

July, 2014  
BUILDING DIVISION

# ***HOW TO APPLY FOR A BUILDING PERMIT TO FINISH A BASEMENT***

This guide outlines the necessary steps to obtain a permit to finish the basement in a Single Family Dwelling.

This is for general guidance only. It does not replace by-laws or other legal documents.

## **General Information**

Most basement finishing does not involve structural work. However, if the proposed work will involve any change to the structural elements of a building, sealed and signed structural drawings and schedules will be required.

## **What Will Be Needed When Applying For A Basement Finishing Permit?**

- A completed building permit application form.
- A current Title Search which may be obtained from the Land Title Office.
- Owner Authorization Form (if the Applicant is not the Registered Owner).
- One complete set of drawings, including:
  - A site plan accurately drawn to scale showing:
    - The entire lot, legal description of the property, property lines and identification and dimensions of setbacks of the main dwelling from the property line.

- A floor plan at a scale of  $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'0''$  or metric equivalent accurately drawn to scale that shows:
  - The proposed basement layout;
  - State the square footage of the entire basement floor and, if the entire basement is not being finished, also state the square footage of the area that is proposed to be finished;
  - Dimension the overall width and length of the basement, outside of foundation wall to outside of foundation wall, as well as the width and length of each room, and width of each hallway;
  - Label the use of each proposed and existing room;
  - Provide the width and height of each door and each window. The BC Building Code requires minimum egress dimensions for bedroom windows and bedroom window wells, as well as minimum entrance door sizes. See BCBC;
  - Provide construction details of all proposed wall assemblies;
  - Show all plumbing fixtures. Identify proposed and existing fixtures; and
  - Show the location of any bathroom exhaust fan that may be required.

All plans and information submitted must be legible and suitable quality for scanning. Minimum size 11" x 17" sheets are required (24" x 36" preferred). Blueprint paper, vellum or graph paper will not be accepted. Drawings in colour ink or in pencil will not be accepted. Drawings should not be laminated. Reversed plans are not acceptable.

- Payment of the permit fee;
- A damage deposit may be required;

### **Other Drawings That May Be Required**

If an existing basement window will be enlarged, or if a new basement window will be installed, an elevation drawings of the affected building face and a cross section drawing through the wall in which the window will be installed are required.

If a new window well will be installed, the architectural drawings that are submitted shall show:

- The proposed materials that will be used to construct the window well;
- The length, width and depth of the well; and
- If the well will be more than 600mm (2ft deep), provide details of the required guard around the well or cover over the well.

### **How to Apply**

To apply for a basement finishing permit, submit the documents listed above to the Building Division. Basic information about the property will also be requested at the time of application.

### **After an Application Has Been Submitted**

Once the plan reviewer is satisfied that all the requirements have been met, the permit will be issued and the applicant will be notified. You will be required to have the drawing at the location at all times during construction.

### **Other Permits That May Be Required**

Separate plumbing and electrical permits are required for any plumbing and electrical work. Plumbing and electrical permits may be applied for only after the building permit has been issued.