



Secondary Suite Construction Requirements

July 2021

A secondary suite is a legal second dwelling unit that includes one or more rooms, is self-contained and includes one kitchen and at least one bathroom. The suite is intended to be used by one household and is attached to and forms part of the structure that constitutes the single detached dwelling.

Secondary Suites are subject to regulations under the current edition of the British Columbia Building Code (2018), City of West Kelowna Zoning Bylaw No. 0154 and other municipal and provincial regulations. Permit(s) may be required from Technical Safety BC for gas and electrical works. Single family dwellings within Strata developments are required to comply with their Strata regulations.

These documents are provided as a guideline and are not exhaustive of requirements that may be applicable to your situation. Please contact our office to discuss your project specifically.

Preliminary requirements include:

- Suite to be located within principal single detached dwelling
- Suite to be located on parcel that does not contain a Carriage House or Bed and Breakfast
- Suite to be of a maximum gross floor area of 90m² (968.8ft²) or 40% of habitable floor area of the principal dwelling, whichever is LESS
- Connection to city sewer and/or water if available is complete.

Secondary Suite applications must include:

- Completed Building Permit application form
- 2 sets of scaled floor plans (please refer to the attached forms for drawing specifications)
- Current state of title (dated within 90 days of the application)
Copies of any covenant, easement and right of way documents are required
- Secondary Suite Application form (with required attachments)
- Owners Authorization of Agent, if applicable
- Site plan demonstrating adequate parking. The parking plan – 1 space for 1 bedroom suite, 2 spaces for 2+ bedroom suite. Stalls to be a minimum of 2.75m (9.0ft) in width by 6.0m (19.7ft) in length, fully located within the parcel boundaries. Tandem parking is permitted.

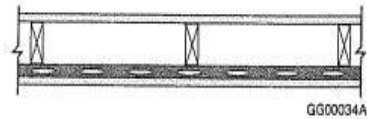
SECONDARY SUITE CONSTRUCTION DRAWING REQUIREMENTS

Clearly indicate the proposed suite area on the floorplans, including the following items:

- Scaled floor plan drawings of the suite area and any common areas,
- Label each room for its intended use, indicating rooms that contain shared facilities,
- All room dimensions (including total square footage of each room and total),
- Identify and label all bathroom fixtures – existing and proposed
- Provide water service line size, also include number and type of fixtures that are in the rest of the home
- Indicate location of exterior suite door, including use of either transparent glazing in the door or side-light or a door viewer. The suite main entry door must be a swing door, sliding doors not permitted as main entry door
- Location and dimensions of all egress windows, including clear openings and window well sizes
- Location of kitchen facilities – stove, exhaust fan, sink, dishwasher (existing and proposed)

Fire Safety items to include:

- Highlight all fire separation walls. Fire separation is to be continuous through all areas including mechanical rooms and under stairs. Shared facilities, like a laundry, are required to be fire separated from both living units. Provide details of how fire separation requirements are to be met, including all construction materials, their individual fire separation ratings and the total of each assembly

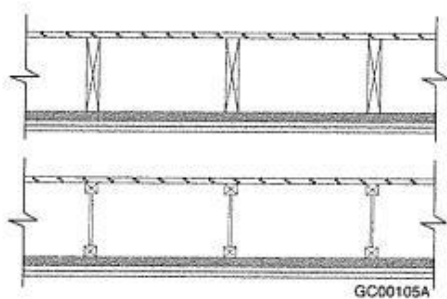


*Example: resilient channel on one side of the studs @ 16" or 24" o.c. with 1 layer of ½" **Type X** drywall on each side of wood studs and mineral/rock wool in the stud cavity - 45min ("W3c", BCBC Table 9.10.3.1-A)*

*Example: resilient channel on one side of the studs at 16' or 24" o.c. with 1 layer of ½" **regular** drywall on each side of wood studs with mineral/rock wool in the stud cavity - 30min (BCBC 9.10.3.1.(3(c)))*

*Example: resilient channel on one side of the studs at 16' or 24" o.c. with 1 layer of ½" **regular** drywall on each side of wood studs with batt insulation in the stud cavity - 15min (BCBC 9.11.1.1.(2)(a))*

- Indicate fire separation ceiling construction materials



Example: Resilient channel @ 16" or 24" o.c with 1 layer of ½" drywall, supporting members spaced not more than 24"o.c. and R20 batt in the joist spaces - 15min (BCBC 9.11.1.1.(2))

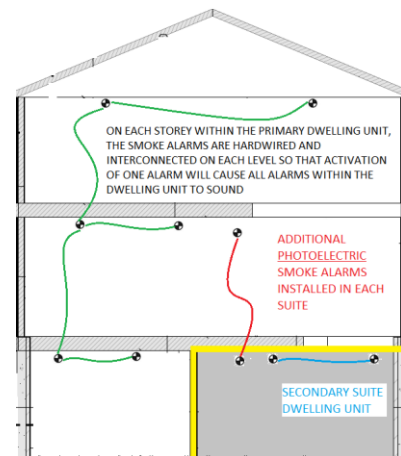
Example: Resilient channel @ 16" or 24" o.c with 1 layer of ½" drywall, supporting members spaced not more than 24"o.c. and mineral/rock wool in the joist spaces - 30min (BCBC 9.10.3.1.(3))

Example: Resilient channel @ 16" or 24" o.c with 2 layers of ½" type "X" drywall, supporting members spaced not more than 24"o.c. and mineral/rock wool in the joist spaces – 45min (BCBC "F6h" Table 9.10.3.1.B)

Smoke Alarms:

Smoke alarm installation in houses with secondary suites vary depending on the rating of the fire separation:

- 15min. FRR – All smoke alarms in both the main unit and secondary suite are photo electric, located in the hallways outside the bedrooms and in the bedrooms themselves and in the common areas such as a laundry. All smoke alarms are to be interconnected within each unit and between the main unit and secondary suite (Entire building),
- 30min. FRR – One additional photo electric smoke alarm is installed in the main unit, one in the secondary suite and one in the common areas such as a laundry and all required photo electric alarms must be interconnected with each other. Standard smoke alarms are also required in the hallway and in each bedroom of each unit and are required to be interconnected inside each unit only, not between units. See side illustration
- 45min. FRR – Standard smoke alarms are required in the hallway and in each bedroom and are required to be interconnected inside each dwelling unit only, not between units.



Carbon Monoxide (CO) Alarms:

- Both the main unit and secondary suite require a CO or combination CO/Smoke alarm located within 5m of sleeping room entrances and interconnected between each other and between units.

Egress Windows:

- Identify egress window in each bedroom
 - Provide egress window dimensions including size of opening. Egress windows must show clear openings of not less than 0.35m² (540sq”) with no dimension less than 380mm (15”) when opened.
 - If window opens into a well, note the dimensions of window well (min 760mm)
 - A second egress window in addition to the one mentioned above may be required where it is required to ascend or descend more than one storey to an egress door. Please see Sentence 9.9.9.1.(2) in the 2018 BC Building Code for guidance.

Heating and Ventilation system:

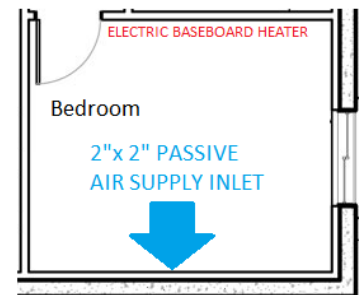
A heating or ventilation systems serving more than one suite must be designed and installed to prevent passage of smoke between the suites. A separate heating system for a secondary suite such as electric baseboard with some additional ventilation openings is typically an easier design alternative. If you want to use one furnace for heating both the primary dwelling and a secondary suite, a competent designer will be required to demonstrate compliance with the BC Building Code.

The options noted below are not intended to limit other building code compliant designs and are for illustration only.

Chose one of the following options and make sure your application reflects the requirements in the option.

- Option 1: Electric baseboard or radiant heat**

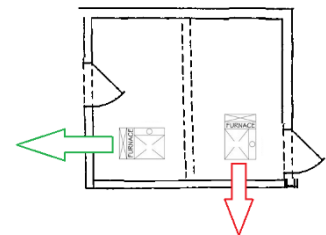
- Note on the drawing “suite heated by electric baseboards”
- If a dedicated Heat Recovery Ventilator (HRV) or Central Recirculating Ventilator (CRV) is used for the suite, note on the drawing and the passive air inlets will not be required.
- If an exhaust fan and & passive inlets are the selected method for ventilation, show the fan location (often a bathroom fan) and;
 - Show passive air supply inlets in each bedroom
 - Show passive air supply inlet in common/living areas.



Note: Ducts serving the primary dwelling unit cannot open into the suite. Ducts can only have openings into one fire compartment.

- Option 2: Separate furnaces with separate ductwork**

- Identify location for each furnace.
- Draw ductwork going from furnace to secondary suite
- Draw ductwork going from furnace to primary dwelling
- Show that all ducts serving individual fire compartments do not open into the other fire compartments.



Option 3: Using one furnace for both the secondary suite and primary dwelling unit (very difficult to achieve in existing homes)

- Identify where the ducts are going
- Identify the required fire separation around and over the furnace room
- Identify where ducts penetrate fire separation
- Draw location of the fire damper(s)
- As each unit must be capable of controlling heat supply to their unit, separate thermostats will be required and zone control dampers installed in the heating system.
- Show in-duct smoke detector locations
- Explicitly indicate on the drawing that all duct work is non-combustible, including the return air ducts, should you wish to not install fire dampers.
- Combination ventilation/forced air heating systems are **not** permitted.

Note: Fire dampers are not zone control dampers. Zone control dampers are required. Central Vacuum's cannot be shared between units.