

SECONDARY SUITES

DISCUSSION

Section 9.37. of the Alberta Building Code 2006 deals with situations where a new secondary suite will be added to a new house at the time of construction or to an existing house as a renovation. Questions have been raised concerning the application of the Alberta Fire Code 2006 for secondary suites that existed prior to December 31, 2006.

For a secondary suite that existed prior to December 31, 2006, if a homeowner takes out a building permit to perform work in anticipation of the provisions in the Alberta Fire Code 2006 coming into effect on December 31, 2008, is the homeowner required to upgrade every aspect of the secondary suite to the current requirements in the Alberta Building Code?

INTERPRETATION

No, the homeowner would be permitted to perform the work necessary to ensure that the existing secondary suite met the requirements of the Alberta Fire Code without having to meet all of the requirements of the current Alberta Building Code.

For example, a homeowner with a secondary suite that existed prior to December 31, 2006 would not have to install a second heating system (the requirement from the Building Code) if all they are doing is upgrading their bedroom window sizes or installing new smoke alarms. For details on situations involving the upgrading requirements for existing secondary suites, please refer to Fire STANDATA FCI-08-07.

This INTERPRETATION is applicable throughout the province of Alberta.

Unless stated otherwise, all Code references in this STANDATA are to Division B of the Alberta Building Code 2006.