

2023 Ontario Fire Code: Overview of Proposed Changes

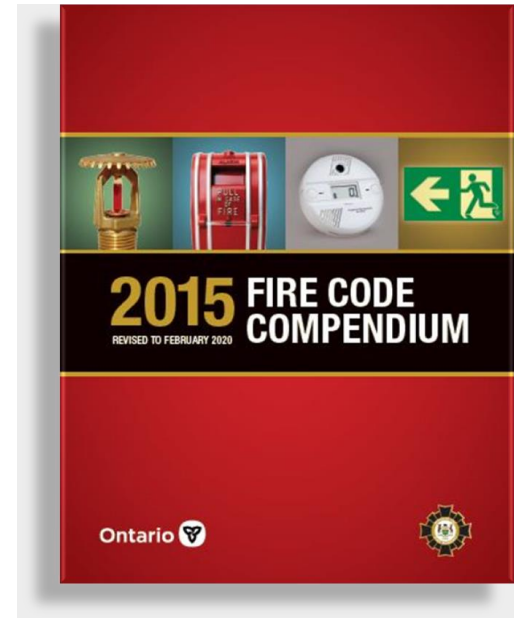
Presented to: Ontario Municipal Fire Prevention Officers'
Association – Annual Symposium

Presented by: Sunaina Menezes, P. Eng., Eric Nei, P. Eng.

Date: June 7, 2023

Purpose

To update OMFPOA members on proposed changes to the Ontario Fire Code (OFC) for 2023.



Proposed Approach to Amending the Ontario Fire Code (OFC) for 2023

Proposed amendments to the OFC are based on the following approach:

Harmonization with the National Fire Code

In accordance with Ontario's commitment* under the [Reconciliation Agreement on Construction Codes](#) (RACC). The RACC aims to increase cross-Canada harmonization with the National Fire Code.

Alignment with changes to the Ontario Building Code (OBC)

As the Ontario Building Code (OBC) sets requirements for new construction, and Fire Code changes apply to existing buildings, changes to the Fire Code typically follow changes to the OBC.

Ontario-specific changes

Targeted amendments to address issues of relevance to Ontario, including known fire safety risks.

Technical/Administrative/Consequential updates

Minor technical, administrative, and consequential amendments.

* Ontario has 24 months from the release of the 2022 National Fire Code (March 2024) to bring into force a more closely harmonized edition of the Ontario Fire Code

Key Principles for the 2023 OFC Amendment

Key principles for proposed changes:


- ✓ Strengthen or maintain fire safety standards
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- ✓ Minimize regulatory and financial impact
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- ✓ Can be achieved under restrictive timelines
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- ✓ Respond to industry / stakeholder concerns

Projected Timelines

Spring/Summer 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Regulatory Registry postings open for 45 days ➤ Stakeholder consultations
Summer/Fall 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Regulatory development, approval, and filing
March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Changes to the Ontario Fire Code anticipated to be in effect to meet commitments made under the RACC

Overview of Proposed OFC Changes

Farm Buildings

- Changes are proposed for the application of OFC requirements to farm buildings. Under proposed changes, large farm buildings constructed under new OBC provisions will be required to comply with the OFC on a go-forward basis, including those buildings with low occupant load. The OFC exemption for low occupant load farm buildings, would continue to apply to existing farm buildings that meet the low occupant load threshold.
- Other farm building-related proposed changes that align with the National Fire Code and Ontario Building Code are also included

Referenced Standards

- Referenced standards are being updated to harmonize with those in the NFC and/or OBC.

Child Care and Early Years Act

- A new provision is proposed for purposes of clarifying that home-based child care will be subject to the same OFC requirements that are applicable to dwelling units.

Maintenance of Encapsulation Materials

- Changes are proposed for new requirements that harmonize with the NFC for the maintenance of materials that provide protection for mass timber elements in encapsulated mass timber construction.

Carbon Monoxide Alarms

- New requirements are being proposed for the installation and maintenance of carbon monoxide alarms in existing care occupancies and retirement homes. Changes related to care occupancies are pending approval of corresponding changes to the Ontario Building Code.
- Expanded requirements for carbon monoxide alarms are being proposed for residential occupancies, pending approval of corresponding requirements under the Ontario Building Code.

Overview of Proposed OFC Changes Cont'd

Allowance for Temporary Placement of Beds and Stretchers

- Changes are proposed allowing for the temporary placement of beds and stretchers in corridors serving patient areas.

Combustible Furniture

- New provisions are proposed that would allow for the limited placement of combustible furniture in certain types of corridors that serve as access to exits in residential occupancies, care occupancies, and retirement homes.

Residential Fire Warning Systems

- Smoke detectors forming part of a residential fire warning system and installed in conformance with ULC S540 are deemed to be in compliance with smoke alarm requirements under the OFC.

Dangerous Goods

- New requirements are proposed for the storage of dangerous goods that will mostly harmonize with dangerous goods requirements in various parts of the NFC, including Subsections 2.4.4., 3.1.2., 3.2.7. and 3.3.4.
- As a result of these changes, existing OFC requirements for Matches (OFC 3.3.5.), Explosives (OFC 5.2), and Radioactive Nuclear Substances (OFC 5.15) may be either deleted, relocated or revised.

Indoor Storage of Aerosol Products

- New requirements are proposed for the indoor storage of aerosol products that will mostly harmonize with the requirements of Subsection 3.2.5. of the NFC.

Making of Records

- Changes are proposed to Div. B, 1.1.2.1. to indicate that records do not have to be written.

Overview of Proposed OFC Changes Cont'd

Indoor Storage of Ammonium Nitrate

- The application of requirements is being revised to harmonize with the NFC application.

Flammable and Combustible Liquids & Laboratories

- Changes are proposed to more closely harmonize Part 4 of the OFC with Part 4 of the NFC.
- Proposed changes will:
 - Continue to exempt underground areas regulated by the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.
 - Allow for existing conditions and configurations currently operating in compliance with OFC requirements to continue operations without retrofit.
 - Include references to some Codes, standards, and other documents that vary from the NFC requirements.
 - Maintain requirements for spill procedures, with minor changes allowing for site specific staff training frequency.
 - Remove references to requirements that fall under the scope of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and associated regulations
 - Relocate the requirements for laboratories currently in OFC Section 4.12 to OFC Section 5.5 and more closely harmonize requirements with Section 5.5 of the NFC .

Compressed Gas Cylinders

- The application of requirements is being revised to exclude compressed gas cylinders regulated by the *Technical Standards and Safety Act, 2000*.

Overview of Proposed OFC Changes Cont'd

Combustible Dust Producing Processes

- Changes are proposed to more closely harmonize Section 5.10 of the OFC with Section 5.3 of the NFC.
- Proposed changes will:
 - Include a new reference to NFPA 664 instead of NPFA 91 for woodworking operations exhaust systems.
 - Increase the threshold (i.e. from 0.47 m³/s to 2.36 m³/s or greater) at which certain dust collector requirements become applicable.
 - Allow for existing conditions and configurations currently operating in compliance with OFC requirements to continue operations without retrofit.
 - Include references to some Codes, standards, and other documents that vary from the NFC requirements
- Some existing requirements in the OFC that are not in the NFC, will continue to apply, for example
 - Explosion venting will be required to meet NFPA 68.
 - Explosion Prevention Systems will be required to meet NFPA 69.

Fire Code Requirements to be Performed by Qualified Sprinkler and Fire Protection Installers

- New requirements are proposed to establish which OFC requirements must be carried out by qualified sprinkler and fire protection installers. Under proposed requirements:
 - Building owners are responsible for ensuring that work described in certain OFC requirements is carried by qualified sprinkler and fire protection installers.
 - Persons performing work described in certain OFC requirements are responsible for ensuring they meet the requirements of the Sprinkler and Fire Protection Installer compulsory trade under the *Building Opportunities in the Skilled Trades Act*.
 - Fire Code requirements to be performed by qualified sprinkler and fire protection installers were identified in 2017 by a working group comprised of the Ontario College of Trades, the Sprinkler and Fire Protection Installer Trade Board, and the Office of the Fire Marshal (see Fire Marshal Communique 2017-05).

Overview of Proposed OFC Changes Cont'd

Building Maintenance

- New requirements are being proposed for the testing and maintenance of integrated fire protection and life safety systems in all buildings. However, these requirements will apply on a go forward basis only to buildings constructed after January 1, 2020.
- New requirements are being proposed for the maintenance of exit doors and exit signs that harmonize with the NFC.
- Changes are proposed for new requirements that mostly harmonize with the NFC for the testing of doors in smoke controlled areas.

Demolition

- Changes are proposed to more closely harmonize Part 8 demolition requirements with Section 5.6 of the NFC.

Sprinkler systems - Retrofit

- Changes are proposed to clarify that sprinkler requirements for existing care occupancies, care and treatment occupancies and retirement homes are intended to align with the requirements of the Ontario Building Code, allowing for partial sprinklering of buildings in limited cases.

Overview of Proposed OFC Changes Cont'd

Boarding, Lodging and Rooming Houses (BLR) - Retrofit

- Changes are proposed to clarify that for purposes of retrofit application, a BLR “house” means a detached house, a semi-detached house, or a row house used exclusively for boarding, lodging, or rooming accommodation. Semi-detached house and row house have the same meaning as described in Div. B, 9.8.1.2. of the OFC.
- Also clarifying that a self-contained unit that consists of BLR accommodation for 4 or less persons and that includes bathroom and kitchen facilities for the exclusive use of persons residing in the unit, is considered a dwelling unit for purposes of retrofit application.
- New requirements are proposed for reduced flame spread rating of interior finishes within a means of egress.
- New requirements are proposed for the installation of smoke alarms in all sleeping rooms.

Two Unit Residential Occupancies - Retrofit

- Revised application of Retrofit requirements for two unit residential occupancies. Under proposed changes, retrofit would apply to all existing units and the application of requirements would no longer be tied to units in existence on or before July 14, 1994.
- New requirements for reduced flame spread rating of interior finishes are proposed for access to exits in existing two unit residential occupancies with one means of escape.
- New requirements are proposed for the installation of additional smoke alarms in some two unit residential occupancies (i.e. on each storey, including those without a sleeping area).

2023 Ontario Fire Code Consultation

- From May 29 to July 13, 2023, the Ministry of the Solicitor General is inviting public comment on a package of proposed changes for the next edition of the Ontario Fire Code (OFC).
- Proposed changes are available for review and comment on the Ontario Regulatory Registry at the following link:
 - [Ontario Regulatory Registry - 2023 Ontario Fire Code](#)

Overview: Ontario Regulatory Registry



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Ontario's Regulatory Registry

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Regulation - Minister

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2023 Ontario Fire Code

Regulation Number(s): Amendments to O.Reg. 213/07

Instrument Type: Regulation - Minister

Bill or Act: Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997

Summary of Proposal: The Ministry of the Solicitor General (the Ministry) is seeking input on proposed amendments to O. Reg. 213/07 (Ontario Fire Code) made under the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 (FPPA). The Ontario Fire Code (OFC) establishes minimum requirements for fire safety within and around existing buildings and facilities. The owner of a building is responsible for complying with the OFC, except where otherwise specified. Municipal fire departments enforce the OFC.

The proposed updates to the 2023 OFC focus primarily on changes that:

- Improve harmonization with the National Fire Code of Canada (NFC) and the codes of other provinces and territories, in accordance with Ontario's commitments towards regulatory reconciliation and cooperation.
- Align with recent changes to the Ontario Building Code (OBC), which is a companion regulation to the OFC. As the OBC sets requirements for new

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Overview: Ontario Regulatory Registry

While harmonization has been a key driver in the development of proposed changes, others are based on requests received by the Ministry from a broad group of stakeholders, such as other provincial ministries, municipalities, fire services, and industry stakeholders.

For additional details on the proposed amendments and to submit feedback on specific code change proposals, please visit the following site:
<https://one.ofmem.ca/firecodeapp>

Analysis of Regulatory


Please see attached document for a preliminary analysis of potential costs.


Impact:


The ministry is seeking feedback on potential costs to inform the regulatory impact assessment that is underway.

Further Information:

 [Review Proposed Changes to the Ontario Fire Code and Submit Feedback](#)

 [Ontario Fire Code \(O. Reg. 213/07\)](#)

 [National Fire Code of Canada: 2020](#)

 [Proposed 2023 OFC Amendments Analysis of Regulatory Impact](#)
(Download Adobe Reader)

Proposal Number:

23-SOLGEN011

Posting Date:

May 29, 2023

Comments Due Date:

July 13, 2023

Contact Address:

Ministry of the Solicitor General
Office of the Fire Marshal
25 Morton Shulman Ave.
Toronto, ON M3M 0B1

[Comment on this proposal via email](#)

Overview: OFM Fire Code Consultation Review Application

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Proposed changes to the Ontario Fire Code

From May 29 to July 13, 2023, the Ministry of the Solicitor General is inviting public comment on a package of proposed changes for the next edition of the Ontario Fire Code (OFC). The 2023 OFC will be the first update since the Government ratified the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Reconciliation Agreement on Construction Codes (RACC) in 2020. The approach for the 2023 OFC focuses on changes that improve harmonization with the 2020 National Fire Code, align with recent changes to the Ontario Building Code, strengthen fire safety by addressing known fire safety risks, and address administrative, consequential, and minor technical amendments to the code. The proposed changes do not represent government policy and your views will be considered before the government makes final decisions regarding the next edition of the OFC.



Provide your comments

You can view all of the proposed Ontario Fire Code changes and provide your comments.

[Get started >](#)



View and download

You can view, print or download an electronic version of all the proposed Ontario Fire Code changes in HTML format.

[View printer friendly version](#)

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[Feedback](#)

Overview: Step 1

OFM Fire Code Consultation Review Application

Fire code consultation review

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[Step 2: Add or Edit Comments >](#)

Instructions

Important information

You must complete this process to submit your comments. If you refresh this page, close this tab, or the page times out after 20 minutes, your comments will not be saved.

Step 2: Adding and editing comments

Add and edit comments to respective code change proposals by clicking "Add comment" or "Edit comment" in the "Manage comments" column for the respective code change proposal.

Note: Search code change proposals by OFC Reference or by Topic in the search boxes provided.

Step 3: Review summary of your comments

When you are done providing your comments, click "Step 3: Review Comments", located on the top right of the page. On this page you will see a summary of your comments. To edit or delete your comments, click on "Step 2: Add or Edit Comments" at the top left of the page to return to the previous screen.

Step 4: Submit your comments

When you are ready to submit your comments, click "Step 3: Submit Comments", located on the top right of the page. Complete all required fields and click "Submit your comments" at the bottom of the page. You will receive an e-mail confirming receipt of your comments and a summary of the comments you provided.

Overview: Step 2

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Fire code consultation review

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[Step 3: Review Comments >](#)

Proposed Changes to OFC Provision

Notice

- All current Ontario Fire Code (OFC) text is extracted from O. Reg. 213/07, as amended April 11, 2022, available online at: [Link to OFC](#)
- All National Fire Code of Canada 2020 (NFC) text is extracted from the National Fire Code of Canada 2020, available online at: [Link to NFC](#)
- For proposed changes to OFC provisions, altered text appears in **red font** and deleted text appears in **red font, strikethrough**.
- Changes to Objectives and Functional Statements in Fire Code Supplement FCS-1 are noted where applicable.
- For changes that are made to harmonize with the National Fire Code, Objectives and Functional Statements in Fire Code Supplement FCS-1 will be more closely harmonized with those included in the National Fire Code.
- The wording and numbering of proposed changes to the OFC are provided in draft format for consultation purposes only. These may be further amended through the regulatory development process, prior to the publication of the next edition of the OFC, and may result in other consequential amendments to the OFC.

Choose the type of changes you want to display

- Show All Ontario Fire Code National Fire Code harmonization

Displaying all changes

OFC Reference	Topic	Description of Change	OFC Provision	Proposed Change to OFC Provision	View	Manage Comments
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>					
Div. 1.4.1.2.	Definitions of words and phrases	Revise definition	Professional Engineer means a member or licensee of the Association of Professional Engineers of the Province of Ontario under the Professional Engineers Act .	Professional Engineer means a (delete start) member or licensee of the Association of Professional Engineers of the Province of Ontario under the Professional Engineers Act...	View full text	Add comment
Div. B, 1.1.2.1.	Making of records	Revise Sentences (2) and (3) with an editorial change	1.1.2.1. (2) If this Code requires an inspection to be conducted in a supported group living residence or an intensive support residence regulated under the Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons...	1.1.2.1. (2) If this Code requires an inspection to be conducted in a supported group living residence or an intensive support residence regulated under the Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons...	View full text	Add comment
Div. B, 1.2.1.1. (Appendix A)	Table 1.2.1.A	Revise referenced documents to more current editions. Note:	See full text	See full text	View full text	Add comment

[Feedback](#)

Overview: Step 2 / View Full Text OFM Fire Code Consultation Review Application

The screenshot displays the 'Full text for - Div. A, 1.4.1.2.' modal window, which is part of the 'Fire code consultation review' application. The modal is titled 'Full text for - Div. A, 1.4.1.2. ONTARIO UNIQUE' and contains the following sections:

- Description of proposed change:** Revise definition.
- OFC Provision:** Professional Engineer means a member or licensee of the Association of Professional Engineers of the Province of Ontario under the Professional Engineers Act.
- Proposed Change to OFC Provision:** Professional Engineer means a (delete start) member or licensee of the Association of Professional Engineers of the Province of Ontario under the Professional Engineers Act. (delete end) (insert start) person who holds a licence or a temporary licence under the Professional Engineers Act. (insert end)
- Rationale:** To align with the Ontario Building Code and with the Professional Engineers Act.

The modal also includes a 'Close' button. In the background, the application interface shows a table of changes and navigation options.

OFC Reference	Topic	Description of Change	OFC Provision	Proposed Change to OFC Provision	View	Manage Comments
Div. A, 1.4.1.2.	Definitions of words and phrases	Revise definition	Professional Engineer means a member or licensee of the Association of Professional Engineers of the Province of Ontario under the Professional Engineers Act.	Professional Engineer means a (delete start) member or licensee of the Association of Professional Engineers of the Province of Ontario under the Professional Engineers Act. (delete end) (insert start) person who holds a licence or a temporary licence under the Professional Engineers Act. (insert end)	View full text	Add comment

Overview: Step 2 / Add Comment

OFM Fire Code Consultation Review Application

< [Step 1: Instructions](#) Step 2 of 4 [Step 3: Review Comments >](#)

Choose the type of changes you want to display

Show All Ontario Fire Code National Fire Code harmonization

Displaying all changes

OFC Reference	Topic	Description of Change	OFC Reference	View	Manage Comments
Div. A, 1.4.1.2.	Definitions of words and phrases	Revise definition	Prof Prof Eng	View full text	Add comment
Div. B, 1.1.2.1.	Making of records	Revise Sentences (2) and (3) with an editorial change	1.1 (2) If group the S	View full text	Add comment
Div. B, 1.2.1.1. (Appendix A)	Table 1.2.1.A	Revise referenced documents to more current editions. Note: Proposed changes to referenced documents that are being...	See	View full text	Add comment
Div. B, 1.2.2.1. (Appendix B)	Abbreviations	Update abbreviations for organizations and associated meanings.	See	View full text	Add comment
Div. B, 2.1.1.3.	Exceptions to Scope and Application	Revise Sentence (1) to clarify that Section 2.1 is intended to apply to individual dwelling units	2.1.1.3. (1) Subject to Sentences (2) and (3), this Part does not apply to individual dwelling units.	View full text	Add comment
Div. B, 2.1.1.3.	Exceptions to Scope and Application	Add new Sentence (4) to clarify that	N/A	View full text	Add comment

Comment for Div. A, 1.4.1.2.

Do you support this proposed change? (required)

I support I do not support

Comment (optional)

You can enter a maximum of 4000 alpha numeric characters.

This is an excellent code change.
I endorse this proposed change to the 2023 Ontario Fire Code.

[Save](#) [Cancel](#)

Overview: Step 3 / Review Summary of Comments

OFM Fire Code Consultation Review Application

[< Step 2: Add or Edit Comments](#)

Step 3 of 4

[Step 4: Submit Comments >](#)

Number of comments: **1 out of 117**

Div. A, 1.4.1.2.

Do you support this change? I support

This is an excellent code change. I endorse this proposed change to the 2023 Ontario Fire Code.

« ‹ 1 › »

Overview: Step 4 / Submit Your Comments

OFM Fire Code Consultation Review Application

Submit your comments

Contact information

You will only be contacted if the Ministry requires a clarification of your comment. Your contact information will not be used for any other purpose. The handling of all personal information by Government of Ontario organizations is governed by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA).

Contact information

First name (required)

Last name (required)

Email address (required)

Function (optional)

Select the functions that apply to you. You can select more than one function.

- Builder / Contractor
- Building / Fire / Plumbing official
- Building owner / Manager
- Designer / Architects / Engineer
- Home owner / General public
- Supplier / Manufacturer
- Function not in list

Are you submitting on behalf of yourself or organization? (required)

- Myself Organization

Organization (required)

If you are not part of a fire department, you can select other organization

Fire department

Organization not in list

An email confirmation will be sent to the email address indicated above.

[Submit your comments](#)