

Safety Codes Communication – Flood Bulletin

Safety Codes is a Branch of the Planning & Development Department with the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. This Branch issues permits for the following disciplines Building, Plumbing, Electrical, Gas, Gas Vent and Private Sewage and also conducts the necessary inspections.

We are here to ensure the success of your rebuild from the Flood in Fort McMurray.

Permitting

- E-Permitting is available online to apply for permits you will need. The link for E-permitting is: <https://www.rmwb.ca/Municipal-Services/E-Permitting.htm>
- All electrical/gas permits that require a re-energization, must be pulled by Licenced Contractors only. For Safety reasons, homeowners will not be able to apply for re-energization permits.
- If you have any problems applying for a permit, you can contact the following:
 - Permit Inquiries email: permit.inquiries@rmwb.ca
 - Permit Inquiries phone: 780-793-1064
 - Timberlea Landing, Main Phone line: 780-799-8695

Inspections

- To book an inspection, you can call the number below, or email inspections@rmwb.ca
 - 780-743-7813 – **please note this is main inspections line and will be busier than normal**
- Areas of town that are not affected by the flood can still schedule inspections, however there may be a slight delay on the timing, as we will be experiencing higher than normal volumes
- Hours of operation to schedule an inspection are 8:30am to 4:30pm, Monday to Friday
- To receive copies of plans and an current certificate of title , please email p&drecordmanagement@rmwb.ca
- Please refer to your building permit conditions listed on the permit to understand what stage to call for inspections listed after this communication

Please make sure your contractors have all your permits closed compliant when work has been completed. It is the property owners responsibility to ensure that all permits have been obtained.

About Building Permits

Building permits are required for most major construction projects. These projects include new buildings, additions, renovations, alterations, repairs, relocations, demolitions, or the change of use in an existing building.

NOTE: The Safety Codes Act requires that all contractors and homeowners in Alberta obtain permits prior to starting any work on buildings covered by the current edition of the Alberta Building Code.

Are plans required?

- You must submit plans with your building permit application to your local authority before starting any construction.
- All construction plans will be reviewed by a certified safety codes officer.
- Please refer to the building permit checklist to determine what plans are required

Applying for a building permit:

When applying for a building permit, you must submit the following information to RMWB Safety Codes branch:

- Describe in detail the project or occupancy to be covered by the permit;
- Describe the land on which the project will be located, with a description that will easily identify and locate the building lot;
- Submit plans, specifications or other documents showing, in detail, the proposed occupancy of all parts of the building;
- State the value of the proposed project; and
- State the names, addresses and phone numbers of the project owner, designer and contractor.

About Trades Permits

If you are doing any electrical, plumbing, venting work, you will require the appropriate permit for that job. You will need Licensed Contractors to sign off on the work, and it will require inspections throughout the duration of the rebuild.

Safety Codes offers trades permitting services for your rebuild. The permits available from Safety Codes are:

- Electrical Permits
- Gas Permits
- Gas Appliance Vent Permits
- Plumbing Permits
- Private Sewage Permits

These permits ensure the rebuild of your home is properly inspected and meets the codes requirements for the Alberta Safety Codes Council.

Our branch has dedicated Safety Codes Officers that can help answer any questions you may have about the type of permit required, and what documentation is required for your rebuild.

Other References

- Red Cross Flood Support – 1-800-863-6582 – Hours 8am-8pm
- UDI Wood Buffalo – List of contractors available in Fort McMurray
<http://www.fortmcmurraychamber.ca/list/member/udi-wood-buffalo-fort-mcmurray-895>

Additional Information

Safety Codes branch is designed for a safe execution of your rebuild. Answers to your most frequently asked questions are in the FAQ at the end of this document. We will be here to answer questions, and help with building/trades related questions.

We have staff answering phones, emails and questions and you can reach them at the following:

- Permit Inquiries – permit.inquiries@rmwb.ca or 780-793-1064
- Inspections – inspections@rmwb.ca or 780-743-7813
- Timberlea Landing Reception – 780-799-8695

FAQ's

How will I know what type of permit I need for my rebuild, and what type of timelines am I expecting?

Once your property has been assessed by a Licensed Professional, i.e. General Contractor, Disaster Specialist, Insurance Personnel, they will be able to advise you what you will need to get started. A Building Permit is usually the first permit you will require and there is documentation required to acquire this permit (See below for checklists). You will then have to apply for this permit and submit the required documentation. A Building Safety Codes Officer will review your application and give proper direction on your rebuild.

We are treating Flood rebuilds as our priority. Ensuring you have the proper documentation for the Building/Trades permits will allow for a quicker approval of the Building/Trades Permits. You can find a list of required documentation under the Building/Trades Permits information, located on this communication.

How do I apply for permits?

You can apply for permits online with our E-Permitting system on the RMWB Website using the following link:

<https://www.rmwb.ca/Municipal-Services/E-Permitting.htm>

Or, you can also apply in person. Our office will be open for Flood rebuild information from 8:30 am to 4:30pm, Monday to Friday, starting Wednesday, May 6, 2020. Our office is located at 309 Powder Drive in Timberlea.

What trades permits will I need?

If you are doing any electrical, plumbing, venting work, you will require the appropriate permit for that job. You will need Licensed Contractors to sign off on the work, and it will require inspections throughout the duration of the rebuild.

Contractors need to have a **VALID RMWB BUSINESS LICENSE**, and can find out more information at business.licensing@rmwb.ca

What if I don't have insurance?

You can contact the Insurance Bureau of Canada for any questions or concerns you may have about your policy at 1-844-227-5422

You can also contact the Red Cross at 1-800-863-6582. They are available to take your call from 8am - 8pm.

How will I know what Contractor to hire?

The Alberta Municipal Affairs website has a list of Contractors available in the Fort McMurray area. You can find the list here: <https://residentialprotection.alberta.ca/public-registry/Builder>

Your insurer will likely provide a list of preferred contractors to assist you. However, you are not obligated to use a contractor recommended by your insurer. You can use the service provider of your choice for the necessary repairs to your property. Before signing a contract, you should speak with your claims adjuster to find out how much of the estimated cost your insurer will pay.

Request that contractors provide written contracts containing detailed work descriptions and warranties for work completed and materials used. If the work is covered by your insurance policy, make sure the claims adjuster approves the work as well as the contractor before work begins. (Insurance Bureau of Canada website)

I do not have my original building plans for my home, how can I obtain them?

You can email p&drecordmanagement@rmwb.ca

They will be able to send you the information that is available in your property file, based on your address.

Why do I need a preliminary inspection from Safety Codes to get power back on in my home?

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Safety Codes Officer will conduct a preliminary inspection to confirm that the recent flooding did not damage or otherwise compromise the electrical system of your home. They will request access into your home so they can confirm that no water entered your basement during the flooding to approve Atco electric to re-energize your home.

What do I need to do to get the power back on in my home if my basement was flooded?

If your home was flooded, it's highly likely that the electrical system or some of its parts were compromised by the water. The potential risk of fire or electrocution from a damaged electrical system is too great to risk energizing the system without inspecting it first. All of the water damage material in the home will have to be removed to expose all of the wiring and equipment that could have been affected by water. All of the electrical wiring and equipment affected by the water will need to be either removed, or if confirmed to be undamaged, completely disconnected from the panel and re-inspected before the home is energized.

Who do I contact to come back and reinspect the disconnected, repaired or replaced electrical equipment once I have it fixed?

Please email the RMWB Safety Codes inspection email; inspections@rmwb.ca and ask for a reconnect inspection. Do not cover the work to be inspected, it has to pass inspection before we can use it.

What if I want to get the power back on in my house before I replace or repair all of the damaged electrical equipment?

All water damaged or otherwise affected electrical equipment will have to be replaced. It may not be necessary to have all your electrical system repaired before energizing your home but you will have to remove all of the damaged system and components and call for an inspection so it can be confirmed safe before it is energized. If system components have to be replaced such as the main panel to repair the system for energizing and electrical permit will be required. If it is not obvious that a panel needs to be replaced consult with a qualified and licensed electrician to confirm.

Why is my gas off?

The gas is off because after flooding the gas mains have to be shut down for testing. Also, the individual metres and regulators feeding into buildings have to be checked to be sure they haven't been damaged by water. Once the main testing is complete and individual metres and regulators are confirmed functioning if your gas appliances have not been damaged ATCO will begin re-lighting I damaged appliances.

What is my next step if my home has been damaged?

You or your contractor should immediately take a video recording of everything that appears to be damaged before throwing it away so you can establish what your contents were with your insurance company.

Call your insurance company and ask them to send you a complete copy of your actual current insurance policy and have them explain it to you.

What goods can I save?

Remove and dispose of all water damaged goods and materials from your home. It has to be assumed if it's wet it's been contaminated by water which mixed with sewage and other chemicals that were either stored in your house or above and below ground in the flood area.