



Office of Public Safety

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**Department of Justice
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Provincial Fire Marshal

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General Fire Safety Code Requirements for One- and Two-Family Dwellings

The following are requirements that shall be addressed for buildings that are to be considered one- or two-family dwellings.

One- and two-family dwellings include buildings not more than two dwelling units in which each living unit is occupied by members of a single family with no more than three outsiders.

In any dwelling or living unit of two rooms or more, every sleeping room and every living area shall have at least one primary means of escape, and one secondary means of escape.

The primary means of escape shall be a door stairway or ramp providing a means of unobstructed travel to the outside of the dwelling unit at street or ground level.

Secondary means of escape shall be one of the following:

- 1) A door, stairway, passage, or hall, providing a way of unobstructed travel to the outside of the dwelling at street or ground level, that is independent of and remote from the primary means of escape.
- 2) A passage through an adjacent non-lockable space independent of and remote from the primary means of escape to any approved means of escape.
- 3) An outside door or outside window with a clear opening area of 3.77 sq feet in accordance with the National Building Code. The bottom of the opening shall not be more than 44 inches (112 cm) from the floor. Such means of escape shall be acceptable if:
 - A) The window is within 20 feet (6.1 metres) of the grade, or
 - B) The window is directly accessible to the Fire Department rescue apparatus as approved by the authority having jurisdiction.
 - C) The window or door opens onto an exterior balcony.

EXCEPTION: A Secondary Means of Escape Is Not Required:

- 1) The bedroom or living room has a door leading directly to the outside of the building at or to grade level: OR
- 2) If the dwelling unit is protected throughout by an approved automatic sprinkler system.

No required path of travel from any room to the outside shall be through another room or apartment not under the immediate control of the occupant of the first room or through a bathroom or other space subject to locking.

No door in the path of travel of a means of escape shall be less than 28 inches (71 cm) wide and be a minimum 6 feet (198 cm) in height.

Every closet door latch shall be such that children can open the door from inside the closet, and every bathroom shall be designed to allow opening from the outside when locked.

No door in any means of escape shall be locked against egress when the building is occupied. All locking devices that impede or prohibit egress or that cannot be easily disengaged shall be prohibited.

Approved inter-connected multi station smoke detectors continuously powered by the house electrical system shall be installed, battery powered smoke alarms shall be allowed in existing occupancies. The alarms shall be located in the hall area(s) giving access to rooms used for sleeping along with being installed in all sleeping rooms and in all living levels of the home. Carbon Monoxide alarms shall be installed within the dwelling according to the manufacturer's guidelines.

Unvented fuel-fired heaters shall not be used.

Electrical wiring and equipment installed shall be in accordance with the current edition of the Canadian Electrical Code and shall be installed by a licensed contractor.

Heating equipment shall be installed in accordance to current standards (contact the Fire Marshal's Office).

References to be used are as follows:

National Fire Codes as published by the National Fire Protection Association & National Research Council.

CAN/CSA - B365 Installation Code for Solid Fuel Burning Appliances and Equipment

CAN/CSA - B139 Installation Code for Oil Burning Equipment

CAN/CSA - B149.2 Installation Code for Propane Burning Appliances and Equipment.

Canadian Electrical Code (CEC) Part 1

If you have any questions or comments relating to these requirements, please contact the Provincial Fire Marshal's Office at (902) 368-4869.