

Ontario's Building Code Technical Bulletin: Highlights of Amendments to Part 3 of Ontario's 2012 Building Code

Ontario Regulation 88/19, amending Ontario's 2012 Building Code, was filed on May 2, 2019.

This bulletin provides general information on certain amendments that have been made to Part 3 of Division B in the Building Code (Fire Protection, Occupant Safety and Accessibility), including the relevant new or affected sections of the Building Code.

Unless otherwise noted, the in-effect date for the amendments described below is January 1, 2020.

For the full range of changes, code users are advised to consult the official source documents, including:

- The Building Code Act, 1992; and
- The 2012 Building Code (O. Reg. 332/12) as amended, and
- Ontario Regulation 88/19

The above documents are available on the [Government of Ontario's e-laws site](#).

Smoke Tightness of Closures in Fire Separations and Smoke Dampers (3.1.8.4., 3.1.8.5. and 3.1.8.7.)

New requirements have been introduced for leakage rates of smoke dampers and combination smoke/fire dampers used as closures, as well as a leakage-rate for door assemblies installed in fire separation in specific areas.

While the current fire damper requirements are maintained, a new provision has been added that requires an air transfer opening, or a duct that penetrates an assembly required to be a fire separation in certain applications, be equipped with either a smoke damper or a combination fire/smoke damper.

Factory-Assembled Panels (3.1.4.2. and 3.1.5.5A.)

Two new articles have been added to address the protection of factory-assembled panels containing foamed plastic insulation installed in walk-in coolers or freezers located in buildings of both combustible and non-combustible construction.

Foamed Plastic Insulation (3.1.5.12A.)

Requirements with respect to foam plastic insulation have been rearranged and a new article has been added to address protection of foamed plastics insulation and combustible insulation separately.

Soffit Protection (3.2.3.6.)

A new provision has been added that clarifies and relaxes roof soffit protection when facing a street, lane or a public thoroughfare. It provides harmonization with similar provisions for spatial separation in Part 9.

Integrated Fire Protection and Life Safety Systems (3.2.10.1.)

A new article has been added which requires the testing of the integration between fire protection and life safety systems, and other systems associated with fire protection and life safety functions.

The testing is to be conducted based on the newly developed CSA Standard (CSA/ULC-S1001, "Integrated Systems Testing of Fire Protection and Life Safety Systems").

Residential Fire Warning System (3.2.4.22A.)

A new article has been added to permit the use of a residential warning system in lieu of interconnected smoke alarm system. The new system allows the connection of heat detectors, CO alarms, other life safety devices and remote monitoring capabilities. The system is also required to have the capability of supervising the interconnected devices.

Smoke Movement in Residential High-Rise Buildings (3.2.6.2.)

A new article has been added which requires air handling systems providing make-up air to a corridor serving residential suites to remain in operation after the activation of the fire alarm to maintain corridor pressurization.

Stairs, Guards and Handrails (3.3.2.8A., 3.3.5.9., 3.4.6.4., 3.4.6.5., 3.4.6.5., 3.4.6.6., 3.4.6.8., and 3.4.6.9.)

Note: All amendments related to stairs, guards and handrails provisions will come into force on January 1, 2022.

A new article has been created and new requirements have been added to an existing article for the installation of handrails in aisles with steps in assembly occupancies.

A new article has been added for guards located in industrial occupancies.

A new requirement has been added to harmonize the landing dimension with similar requirements in Part 9.

A new requirement has been added to harmonize the height of guards serving a flight of exit stair with similar requirements in Part 9.

Changes have been made to handrail requirements to clarify where handrails are required and where they need to be continuous.

The loading requirements for handrails have been moved from Part 3 to Part 4.

Changes were made to the rise and run dimensions of public stairs.

A new provision has been added to the tread and riser requirements to restrict open stair risers.

A new provision has been added to clarify the permitted configurations of exit stairs.

Door Threshold (3.3.1.12. and 3.4.6.11.)

A new requirement has been added that sets limits on the height of door thresholds, other than those in a required barrier-free path of travel.

Plumbing Fixtures, General (3.7.4.2.11.)

A change is made to provide additional clarification on manual control faucets that serve lavatories.

Medical Gas Piping (3.7.5.2.)

A change was made to the requirements for the design, construction, installation and testing of medical gas piping systems. Medical gas piping systems are also required to be in conformance with Ontario's Fire Code, or in the absence of such requirements, with the National Fire Code of Canada.

Accessibility – Controls (3.8.1.5.)

A change was made to clarify all common requirements for accessible controls related to the operation of building services and safety devices.

Accessibility – Water Closet Stalls and Enclosures (3.8.3.8.(1), 3.8.3.8.(7)(b), and 3.8.3.9.)

A change was made to provide additional accessibility requirements and clarification for water closets, water closet stalls and enclosures.

Accessibility – Urinals (3.8.3.10.)

A change was made to clarify provisions for accessibility requirements for urinals within a barrier-free washroom.

Accessibility – Lavatories, Mirrors and Washroom Accessories (3.8.3.11.)

A change was made to provide clarification on accessibility requirements for lavatories, mirrors and washroom accessories within a barrier-free washroom.

Accessibility – Universal Washroom (3.8.3.12)

A change was made to provide additional clarification on accessibility requirements for universal washroom doors.

Accessibility – Showers and Bathtubs (3.8.3.13.)

A change is made to provide additional clarification on accessibility requirements for showers and bathtubs including requirements for grab bars, clear floor spaces, shower heads and facets, and individual bathtub requirements for Group B Division 2 or 3 occupancies.

Electric Vehicle Charging (3.1.21.)

Note: Amendments related to electric vehicle charging requirements in the Building Code came into effect on the date the regulation was filed – May 2, 2019.

All requirements including transition provisions related to electric vehicle charging in non-residential buildings have been deleted.