February 4, 2025
BUILDING DIVISION

BC Energy and Zero Carbon Step Code Requirements for Part 3 Buildings: Multi-Family Residential, Commercial, Office, and Retail

DISCLAIMER: The information bulletin is subject to future versions. Notes below indicate some, but not all, items that may be revised.

Purpose and Background:

On May 1, 2023, the Province enacted changes to the BC Building Code that requires Part 3 buildings to meet Step 2 of the BC Energy Step Code. Starting March 10, 2025, the Province will be enacting additional requirements to meet Zero Carbon Step EL-1 to measure and disclose operational greenhouse gas emissions for new Residential, Commercial, Office and Retail projects.

- Refer to the **Additional Information** section at the bottom of this bulletin for additional Step Code information and resources.
- A separate bulletin has been prepared for BC Energy and Zero Carbon Step Code and associated requirements for **Part 9 Buildings**.

Implementation:

Effective March 10, 2025, Step EL-1 of the BC Energy and Zero Carbon Step Code will apply to all new building permit applications for Part 3 multi-family residential, commercial, office and retail. To comply with the BC Energy and Zero Carbon Step Code, builders must work with a Registered Professional to ensure building designs meet all applicable energy performance and administrative requirements. All Registered Professionals are encouraged to follow the Joint Architectural Institute of BC and Engineers and Geoscientists BC *Professional Practice Guidelines – Whole Building Energy Modelling Services*.[1]

The City will rely on Letters of Assurance provided by the registered professionals.

Building Permit application submitted on or after May 1, 2023		
Part 3 Buildings	Multi-family Residential Commercial, Office & Retail	Energy - Step 2 (Minimum) Zero Carbon – Step EL-1 (Measure only)

Notes:
1. Step Code only applies to new construction. It does not apply to renovations.
2. Step Code does not apply to assembly, institutional, or industrial major occupancies.

[1] Download AIBC and EGBC's *Joint Professional Practice Guidelines for Whole Building Energy Modelling Services* here: https://www.egbc.ca/Practice-Resources/Professional-Practice-Guidelines

Development Permit Applications and Approvals:

As part development permit application, applicants are expected to conduct energy modelling and provide a statement to the City that their proposed design will meet the City's Energy and Zero Carbon Step Code requirements in place at the time of the associated building permit application. This statement must be submitted prior to the City considering the development permit application. It is incumbent on applicants to ensure their proposed building design will meet the City's Energy and Zero Carbon Step Code requirements. Any revisions to building design may require applicants to reapply for updated development permit approvals.

Building Permit Submission Requirements:

The following documents must be completed and submitted with the Building Permit application package:

1. Energy Report for the BC Energy and Zero Carbon Step Code for Part 3 Buildings (Building Permit Stage)[2] with complete contact information and Section G completed.
2. Printed copy of energy model report stamped with signature and date by a Registered Professional. The City may contact the Registered Professional to submit the associated model files for auditing purposes. Effective March 10, 2025 the report must include data to measure and disclose the operational greenhouse gas emissions.
3. Plan drawings clearly showing all energy efficiency upgrades beyond minimum energy code requirements as well as the type of air barrier. Building permit application drawings must include sufficient information to demonstrate energy efficiency compliance.

   Note that Registered Professionals of Record (RPRs) are already required to submit Letters of Assurance (Schedule B) for their respective disciplines. The RPRs for the architectural, mechanical, plumbing, and electrical disciplines each have specific responsibilities to energy efficiency requirements under the BC Energy Step Code. The City will not accept Letters of Assurance (Schedule B) if the BC Energy Step Code section has been crossed out.

Final Building Inspection Requirements:

All Part 3 buildings must demonstrate compliance with the 10.2.3 pathway under the BC Building Code, including a post-construction airtightness test. Applicants must notify the City's Building Inspections Section before a scheduled airtightness test so that a Building Official may, at the discretion of the Building Official, attend the testing.

Final Building Inspection Documents:

1. Energy Report for the BC Energy Step Code for Part 3 Buildings[2] (Occupancy Stage) with complete contact information and Section G completed. Final airtightness results and energy efficiency upgrades must be included.
2. Printed copy of energy model report for each building as constructed, stamped with signature and date by a Registered Professional. The City may contact the Registered Professional to submit the associated model files for auditing purposes.
3. Final airtightness test report.

Additional Information:

BC Energy Step Code:

- Receive up-to-date information by signing up for the Province's BC Energy Step Code Stakeholder Update newsletter: bit.ly/StepCodeStakeholderNewsletter.
- To learn more about the BC Energy Step Code, including performance requirements, resources for industry, and upcoming events, visit energystepcode.ca.

[2] Energy Report for the BC Energy and Zero Carbon Step Code for Part 3 Buildings is available at https://energystepcode.ca/compliance-tools-part3/ (for applications submitted until March 9, 2025) and BC-Step-Code-Part-3-Checklist-v3.0.1.xlsx (for applications submitted after March 9, 2025) The City is accepting the default version generated by province. Tip sheet and recorded video training is available at https://energystepcode.ca/compliance-tools-part3/.

- If you have additional questions regarding the BC Energy and Zero Carbon Step Code, visit energystepcode.ca/contact-us/ or Compliance tools for Part 3 buildings | Energy Step Code or email building.safety@gov.bc.ca.