



FOR RELEASE

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Yukon government to establish committee on building code amendments

WHITEHORSE—The Yukon government is establishing an advisory committee to provide advice on the application of National Building Code amendments in Yukon. At the same time, the government is granting Yukon home builders a one-year exemption from new energy efficiency requirements to allow time for a public review.

"The recent National Building Code requirements for insulation, home heating systems, wood stoves and log homes require additional review to properly understand their implications for Yukon," Minister of Community Services Brad Cathers said. "By establishing an advisory committee and consulting with stakeholders, we'll be better positioned to consider the needs of rural residents and communities."

The Yukon government passed changes to the territorial Building Standards Act in 2013, which set a minimum six-month waiting period prior to adopting new building code provisions. Current energy efficiency provisions were automatically adopted when the National Building Code was changed in 2012, so did not involve a local consultation process. The steps taken today will allow government to consult Yukoners directly on whether these provisions should apply.

"The Government of Yukon recognizes the benefits of healthy and energy-efficient home construction," Cathers added. "We have also heard from Yukon home builders and citizens in rural Yukon who are very concerned about the new National Building Code requirements, including their effect on affordability, so we are listening and acting on what we heard."

The one-year exemption – effective today through March 31, 2015 – does not affect the bylaw requirements for residential buildings in Whitehorse. The city's bylaw mandates energy efficiency standards for new home construction and heating systems.

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See attached backgrounder.

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Background

- The process of examining the energy efficiency provisions of the National Building Code will take place over the next year to allow for consultation development, creation of the advisory committee, and the decision-making process.

- The National Building Code energy efficiency provisions affect construction throughout Yukon. The city of Whitehorse, however, has its own building standards in place that in most cases meet or exceed the new provisions. This Yukon government process will not change or affect those standards.
- Although municipalities may have their own energy efficiency standards in place through bylaws, they are required to enforce territorial standards if they exceed municipal standards.
- Due to Yukon's existing legislation at the time, the new energy efficiency section of the National Building Code was automatically adopted in December 2012 without consideration of its impact on the territory.
- Changes made in 2013 to Yukon's Building Standards Act require a minimum six-month waiting period prior to adopting new national building code provisions in Yukon. This process is used by other provinces and will give Yukon time to consider whether changes to the national code meet the territory's needs before they are adopted.

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