

Planning + Development Bulletin #4 | Alternative Inspection Procedures During COVID-19 Health Emergency

May 1, 2020

Background

This Bulletin has been developed to assist building permit holders in completing their projects by clarifying options in regard to the City's delivery of inspection services during the COVID-19 health emergency. Inspection services continue to be offered by the City of Coquitlam on a modified basis in order to ensure the safety of inspection staff and the public while maintaining this important service. To schedule an inspection, please use the 24 hour online inspection booking service a coquitlam.ca/inspections.

Contacting the Building Permits Division

Our central customer service centre continues to be staffed from 8:30-4:30 Monday to Friday (for general inquiries).
Phone: 604-927-3441
Email: permits@coquitlam.ca

Inspection Procedures During COVID-19 Health Emergency

It is required that all construction sites follow the Provincial Health Officer's Orders and direction provided, as well as WorkSafeBC regulations, as they relate to construction sites in BC. Failure to follow these measures may lead to delays in inspection requests being completed.

When the Building Official or Plumbing Official attends a construction site for a scheduled inspection, the floor area, or area of construction to be inspected, is to be cleared of all non-essential personnel for the duration of the inspection. Physical distancing is to be maintained during the inspection which includes access to and from the area of construction.

For larger construction sites, where there is a Construction Safety Officer (CSO), the Building Officials will require a copy of the site safety plan prior to attending the site, and the CSO will:

- Meet with the Building Official (while maintaining a minimum 2m distance) and provide the Site Safety orientation including the COVID-19 precautions on site,
- Confirm that no staff on site have shown symptoms or reported being ill,
- When required accompany the Building Official (while maintaining a minimum 2m distance) through the construction site to the area of construction to be inspected. The floor area or area of construction to be inspected is to be cleared or all non-essential staff as noted above.

Building Officials will not be entering any occupied building or structures. If your inspection is related to a building that is currently occupied, your inspection may be able to be conducted through an alternative inspection procedure or remote video inspection (RVI). For details, please review the section below in regard to alternative inspection procedures and RVI options.

Building Officials have the right to postpone an inspection if they feel their health and safety may be at risk. The inspection may be rescheduled once steps have been taken to ensure the construction site is in compliance with the recommended procedures of worker safety in regard to COVID-19 mitigation measures.

Alternative Inspection Procedures and Remote Video Inspections (RVI)

Alternative inspection procedures, and remote video inspections (RVI), may only be conducted at the discretion of the Building Official. These options are intended as a temporary alternative in satisfying inspection requirements during the COVID-19 health emergency. If your building/structure is currently occupied, you may request to use these alternative inspection procedures, including an RVI.

- **Alternative Inspection Procedures** may be approved utilizing the following alternative inspection methods to monitor compliance with the British Columbia Building Code:
 - A. Submission of site observations/field review from a Registered Professional,
 - B. Provision of documents, photos, or video walk-through acceptable to the inspector,
 - C. Remote video Inspections (RVI), acceptable to the inspector
 - D. In-person physical inspection,
 - E. Or, a combination of the methods described above that are acceptable to the inspector.

City staff reserve the right to limit alternative inspection procedures or cancel inspections at their sole discretion. To request alternative inspection procedure(s), please book an Inspection using the Webpermits online booking system and complete the Special Instruction section to request “Alternative Inspection Procedures”

- Should in-person inspections be required, all Provincial health advisories and WorkSafeBC regulations are to be followed. In addition, the attached Owner and Contractor screening questions checklist must be completed and emailed to permits@coquitlam.ca 24 hours in advance of the scheduled inspection.

Once the request for an alternative inspection procedure is received, it will be forwarded to the Building Official. The Building Official will review the permit records and contact you in regard to your request and advise if the requested process is acceptable for the type of inspection required. If approved, the Building Official will coordinate the date of the inspection with you.

In the case of an RVI, on the day of the inspection you will receive a “Skype for Business” meeting request via email confirming the time of the inspection and the Building or Plumbing Official will meet you on site at the scheduled time. In order to ensure your RVI occurs, it is recommended to download “Skype for Business” for free from the app store on your smart phone or other mobile device. You do not need to register an account and can sign-in as a guest. Please ensure that you allow the app access to your video camera and microphone. Once your inspection commences via Skype for Business, the Building Official will direct you to move through the site and to point the video camera of your smart phone or mobile device at critical locations. If there is any associated documentation required, in order to have the inspection completed, these documents will need to be submitted via email to the inspector in advance of the RVI. The Building Official will confirm receipt of the required documentation prior to conducting your RVI inspection.

Please ensure the area to be inspected is equipped with enough lighting to facilitate the RVI. You should have an additional flashlight, tape measure and for a plumbing inspection an incremental level. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the building department at permits@coquitlam.ca or 604-927-3441.

Related information

BC Gov News – [Guidance to construction sites operating during COVID-19](#)

WorkSafeBC – [Construction and COVID-19 Safety](#)

BC Centre for Disease Control – [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#)

Alternative Inspection Procedures During COVID-19 Health Emergency

Address:

Permit Number: _____

Owner and Contractor screening questions and checklist

Prior to an inspector entering a construction site, the owner and contractor must complete the following checklist and provide it to the City in order to facilitate **in-person onsite Inspections conducted by the Building or Plumbing Official**.

Part A COVID-19

Yes	No	Questions
		A1. Have you, or anyone else in the building or working in the building, experienced symptoms consistent with COVID-19 in the past 10 days (coughing, sneezing, sore throat, fever, difficulty breathing)?
		A2. Have you, or anyone else in the building or working in the building, been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 10 days?
		A3. Have you, or anyone else in the building or working in the building, been in close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
		A4. Have you, or anyone else in the building or working in the building, been tested for COVID-19 and/or are waiting to hear the results of a laboratory test for COVID-19?
		A5. Have you, or anyone else in the building or working in the building, travelled anywhere outside of Canada within the past 14 days?
		A6. Have you, or anyone else in the building or working in the building, been advised by a medical professional to self-isolate for any other reason?
		A7. Have you, or anyone else in the building or working in the building, been in the construction area for any reason in the last 24 hours?

Part B Physical Distancing and other requirements

Yes	No	Questions
		B1. Will the work area being inspected, or the entire site, be cleared of personnel for the duration of the inspection?
		B2. Will access be provided to the site, and areas to be inspected, maintaining a minimum 2 m physical distance at all times between persons?
		B3. Is the area to be inspected vacant and not yet occupied? (not lived in; owner or occupant's possessions are not present in the floor area to be inspected)
		B4. Will the heating/air-conditioning and ventilations systems that are shared between the occupied space and area of construction be turned off for the duration of the inspection?
		B5. Is the area of construction clear of all construction debris and garbage?

Part C Additional Building Inspection requirements

Yes	No	Description
		C1. Approved permit plans on site, Required field reviews, documents on site or emailed to the Building Official in advance of the inspection. <i>(If you are unsure what documents need to be onsite for the inspection, please contact the inspector.)</i>
		C2. Open access provided to the construction site and areas to be inspected; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all doors to rooms to be open, • cabinet doors open to inspect kitchen exhaust system, • crawlspace access open, • access to both sides of fire separation to ensure continuity of the fire separation • attic access open and ladder provided to access attic space.

Part D Additional Plumbing Inspection requirements

Yes	No	Description
		D1. Open access provided to the construction site and areas to be inspected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all doors to rooms open, • crawlspace access open, • attic access open with ladder to safely access attic, • cabinet doors open to inspect plumbing and plumbing cleanouts.
		D2. Prior to plumbing inspection clean and disinfect all plumbing fixtures, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • faucets, • hot water tank, • tubs, showers, toilet etc.

Please email the completed checklist to permits@coquitlam.ca 24 hours in advance of the scheduled inspection.