

Fire Department Response Time

The BC Building Code bases some fire safety construction requirements on how quickly the local fire department can respond to fires.

The Town of Smithers recently had the Fire Department response time analysed, and similar to many other jurisdictions that do not have career fire crews, fire department response time in Smithers does not achieve the threshold as required in the BC Building Code. Moving forward, some aspects of construction in Smithers will be reviewed in a more conservative manner. In practical terms, this can potentially mean an increased setback from property line is required, or the amount and size of windows can be affected.

Therefore, all building permit applications received **after 4:30pm on March 16th, 2020**, will be reviewed as having a limiting distance of half of the actual limiting distance if the building is not sprinklered.

Please see the following relevant quotes from the BC Building Code 2018:

9.10.14.3. Limiting Distance and Fire Department Response

- 1)** Except for the purpose of applying Sentences 9.10.14.4.(2), (3), (8) and (9), and Sentences 9.10.14.5.(3), (8) and (13), a *limiting distance* equal to half the actual *limiting distance* shall be used as input to the requirements of this Subsection, where
- a) the time from receipt of notification of a fire by the fire department until the first fire department vehicle arrives at the *building* exceeds 10 min in 10% or more of all calls to the *building*, and
 - b) any *storey* in the *building* is not *sprinklered*.
- (See Notes A-3.2.3. and A-3.2.3.1.(8).)

9.10.15.3. Limiting Distance and Fire Department Response

- 1)** Except for the purpose of applying Sentences 9.10.15.2.(2), 9.10.15.4.(3) and 9.10.15.5.(13), a *limiting distance* equal to half the actual *limiting distance* shall be used as input to the requirements of this Subsection, where
- a) the time from receipt of notification of a fire by the fire department until the first fire department vehicle arrives at the *building* exceeds 10 min in 10% or more of all calls to the *building*, and
 - b) any *storey* in the *building* is not *sprinklered*.
- (See Notes A-3.2.3. and A-3.2.3.1.(8).)

3.2.3.1. Limiting Distance and Area of Unprotected Openings

- 8)** A *limiting distance* equal to half the actual *limiting distance* shall be used as input to Tables 3.2.3.1.-B and 3.2.3.1.-C, where
- a) the time from receipt of notification of a fire by the fire department until the arrival of the first fire department vehicle at the *building* exceeds 10 min in 10% or more of all fire department calls to the *building*, and
 - b) any *storey* in the *building* is not *sprinklered*.
- (See Notes A-3.2.3.1.(8) and A-3.2.3.)

Please contact Morgan Widen, Building Inspector, for details.