Vent piping. The person to whom the plumbing permit was issued (licensed plumber or qualified homeowner) must be on site for the inspection.

When to schedule:

After groundwork is complete and under test but before placing concrete.

Key National Plumbing Code References:

- Sections 2.2., 2.3., 2.4., and 2.6.

Underslab Plumbing Checklist:

☐ Fixture count and locations match approved drawings
☐ Complies with relevant National Plumbing Code requirements
☐ All piping under test

Required Documents:

☐ Professional's field review, if applicable

Commonly Missed:

- Pipe not adequately bedded
- Pipe not adequately graded
- Plumber not on site
- Piping not under test

6. SLAB/FOUNDATION INSULATION INSPECTION

This inspection is to confirm that adequate slab and/or foundation insulation has been installed in conditioned spaces, and to inspect the below-ground air barrier. The air barrier also plays a critical role in the radon protection system, and care must be taken to ensure it is properly sealed around penetrations and slab edges.

When to schedule:

After required insulation and air barrier materials are in place but prior to placing concrete.

Key BCBC References:

- Section 9.25.
- Section 9.36.

Slab Insulation Checklist:

☐ Previous required inspections and deficiencies completed
☐ Previous required field reviews submitted
☐ *For buildings required to meet the Energy Step Code:* Assemblies comply with Pre-Construction Energy Compliance Report
☐ *For buildings not required to meet the Energy Step Code:* Assemblies comply with prescriptive requirements of 9.36.2.8.
☐ The air barrier complies with 9.25.3.6.

Commonly Missed:

- Thermal break missing
- Air barrier not adequately sealed
- Assemblies do not match Energy Compliance Report

7. DAMPPROOFING, FOUNDATION DRAINAGE, AND RAINWATER LEADERS INSPECTION

Dampproofing, foundation drainage (a.k.a. “drain tile”), and rainwater leaders all require inspection. Typically, this is all done in one inspection, but in some cases two stages may be necessary when the rainwater leaders are not installed at the same time as the foundation drainage.

When to schedule:

After pipework and dampproofing is complete and drain rock is installed but prior to backfill.

NOTE: Drain tile must be laid on undisturbed or well-compacted soil.

NOTE: The inspector may request that some drain rock is removed to expose portions of the foundation drain pipe.

Key Code References:

- BCBC Section 9.14.
- NPC Sections 2.2., 2.3., and 2.4.

Dampproofing, Foundation Drainage, and RWL Checklist:

☐ Previous required inspections and deficiencies completed
☐ Previous required field reviews submitted
☐ Dampproofing complete
☐ Separate pipes for foundation drainage and rainwater leaders (RWL)
☐ RWL fully bedded or supported every 1.2m (soil or lumber piles not accepted)
☐ Top of foundation drainage pipe below underside of slab
☐ 150mm (6”) drain rock on top and sides of drainage pipe

Required Documents:

☐ Professional’s field review, if applicable

Commonly Missed:

- Foundation drainage pipe too high
- Unable to confirm height of slab in relation to foundation drainage pipe
- RWL not adequately supported
- Incorrect pipe slope

8. SEWER, STORM, AND WATER LATERAL INSPECTION

Sewers, storm laterals, and water-service piping all require inspections prior to covering. These inspections may take place at the same time, or in three stages.

When to schedule:

After pipe is installed and bedded but prior to backfill.

Key NPC References:

- Sections 2.2., 2.3., 2.4., and 2.6.

Sewer, Storm, and Water Lateral Checklist:

☐ Pipes adequately sized and graded
☐ Water service minimum depth of 450mm (18”)
☐ Sewer and storm minimum depth of 300mm (12”)
☐ Sewer and storm fully bedded or strapped every 1.2m (soil or lumber piles not accepted)
☐ Water service fully bedded
☐ Bedding material capable of supporting and protecting pipe
☐ Sufficient cleanouts installed for sewer and storm laterals

Commonly Missed:

- Pipe not adequately bedded
- Water service not sleeved where it passes through concrete

9. ROUGH PLUMBING INSPECTION

The rough plumbing inspection must be completed prior to the frame inspection. All DWV and water-supply piping must be inspected, under test, prior to covering.

The person who performed the plumbing work (licensed plumber or qualified homeowner) must be on site for the inspection.

When to schedule:

After plumbing rough-in is complete and under test, but before frame inspection.

Key NPC References

- Sections 2.2., 2.3., 2.4., and 2.6.

Rough Plumbing Checklist:

☐ Previous required inspections and deficiencies completed
☐ Previous required field reviews submitted
☐ Fixture count and locations match approved drawings
☐ Complies with relevant National Plumbing Code requirements

Required Documents:

☐ Professional's field review, if applicable

Commonly Missed

- Protection plates
- Expansion joints
- Plumber not on site
- Piping not under test

10. FRAMING AND SHEATHING INSPECTION

The purpose of the combined framing and sheathing inspection is to confirm general code and bylaw compliance, as well as adherence to approved drawings. It may be scheduled as a single inspection, or the framing and sheathing may be inspected separately if preferred.

Items that will be reviewed at the framing and sheathing inspection include, but are not limited to: exterior sheathing, building height and siting, structure, layout, heating and ventilation, fenestrations, life/health/safety requirements, etc. Changes to the building which have not been previously approved will result in a failed inspection.

If the structural engineer has approved the nailing and provided a field review, the sheathing membrane and flashings may be installed at the time of the inspection.

All rough-ins must be complete (plumbing, electrical, mechanical), and all professionals' field reviews and required height and site surveys must be submitted and approved prior to this inspection. For any project that includes ventilation work, the TECA Ventilation Checklist must be complete and available on site (or submitted prior to inspection).

For buildings with fire separations, concealed details, such as firestopping, service-space separations, rated chases and box-outs must be complete.

When to schedule:

The sheathing inspection should be scheduled after exterior sheathing is complete but before the installation of the sheathing membrane (e.g. Tyvek), unless nailing has been approved by a professional.

The framing inspection must occur immediately prior to installation of insulation.

If both inspections are conducted together, all requirements must be met at the time of inspection.

Key BCBC References:

- Section 9.5.
- Section 9.8.
- Section 9.9.
- Section 9.10.
- Section 9.18.
- Section 9.19.
- Section 9.23.
- Section 9.32.

Sheathing Checklist:

☐ Previous required inspections and deficiencies completed
☐ Previous required field reviews submitted
☐ Part 9 sheathing complies with BCBC 9.23.
☐ Professionally designed sheathing complies with approved structural drawings
☐ Structural P.Eng. has approved sheathing, if applicable
☐ Building matches approved plans

Framing Checklist:

☐ Previous required inspections and deficiencies completed
☐ Previous required field reviews submitted
☐ Building matches approved plans
☐ Part 9 framing complies with BCBC 9.23.
☐ Professionally designed framing complies with approved structural drawings
☐ Professional(s) have approved framing, if applicable
☐ Building is at lock-up stage (roof & fenestrations complete)
☐ All rough-ins complete (plumbing, electrical, mechanical)
☐ Headroom complies with BCBC Table 9.5.3.1. (see Table 1.1.1.1.(6) for existing buildings)
☐ Stairs comply with BCBC 9.8.
☐ Egress windows comply with BCBC 9.9.10.1.
☐ Concealed firestopping and fire separations comply with BCBC 9.10.
☐ Smoke alarms comply with BCBC 9.10.19.
☐ Fire blocking complies with BCBC 9.10.16.
☐ Roof-space venting complies with BCBC 9.19.1.
☐ Ventilation complies with BCBC 9.32. (crawl spaces to BCBC 9.18)

Required Documents:

☐ Professional field review(s), if applicable
☐ BCLS height and site surveys
☐ TECA Ventilation Checklist
☐ Firestop listings, if applicable

Commonly Missed:

- Outstanding documents
- Fire separation details not addressed
- Unapproved changes

11. PRE-CLADDING INSPECTION

The purpose of the pre-cladding inspection is to confirm the flashings and the second plane of protection from precipitation (sheathing membrane, e.g. Tyvek) comply with code requirements, prior to the installation of the first plane of protection (cladding).

Areas being inspected should be ready to cover with cladding at the time of inspection. If stucco will be installed, a separate stucco wire inspection is required.

When exterior insulation will cover the sheathing membrane, schedule a partial inspection when the sheathing membrane and flashings are complete.

NOTE: Stone veneer over 1.2 m (4') requires professional design for attachment.

When to schedule:

Immediately before cladding is installed.

Key BCBC References:

- Section 9.25.
- Section 9.27.

Required Documents:

☐ Professional's field review(s), if applicable

Pre-Cladding Checklist:

☐ Previous required inspections and deficiencies completed
☐ Previous required field reviews submitted
☐ Professional(s) have approved rainscreen, if applicable
☐ Sheathing membrane complete
☐ Drainage plane is open at bottom and blocked from opening into soffits at top
☐ Minimum 9.5 mm deep capillary break (e.g. strapping) in place
☐ Openings protected by flashings with 22 mm end dams
☐ Penetrations sealed

Commonly Missed:

- Drainage plane opens into roof soffits
- Penetrations not sealed
- Flashings do not have end dams
- Drainage plane less than 80% open
- Flashings not lapped behind sheathing membrane

12. INSULATION INSPECTION

The purpose of the insulation inspection is to confirm interior insulation and air/vapour barrier requirements.

Buildings that are required to comply with the Energy Step Code must be constructed with insulation and air-barrier assemblies that match the approved Pre-Construction Energy Compliance Report. Changes made to assemblies specified in the report must be approved by the energy advisor prior to the insulation inspection, and a revised report must be submitted for review. Mid-construction blower-door tests are not required, but are they are recommended.

Buildings that are not required to comply with the Energy Step Code must comply with the prescriptive requirements of BCBC sections 9.25. and 9.36.

NOTE: Insulation cannot be installed until the building is waterproofed.

When to schedule:

After installation of sheathing membrane, flashings, insulation and interior air/vapour barrier but prior to drywall.

Key BCBC References:

- Section 9.25.
- Section 9.36.

Required Documents:

☐ If spray foam has been installed, copy of installer's certification and site-specific daily worksheet

Insulation Checklist:

☐ Previous required inspections and deficiencies completed
☐ Previous required field reviews submitted
☐ *For buildings required to meet the Energy Step Code:* Assemblies comply with Pre-Construction Energy Compliance Report
☐ *For buildings <u>not</u> required to meet the Energy Step Code:* Assemblies comply with prescriptive requirements of 9.36.

Commonly Missed:

- Insulation not in contact with vapour barrier/drywall
- If interior air barrier, sealing of barrier incomplete
- Joist cavities not complete
- Does not match Pre-Construction Energy Compliance Report

13. FIRE SEPARATION INSPECTION

Wall and ceiling fire separations require inspection prior to mud and tape to confirm location, board type, fasteners, and continuity. Fire separation details that will be concealed after walls and ceilings are boarded should be inspected at the framing inspection.

When to schedule:

After drywall board is installed but prior to mud and tape.

Key BCBC References:

- Section 9.10.
- Section 9.11.
- Section 9.29.

Required Documents:

☐ Professional's field review(s), if applicable
☐ Firestop listings, if applicable

Fire Separation Checklist:

☐ Previous required inspections and deficiencies completed
☐ Previous required field reviews submitted
☐ Fire separation assemblies meet minimum STC and fire-resistance rating
☐ Drywall board is continuous over all vertical and horizontal fire separations
☐ Penetrations are firestopped
☐ Drywall installation complies with 9.29.5.
☐ Firestopping complies with 9.10.9.6.(1)

Commonly Missed:

- Incomplete sections (behind furnace, hot water tank)
- Firestopping is not complete

14. STUCCO WIRE INSPECTION

Stucco wire requires inspection prior to covering.

When to schedule:

After installation of stucco wire is complete but prior to scratch coat.

Key BCBC References:

- Section 9.27.
- Section 9.28.

Stucco Wire Checklist:

☐ Previous required inspections and deficiencies complete
☐ Previous required field reviews submitted
☐ Part 9 wire and fasteners comply with 9.28.
☐ Professional(s) have approved stucco wire, if applicable
☐ Professionally designed wire and fasteners comply with approved structural drawings

Commonly Missed:

- Rainscreen details not previously approved
- Inadequate fasteners
- Inadequate overlap of wire

15. FINAL INSPECTION

The purpose of the final inspection is to confirm all the conditions of the permit have been satisfied. Exterior and interior building components should be complete and functional. The landscaping that impacts egress or grades should be complete.

When to schedule:

After building is complete but prior to occupancy

Required Documents:

☐ Professionals' Letters of Assurance (Schedule C-A or C-B), if applicable
☐ Step Code As-Built Compliance Report, if applicable

Final Inspection Checklist:

☐ Previous required inspections and deficiencies completed
☐ Building is substantially complete
☐ Building matches approved plans
☐ All required documents have been submitted and approved
☐ All life, health, and safety requirements are complete
☐ All building-performance requirements are complete

Commonly Missed:

- Outstanding documents
- Building not complete
- Exterior guards incomplete
- Exterior stair rise/run incorrect
- Graspable handrails required