



Bulletin

Secondary Suites and Suite Ready Dwellings

Updated: 2022 February

Created: 2020 July

PURPOSE

To inform staff, developers, builders, and home owners with regards to how a new single family dwelling may be constructed to include a secondary suite or be secondary suite ready to avoid future cost and disruption.

BACKGROUND

Secondary suites are an important mechanism to add market priced accommodations, short term and long term. They can also serve as a mortgage helper.

IMPLEMENTATION

General provisions:

1. Kitchen vent hoods are required by Code to vent to the exterior of the building via solid metal ducting. To avoid future costs, the exterior duct termination plus internal ducting to the location where the stove should be roughed in for installation of a future kitchen hood fan.
2. A conduit from the electrical panel where a future stove should be installed.
3. A subpanel which is located in and controls all of the electrical circuits within the suite. This is required under the Electrical Code to ensure direct access to circuit breakers should they trip or need to be turned off due to work being done on the circuits. All circuits serving the proposed suite are to be completely separated from the remainder of the dwelling.
4. Separate water shut offs that control the hot and cold water supply to all fixtures located within the proposed suite. These water lines are to be dedicated to this area with no cross over to fixtures located elsewhere in the dwelling.
5. Rough-in facilities for a proposed second laundry area. This is to include a drain, hot & cold water supply, dryer vent ducting and conduit for the future installation of power to the dryer.
6. Circuits in the future kitchen area are to be wired to the applicable standards of the BC Electrical Code for kitchens. Note: A kitchen cannot be installed unless the suite is built out under a valid Building Permit.
7. Electrical rough-in for Smoke/Carbon Monoxide alarms should be installed in the proposed suite. These rough-in installations are to be located within 5m of bedrooms, in each bedroom, and are all to be interconnected with the main dwelling detection system. As per BC Building Code alarms are to be hardwired and equipped with a battery back-up.
8. Egress windows for all proposed bedrooms as per building code.
9. 3 parking spaces will be required. 2 for the single detached dwelling and a third for the proposed suite.

Fire separation:

1. Secondary suites need to be fire separated from the remainder of the building per BCBC 9.10.09.14 to
 - 15min where all smoke alarms are interconnected and photo-electric
 - 30min where an additional interconnected smoke alarm is installed in the remainder of the building
 - 45min where the smoke alarms are not interconnected

See BCBC 9.10.3.1 for allowable wall and ceiling assemblies to achieve the required fire separation. Generally stud and joist space insulation, resilient channel, with drywall layers to meet the actual rating, is required.

2. A 20min fire rated door or 45mm solid core door with 38mm solid wood frame, equipped with a self-closing device, must be installed between units. Weather-stripping is recommended for noise protection.
3. All penetrations by pipes, ducts or else between main unit and secondary suite need to be fire stopped/fire caulked.

Noise protection:

1. Secondary suites need to be separated from the remainder of the building per BCBC 9.11.1.1 to limit the transmission of noise to an STC rating of 40.
An example compliant assembly has stud and joist space filled with noise absorbing material (e.g.rock-wool), resilient channel on one side of wall or underside of ceiling and ½” of drywall.

Ventilation:

1. Required heating season mechanical venting systems, such as HRVs or ducted forced air heating system with fresh air intakes, need to comply with BCBC 9.32.3 and be equipped with, or provisions made for, fire dampers and relay shut-off (see heating below) where ducts penetrate a fire separation and serve both suites.
2. Fresh air needs to be supplied to each bedroom and common spaces.
3. Continuously running bathroom fans and passive air intakes are not Code compliant.

Hot Water or Forced Air Heating:

1. An additional thermostat is required for the use of the proposed suite.
2. Provisions for the installation of fire dampers on all supply and return air ducts.
3. Relay interconnection required between a smoke detector in the return air duct and the furnace to shut the furnace down in the event of a fire per BCBC 9.32.3.2. to prevent the spread of smoke.

or alternatively**Electric Base Board Heating/other Independent Heating System:**

1. Separate heating source with independent thermostat for temperature control as per the BC Building Code requirements. This is to eliminate the need to transition the heating system of the proposed suite in the future. Venting requirements apply!

With these measures installed it is relatively simple to convert the space to a legal secondary suite subject to zoning and a future building permit.

Note: Please contact Town of Golden Development Services prior to commencing any construction to verify Zoning Bylaw regulations and permitting requirements.