

## Construction Permits for Water Supply System Frequently Asked Questions

### **Why do I need a construction permit?**

The BC *Drinking Water Protection Act* (Section 7) requires that a Construction Permit be obtained **before** commencing construction, installation, alteration or extension of a water supply system. This includes any works, facilities or equipment that are intended to be a water supply system or part of a water supply system. The purpose of this requirement is to confirm the water supply system design will not contribute to a drinking water health hazard.

### **What kinds of work do I need a construction permit for?**

Construction, installation, alteration or extension of a water supply system or works may include but are not limited to:

- New sources such as surface intakes and groundwater wells
- Consolidating with another approved system
- Water mains and distribution system appurtenances (e.g. valves, hydrants, etc.)
- Pressure reducing stations, pump stations
- Reservoirs, storage tanks, pressure tanks
- Water treatment systems and/or components
- Changes to existing works which affect flow, service area, intake, treatment or reliability (e.g. switching a disinfection delivery system, addition of on-line monitoring equipment, pump addition, upsizing water mains, backflow assembly installations on water mains, etc.)
- Replacement of existing water mains, pumps, etc.

### **Are there circumstances when I don't need a construction permit to do works?**

Yes. Under the following circumstances, it is acceptable to undertake works without a construction permit:

- For emergency repairs<sup>1</sup>
- For routine maintenance
- Like for like replacements<sup>2</sup>
- If an issuing official has waived the need for a permit<sup>3</sup>
- Your system is exempt from the regulations<sup>4</sup>

If you have any questions or want more information on applying for a Construction Permit visit our website (<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/information-for/businesses/drinking-water-providers-and-operators#waterworks-construction-permit>) or contact our Public Health Engineering Team at:

Engineering Direct: 1-855-743-3550

Email: [EngineeringDirect@interiorhealth.ca](mailto:EngineeringDirect@interiorhealth.ca)

Penticton Protection Office, 3090 Skaha Lake Rd., Penticton, B.C. V2A 7H2

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<sup>1</sup> Note the *Drinking Water Protection Act* requires all drinking water related emergencies be reported to a Drinking Water Officer.

<sup>2</sup> It is recommended that details of the work be discussed with the issuing official in advance. The original component must have received a construction permit and the replacement is the same make, model, and specifications. In the case of a treatment component it must have the same validated operating parameters.

<sup>3</sup> The *Drinking Water Protection Regulation* (Section 6(3c)) provides the issuing official the discretion to waive the requirement for a construction permit where works are considered to present a low public health risk. Details of the works must be discussed with the issuing official in advance so they can decide if a waiver is appropriate or if a Construction Permit is required.

<sup>4</sup> Only "water supply systems" as defined in the BC *Drinking Water Protection Act* are subject to permitting requirements. This generally includes all system that provide water for domestic use to anything other than one single-family residence. A building or "system-within-a-system" may also be exempt and not require an operating or construction permit.