

Provincial Building Code Updates

Effective March 10, 2025



The BC Energy Step Code regulates the **energy consumption and efficiency** of buildings through construction and design practices that prioritize the building envelope.

The Zero Carbon Step Code regulates the **carbon emissions** associated with operating buildings, related to the mechanical systems used for space heating, water heating and cooking equipment.

Current code requirements as of March 10, 2025

Most new construction in BC is required to be 20% more energy efficient than the base 2018 building code requirements.

Step 3 is the minimum required for Part 9 buildings.

Step 2 is the minimum required for Part 3 buildings.

Emissions Level 1 (EL-1) is required for Part 9 and Part 3 buildings. This “**measure-only**” level requires reporting of two carbon performance metrics:

- Absolute GHG, measured as kg CO₂e/yr
- GHG Intensity, measured as kg CO₂e/m²/yr

EL-1 does not include any carbon performance requirements.

Opt-in measures beyond code that would require a bylaw change

Local governments can incentivize or require via bylaw:

- Step 4 or 5 for Part 9 buildings
- Step 3 or 4 for Part 3 buildings

Local governments can incentivize or require via bylaw:

- EL-2 (Moderate)
- EL-3 (Strong)
- EL-4 (Zero)

Each of these levels requires Part 9 buildings to achieve specific performance targets for both Absolute GHG and GHG Intensity, whereas Part 3 buildings only need to meet the GHG Intensity metric for each emissions level.

Prescriptive pathway option

A prescriptive pathway is available for Part 9 buildings to achieve Step 3.

A prescriptive pathway is available for Part 9 buildings, and involves disclosure of space heating, water heating, and cooking equipment.

Tips for local governments:

1. Use the [Provincial Step Code compliance checklists and forms](#) to simplify reporting and permitting.
2. Reach out to nearby communities to collaborate and ensure consistency in policy approach and implementation timelines to make it easier for builders to work across different jurisdictions.
3. Join the [Step Code Peer Network](#) to connect with and learn from other communities.