



OCCUPANCY INSPECTION

RESTAURANT OCCUPANCY INSPECTION GUIDE

This guide applies to all restaurants including cafes, take-out, catering, pubs, bars, ghost kitchens and mobile cooking operations (food trucks).

[Occupancy permits](#) are required for all restaurants when the space was previously approved for a different use or when ownership changes. Before requesting an occupancy inspection, applicants should consult qualified industry professionals to confirm what work is needed and obtain any required permits separately. Work started without permits is subject to double [permit fees](#).

Occupancy inspections confirm that the space meets the required Safety Codes and involve Safety Codes Officers (SCO's) from multiple disciplines - building, HVAC, plumbing, gas, electrical, and fire - and the business licensing coordinator may also attend. Because each discipline reviews different aspects of the space, one inspector may approve their portion while another identifies issues that must be corrected. Site conditions left by a previous tenant may also require upgrades to meet current code.

Once all required work is complete and all inspections have passed - including inspections under any separate permits - the occupancy certificate will be forwarded to the business licensing coordinator for issuance.

Separate Permits:

- [Separate Permits](#) may be required where an occupancy includes renovations or alterations to the walls (including non-load-bearing walls), floor, roof, plumbing, gas, electrical, fire alarm or fire suppression systems.
 - Apply for required permits through the [online portal](#) **prior** to starting any work.
- [Professional involvement](#) of an Architect and/or an Engineer may be required.

Common documents to have ready:

- Approved fire safety plan.
 - Fire safety plan templates can be [downloaded](#) from the City of Medicine Hat website.
- Proposed menu.
- Permit records and inspection reports.
- Verification reports from qualified trades.
- Certification labels for appliances and equipment.
- Air balancing report, if required.
- Fire alarm, kitchen exhaust, or fire suppression verification, if required.

Common work items and corrections:

Work item / Correction	Permit / Documentation reminder
Fire Prevention:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fire separation walls between suites or occupancies must be continuous from floor to underside of roof and all penetrations are fire-stopped. Restaurants may require a 2-hour fire-separation.	A building permit may be required where the fire-resistance rating must be upgraded.
<input type="checkbox"/> Fire extinguishers are installed where required.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Service rooms and janitor rooms are enclosed by fire rated walls, ceiling and door. Fire dampers are installed on ducts passing through rated walls.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Required clearance to combustible and limited-combustible assemblies and materials is provided. Grease duct enclosures are protected by an approved clearance reduction assembly.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous substances, equipment and processes comply with the National Fire Code (NFC-AE). Janitorial supplies are stored in a room or cabinet.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fire alarm system has been verified by an Engineer or a qualified electrician.	Building and electrical permits are required for installation or alterations to a fire alarm system.
<input type="checkbox"/> Walk-in coolers are CSA approved with manufacturer's label attached/visible.	
Kitchen Fire Suppression	
<input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen fire suppression system complies with NFPA 96 and has been verified by a qualified trade.	A building permit may be required for <u>existing</u> systems that are modified or altered. A building permit is required for <u>all new</u> systems.
<input type="checkbox"/> All cooking appliances are installed and located in their intended final location.	
<input type="checkbox"/> K-type portable fire extinguisher is installed in the kitchen.	
Exits:	
<input type="checkbox"/> The minimum number of required exits are provided. Path of travel to exits are free and clear of obstructions.	If exits are added, modified or removed, building and electrical permits may be required.
<input type="checkbox"/> Exit signs are installed (where required).	
<input type="checkbox"/> Exit doors have hardware that is openable with one hand in a single motion. Deadbolts are removed or disabled.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Exit doors open in the direction of exit travel.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency lighting is installed in all required locations including exits, washrooms and food prep area(s).	
Barrier-free Accessibility:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Barrier-free accessibility requirements are in place. Refer to the Alberta Municipal Affairs Accessibility Design Guide .	Alterations and renovations required for accessibility may require building and electrical permits.
<input type="checkbox"/> Power door operators are installed on all pedestrian entrances, at barrier-free washrooms and doors within a barrier-free path of travel.	
Washrooms:	
<input type="checkbox"/> The required number of washrooms are provided for males and females. A universal washroom or wheel-chair accessible stalls are provided.	Building, electrical or plumbing permits may be required if washrooms are added or modified.

Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning (HVAC):	
<input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen exhaust system complies with NFPA 96 and has been verified by a qualified trade.	A heating permit may be required for <u>existing</u> systems that are modified or altered. A heating permit is required for <u>all new</u> systems.
<input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen exhaust and make-up air are interlocked.	Heating and electrical permits may be required.
<input type="checkbox"/> Ventilation in all areas complies with ASHRAE standards .	Air balancing report may be required from an Engineer or a qualified trade.
Plumbing:	
<i>All plumbing fixtures must conform to CAN/CSA - B45 General Requirements for Plumbing Fixtures</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Toilets have open front toilet seats.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Lavatories (sinks) have metered faucets.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Grease trap is installed.	A plumbing permit is required to install, alter or add to a plumbing system.
<input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen sinks with 3 compartments are serviced with 2" drains.	
Gas:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Gas appliances have Canadian certification (CSA or equivalent).	Non-certified appliances require a gas interlock. A gas permit is required to install, alter or add to a gas system.
<input type="checkbox"/> Gas cooking appliances are interlocked with the kitchen exhaust system (required where system complies with NFPA 96).	A gas permit is required to install, alter or add to a gas system.
<input type="checkbox"/> Unused gas lines are capped or plugged.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Gas lines are sized for the appliance BTU load.	
<input type="checkbox"/> The gas meter has enough capacity to handle the BTU load.	A gas meter upgrade requires an application with the City of Medicine Hat Gas Utilities department . A gas permit is required to install, alter or add to a gas system.
<input type="checkbox"/> Connection and venting of all gas appliances are code compliant.	
Electrical:	
<i>All electrical equipment must conform to CSA or equivalent approval standards</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Electrical cooking appliances are interlocked with the kitchen exhaust system (required where system complies with NFPA 96).	An electrical permit is required to install, alter or add to an electrical system.
<input type="checkbox"/> Electrical equipment has visible CSA or equivalent certification labels.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Overcurrent protection does not exceed the manufacturer's listed maximum.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Wiring methods are code compliant for the specific purpose (grease exposure, high heat environment, exposure to moisture etc).	
<input type="checkbox"/> Receptacles by sinks and wash basins are GFCI protected.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cover plates and end use devices are installed.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Electrical panel has a branch circuit schedule in place, and any missing breaker openings are filled.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Light fixtures in food preparation area have protected light bulbs.	

Mobile Cooking Operations (Food Trucks):

Note: All requirements noted above for plumbing, gas, electrical, fire suppression and kitchen exhaust are applicable to mobile cooking operations (food trucks.)

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Generator is installed and operational. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Propane tanks and truck are grounded to the electrical system grounding. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Generator, main service panel, appliances and equipment are bonded. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service windows and shutters are interlocked with the gas and electrical services and the kitchen exhaust fan. |

Additional Resources and Links:

[City of Medicine Hat](#)

[National Building Code - 2023 Alberta Edition](#) (free download)

[National Fire Code - 2023 Alberta Edition](#) (free download)

[National Plumbing Code of Canada 2020](#) (free download)

[National Fire Protection Agency \(NFPA\)](#). (Documents are viewable for free).

CSA C22.1-24 Canadian Electrical Code (26th Edition) (Available for purchase from [Canadian Standards Association](#))

[Alberta King's Printer](#) - legislation and regulations in Alberta (View PDF documents for free)

[STANDATA interpretation 23-BCI-011/24-ECI-009/23-FCI006, "Existing Fire Alarms"](#)

[STANDATA interpretation 23-FCI-004/23-BCI-009](#) Fixed fire suppression and exhaust systems – cooking, cleaning, maintenance and qualified persons