

Alternative Family Care Homes (2015 National Building Code of Canada)

Information and Drawing Requirements

Houses that accommodate outsiders where residential care services are provided are classified as Care occupancies under the 2015 National Building Code of Canada (NBC). Alternative Family Care Homes (AFCH) were previously referred to as Residential Care Homes by Building Standards. Alternative Family Care Homes (AFCH) will include the following:

- Approved Homes (The Mental Health)
- Private Services Homes (The Residential Services Act)
- Personal Care Homes (The Personal Care Homes Act)
- Nursing Homes (The Housing and Special-Care Homes Act)
- Children's Custodial Homes (The Child and Family Services Act)
- Residential Service Facility (The Residential Services Act)
- Custodial Homes (The Young Offenders Act)
- Special Care Homes (The Housing and Special-Care Homes Act)
- Convalescent Homes (The Personal Care Homes Act)
- Group Homes (The Residential Services Act or The Housing and Special-Care Homes Act) Maternity Homes (The Residential Services Act)
- Special-care Homes Act)
- Transition Homes (The Residential Services Act)
- Treatment Centres (The Alcohol and Drug Abuse Act)
- Young Offenders' Homes (The Young Offenders Act)

The NBC has strict requirements for these types of occupancies due to the nature of care being provided. However, the NBC has granted a relaxation of code requirements for houses classified as one-unit dwellings that have sleeping accommodation for not more than 10 persons, including the caregiver and his/her family. This relaxed set of NBC requirements is outlined in the following pages of this document.

Where construction, alterations or renovations to a building will be undertaken, a building permit is required for all occupancies including AFCH.

Where no construction is being undertaken, a building permit is required for the conversion of an existing one-unit dwelling to an AFCH for:

- All Personal Care Homes
- All of the other types of AFCH listed above where accommodations are provided for more than 5 residents. These AFCH may require discretionary use approval according to the Municipal Zoning Bylaw.

To apply for a building permit, please complete the Residential Building Permit Application form (available on our website).

When a building permit is applied for, the application and drawings will be circulated to the following:

1. The Municipal Planning and Development Department to formally confirm and approve that the zoning of the area can accommodate the AFCH. If care is provided for more than 5 residents, discretionary use approval may be required.
2. 49North Building Solutions to review compliance with the 2015 National Building Code of Canada.

Work is NOT permitted to proceed on the conversion of the house to an AFCH before the building permit is approved and issued. This may avoid any additional costs that may arise if the work is done incorrectly.

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The following is a MINIMUM list of code requirements of the 2015 NBC, UBASA Regulations and the Municipal Fire Department. There may be other requirements or exceptions to the requirements that are not listed here.

*Please note that 49North Building Solutions will review building permit applications for compliance with the above criteria and the relevant Building Codes only. The owner is responsible for ensuring that all other applicable requirements from the legislation (i.e. the Acts and Regulations) governing each type of AFCH care home are met and that a building permit is obtained for construction related to these requirements. Please note un-sprinklered AFCH with 1 to 5 occupants-in-care may require additional fire safety measures. Additional fire safety measures are fire and life safety measures established in policy by the licensing authority for a particular type of AFCH. Please contact your licensing authority for requirement details.

OCCUPANCY

- An AFCH is permitted to be classified as a residential occupancy if the occupants live in a dwelling unit used as a single housekeeping unit with sleeping accommodation for not more than 10 persons. This includes the caregiver and his/her family. This only applies to AFCH that are located in detached single family homes, or one unit dwellings.

SMOKE ALARMS

- Interconnected smoke alarms must be installed in each sleeping room.
- At least one smoke alarm shall be installed on each storey of a dwelling unit.
- On any storey of a dwelling unit containing sleeping rooms, a smoke alarm shall be installed in a location between the sleeping rooms and the remainder of the storey, and if the sleeping rooms are served by a hallway, the smoke alarm shall be located in the hallway.
- Smoke alarms shall be installed with permanent connections to an electrical circuit and shall have no disconnect switches between the overcurrent device and the smoke alarm.
- Smoke alarms shall be wired so that the actuation of one smoke alarm will cause all smoke alarms within the dwelling unit to sound.

SPRINKLER SYSTEM

- A sprinkler system is required in an AFCH with 6 or more occupants-in-care where any of the occupants are not capable of self-preservation.
- A sprinkler system is required in a personal care home with 6 or more occupants-in-care.
- *As per UBASA, a care home with 5 or fewer occupants in care does not require a sprinkler system.
- Capable of self-preservation is defined as a person is capable of recognizing and responding to an emergency given his or her physical, cognitive and behavioral abilities, and is able to arise and walk, or transfer from a bed or chair to a means of mobility and leave the building or move to a safe location on his or her own without assistance of another person. All permits for un-sprinklered AFCH issued with more than 5 occupants-in-care are subject to all residents meeting this definition of capable of self-preservation.
- A sprinkler system is permitted to be designed in accordance with NFPA 13D provided the home contains not more than 10 occupants and a 30-minute water supply demand can be met.
- If the above condition cannot be met, the sprinkler system shall be designed in accordance with NFPA 13R.

FIRE ALARM SYSTEM

- A fire alarm system is required to be installed if a sprinkler system conforming to NFPA 13R is installed in the building. The installation of a sprinkler system conforming to NFPA 13D does not require the installation of a fire alarm.

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EMERGENCY LIGHTING

- Emergency lighting shall be provided to an average level of illumination not less than 10 lx at floor or tread level on all levels of the home.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

- A minimum of a 2A10BC portable fire extinguisher is required in the kitchen and furnace room area of the home.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

- An emergency evacuation plan must be in place for review by the Municipal Fire Department.

EXITS

- In most cases, one exit from each building area is acceptable by Building Code.
- Locking, latching and other fastening devices on the principal entrance door to the care home, as well as on every exit door, shall permit the door to be readily opened from the inside without requiring keys, special devices or specialized knowledge of the door opening mechanism.
- Bedroom windows must be openable and provide unobstructed openings with areas not less than
- 0.35 m² and with no dimension less than 380 mm.
- Openable windows are not required if bedroom door provides access directly to the exterior or the building is sprinklered.

CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS

- Carbon monoxide alarms are required in all homes that contain a fuel-burning appliance (including furnaces, water heaters, and fireplaces) or a storage garage.

SLEEPING ACCOMMODATION FOR UP TO 20

- A one unit dwelling divided by a firewall may provide sleeping accommodation for up to 10 persons on each side of the firewall if access (ie. door/protected opening) is provided through the firewall.
- A firewall must be constructed of non-combustible construction and shall extend from the foundation up to the roof with 150 mm parapets extending through the roof. A firewall is required to be designed under Part 4 of the NBC, as such the firewall design shall be signed and sealed by an architect or engineer licensed to practice in the province of Saskatchewan. A corresponding Commitment for Field Review letter is also required to be submitted.
- The entire building must be protected by an automatic fire suppression system conforming to NFPA 13 R (sprinklers).
- A fire alarm system is required if a sprinkler system conforming to NFPA 13R is installed.

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DRAWING REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST

Please ensure the following drawings are provided in addition to the “Residential Type B Building Permit Application”

	Two complete sets of the following plans. Drawings must be scalable or have dimensions provided.
	Site plan including parking
	Floor plans of all levels of the home, with rooms and spaces clearly labeled
	Existing and new wall, floor and ceiling construction details
	Locations of residents receiving care in the home
	Locations of smoke detectors, carbon monoxide alarms, emergency lighting, exits, etc.
	Window sizes in all bedrooms
	Sprinkler system drawings (where required) that are signed and sealed by an engineer licensed to practice in the province of Saskatchewan
	Fire alarm system drawings (where required) that are signed and sealed by an engineer licensed to practice in the province of Saskatchewan
	Firewall drawings (where required) that are signed and sealed by an architect or engineer licensed to practice in the province of Saskatchewan. A corresponding Commitment for Field Review letter is also required to be submitted.