CONSTRUCTION PERMITS FOR WATER SUPPLY SYSTEMS

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 repairs¹
- For routine maintenance
- Like for like replacements²
- If an issuing official has waived the need for a permit³
- Your system is exempt from the regulations⁴

If you have any questions or want more information on applying for a Construction Permit visit our website (www.interiorhealth.ca/YourEnvironment/DrinkingWater/Pages/Permits) or contact our Public Health Engineering Team at:

   Engineering Direct: 1-855-743-3550
   Email: EngineeringDirect@interiorhealth.ca
   Penticton Health Protection
   3090 Skaha Lake Rd.
   Penticton, B.C. V2A 7H2

¹ Note the Drinking Water Protection Act requires all drinking water related emergencies be reported to a Drinking Water Officer.

² 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.

³ 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.

⁴ 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.

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