

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.