

COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date:November 28, 2023Contact:Andrea LawContact No.:604.871.6509RTS No.:15999VanRIMS No.:08-2000-20Meeting Date:December 13, 2023Submit comments to Council

TO:	Standing Committee on	City Finance and Services
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- FROM: General Manager of Development, Buildings, and Licensing, and the Chief Building Official
- SUBJECT: Plumbing, Sprinkler and Mechanical Updates to the Building By-law

Recommendations

- A. THAT Council approve, in principle, various miscellaneous amendments to the Building By-law as generally described in this report and as set out in Appendix A.
- B. THAT Council instruct the Director of Legal Services to bring forward for enactment amendments to the Building By-law as set out in Appendix A.

Purpose and Executive Summary

This report recommends three quick-win amendments to the Building By-law which can be implemented immediately to help reduce building cost, increase reliance on professionals and harmonize selected plumbing by-law requirements with the National Plumbing Code:

- *Plumbing:* harmonize with the national and provincial standard for backflow preventer requirements on private property, to protect the City's water supply
- *Sprinklers:* eliminate the requirement for a sprinkler permit for minor repairs, helping to also reduce the sprinkler permit backlog
- *Mechanical:* better match the cost of a mechanical permit to the review and inspection effort required, by reducing the cost of mechanical permits prepared by registered professionals.

Council Authority/Previous Decisions

Council has the authority under sections 306 and 330 of the <u>Vancouver Charter</u> to make by-laws for regulating the installation of plumbing facilities, for fixing standards for plumbing facilities, for protecting the health of inhabitants and for preventing and prohibiting insanitary conditions.

City Manager's Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

Context and Background

The report proposes three amendments to the Building By-law which can be implemented immediately to help reduce building cost.

Discussion

1. Plumbing: backflow preventers on private property

To protect the City's water supply, buildings must provide appropriate means of preventing backflow. This report seeks to harmonise City requirements with the national and provincial plumbing codes. Removing differing requirements between local construction codes helps to decrease industry uncertainty and construction cost.

2. Fire sprinklers: minor repairs

Currently a fire sprinkler permit is required for any type of work on a fire sprinkler system, including minor repairs. Conversely, plumbing and mechanical systems do not require a permit for a minor repair, replacement of a valve and other smaller items which do not change the plumbing or mechanical system. This report seeks to eliminate the sprinkler permit requirement for the replacement of a valve or sprinkler head, or to complete a repair. This will aid in reducing the sprinkler permit backlog and will allow City resources to be allocated more effectively.

3. Mechanical permits: cost

<u>Mechanical permits</u> were launched on June 1, 2022 to streamline the installation of heating and cooling systems. In 2023, this entirely on-line program has automatically issued over 2,000 permits. This report seeks to establish a more equitable pricing system. Fewer City resources are required to review and inspect installations which are designed by a registered professional, and this report seeks to establish a maximum fee.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report's recommendations.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report's recommendations.

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APPENDIX A DRAFT

A By-law to amend Building By-law No. 12511 Regarding amendments to backflow preventer standards, minor sprinkler repairs and mechanical permit fees

Note: A By-law will be prepared generally in accordance with the provisions listed below, subject to change and refinement prior to posting.

- 1. This By-law amends the indicated provisions of Building By-law No. 12511.
- 2. In Article 2.6.2.1. of Book II, Division B, Council strikes out Sentence (3) and substitutes

"3) Backflow preventers shall be selected and installed in conformance with CSA B64.10, "Selection and installation of backflow preventers.""

- 3. In Table 1.3.1.2. of Book II, Division B, Council:
 - a) strikes out the row corresponding to the CoV Water Works By-law,
 - b) renumbers "CSA B64.10-11" as "CSA B64.10-17", and
 - c) strikes out the row corresponding to CSA B64.10.1-11.
- 4. In Article 1.6.3.7. of Books I and II, Division C, Council:
 - a) in the title, strikes out "or Mechanical" and substitutes ", Mechanical or Sprinkler", andb) in Sentence (1), adds "sprinkler head," after "valve,".
- 5. In Part D of the Schedule of Fees in Books I and II, Division C, Council adds ", to a maximum of \$2,500.00" after "for each electric heat pump installation above 6 total heat pump units".
- 6. A decision by a court that any part of this by-law is illegal, void, or unenforceable severs that part from this by-law, and is not to affect the balance of this by-law.
- 7. This By-law is to come into force and take effect on the date of its enactment, except for section 5, which will come into force and take effect on January 1, 2024 immediately after By-law No. 13841.

ENACTED by Council this day of

, 2023

Mayor