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Revisions to the 2012 BC Building Code – Daycare Facilities for Children

This bulletin is one of a series of bulletins related to BC Building Code changes that take effect on December 19, 2014. For more information, or to view other bulletins, see our website at: <http://housing.gov.bc.ca/pub/bulletins/index.htm>

Ministerial Order M290 – B.C. Reg 175/2014 **Contents (see lines 8, 18, 59, 60) – Daycare Facilities for Children**

In previous editions of the BC Building Code, requirements for child daycares, and particularly those for infant daycares were subject to varying interpretation and hence to varying levels of building safety. This code change provides clear requirements for daycare facilities for children, as well as providing special additional requirements for those facilities in which 1 or more infants will be accommodated.

The new Article 3.1.2.8. requires a daycare facility for children to be classified as a Group A, Division 2 (assembly) occupancy. This applies regardless of the age of the children. The additional risk imposed due to the presence of 1 or more infants in a daycare is addressed separately in Article 3.3.2.16.

The new Article 3.3.2.16. sets out the following additional requirements for daycare facilities where 1 or more infants are accommodated (an infant is any child under the age of 30 months):

- A daycare facility with 1 or more infants must either be located in a sprinklered building, or be located such that the daycare has easy access to an exit at grade. The exit may not be more than 1 storey from any of the daycare rooms. For example, an unsprinklered daycare may be located either on the second storey or in the basement of a building located on a level lot where there is an exit on the first storey or the exit is an outside stairway leading to ground level.
- A fire alarm is required if the daycare is in a multi suite building, or if the daycare shares a means of egress located inside a building. Clause 3.2.4.1.(4)(f) already requires a fire alarm where the occupant load exceeds 40. The new Sentence 3.3.2.16.(2) is additional to Clause 3.2.4.1.(4)(f) and thus applies regardless of occupant load.
- Regardless of whether smoke detectors are otherwise required by Article 3.2.4.12., a daycare facility for children that accommodates 1 or more infants must have smoke detectors installed in each room and egress corridor if a fire alarm is required by the code.
- Where the daycare does not require a fire alarm, smoke alarms must be provided in each room, and in each corridor that provides egress from the daycare.

- Smoke alarms in a daycare must:
 - be wired so that if 1 smoke alarm sounds, any others in the daycare will sound;
 - conform to the required product standard and be installed in accordance with the required installation standard;
 - be electrically wired and provided with a seven day battery backup; and
 - have no disconnect switch between the overcurrent device and the smoke alarm (this helps to ensure that the smoke alarm will always remain turned on).

All other applicable requirements of the BC Building Code must still be followed.

Additional editorial changes were made elsewhere in the code so that all existing related requirements referred to “daycare facilities for children” instead of the current varied wording.

Appendix notes were also added to clarify that the term “daycare” is being used in a generic sense to mean a facility that provides short term child care. This term is not intended to exclude night time care, but it is intended to exclude any residential child care facilities.

In addition to the BC Building Code, daycare facilities for children are also regulated by the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*. Section 20 of the Act states that licensed child care facilities that accommodate no more than 8 children shall not be required to conform to any BC Building Code requirements beyond those that apply to a single family dwelling*. These licensed daycare facilities will continue to be accepted as single family dwellings under Part 9 of the BC Building Code and are not subject to the additional requirements discussed above.

*For more information on the Community Care and Assisted Living Act, please contact the Ministry of Health.