



Safety Codes Inspection Efficiencies: Q&A for Industry

1. Why are you doing this?

This project will improve the experience of our customers by reducing the number of low risk, discretionary inspections required by the City. By reducing the number of low risk inspections, our Inspectors can focus more time on complex, higher risk inspections. This creates efficiencies and contributes to improved timelines.

About the Process

2. What exactly is changing on October 1, 2019?

- Some Plumbing Stack, Plumbing Groundwork, HVAC Stack and HVAC Concealed duct inspections will not be required for every project
- If you request an inspection for one of these four inspection types and we determine that the inspection is not required, you will receive an email at 10 am on the day of the scheduled inspection telling you that it's not required.
- If the inspection is not required, stickers will not be placed on-site.

3. What is **not** changing on October 1, 2019?

- Builders and Contractors are still accountable to ensure every job is done correctly and to code
- You must still schedule inspections for all inspection types, even the four included in this process
- The Footing and Foundation inspection process will remain the same
- Building envelope inspection processes (Framing, Insulation Vapor Barrier) will remain the same
- Dual inspections requested within the same day/discipline will still occur

4. How will I know if an inspection is not required?

An email will be sent to the builder or contractor by 10 am on the day the inspection is scheduled to confirm that an onsite inspection will not happen. In the online dashboard you will see that the inspection was completed as Not Required.

5. What information is used to make a decision about whether an inspection is not required?

We will use a number of variables, not a specific builder or contractor name. These include:

- Building Attributes: permit class, floor area, home design, infill location, secondary suite, lot area, construction value

- Geographical Information: neighbourhood classification
- Contractor Attributes: 12-month inspection volume, 12-month first-time pass rate
- Inspection Attributes: Inspection type, date, the time between permit submission and inspection

6. How many inspections will not happen once this is implemented?

The number of inspections will depend on your history of passing an inspection the first time around. If there are high rates of passing inspections the first time in real life, it's possible that some of the identified inspections will not be required. However, we will be randomly inspecting 20% of inspections that fall into the "not required" list to ensure that we continually have current data on all builders and contractors. Current inspection data will help us ensure that we are continuing to support homeowner safety while also creating more efficiencies in the process.

7. What happens if I received a notification that the inspection would not be required, but an Inspector still showed up?

It is your responsibility to meet the minimum requirements of the code and the City reserves the right to audit a job at any time. This includes while attending another inspection. If we notice a deficiency on a different inspection, we may review and inspect as necessary.

8. What if I received a notice that the inspection was not required but still want it to happen?

If you wish to still have an inspection conducted, please contact the Supervisor of the Plumbing or HVAC area to schedule an additional inspection. Applicable fees will apply.

9. Can I continue to request additional inspections?

Yes. You should call the Supervisor of the Plumbing or HVAC area to schedule an additional inspection. Applicable fees will be charged as per the permit fee schedule

10. If an inspector is on site completing a different inspection will they review an inspection type that was previously not required?

Yes. Inspectors always have the right to do an audit check if they see an issue on any previous or unscheduled inspection. They will document the inspection findings and notify the applicant for remedy as required. take pictures, document it, and schedule the inspection as an audit check.

11. Will the time frame on scheduling inspections change?

No, the current process for any inspection will still be followed:

- If the call comes in before 12 pm, the inspection is scheduled for the next business day
- If the call comes in after 12 pm, the inspection is scheduled within two business days
- While we aim for next day inspections, during periods of high volume we will commit to completing the requested inspection within 2-5 business days.
- Builders are required to begin work within 90 days of when a permit is issued
- Permits will expire 24 months from date they are issued

12. Will permit fees change if an inspection is not required?

The permit fees are tied to the issuing of a permit, and the inspections tied to that permit. The fees will still apply even if an inspection was "Not Required" in relation to this specific Safety Code efficiencies

process. Permit costs are not currently under review and are handled by a separate process within the City.

13. Do I need to sign up to participate in the new inspection process?

All builders and contractors licensed and conducting work in the City are automatically included.

14. Why do 100% of my inspections continue to be scheduled? I thought this was supposed to reduce the number of inspections.

We will use a number of variables, not a specific builder or contractor name to make a decision about which inspections are not required. These include:

- Building Attributes: permit class, floor area, home design, infill location, secondary suite, lot area, construction value
- Geographical Information: neighbourhood classification
- Contractor Attributes: 12-month inspection volume, 12-month first-time pass rate
- Inspection Attributes: Inspection type, date, the time between permit submission and inspection

Broadly, we would expect to see that low volume or small builders would continue to have 100% of their inspections scheduled while many high volume builders would likely see some reduction in the number of inspections scheduled. This is because low volume builders don't have enough data in our system for us to make a prediction about the inspection. The software and process will continually be updated providing opportunity for further enhancements.

In addition, we are continuing to do inspections for dual inspections that are scheduled on the same day. If you request both plumbing stack and plumbing ground inspections on the same day, or HVAC stack and HVAC concealed duct inspections on the same day, we will continue to do both inspections.

Safety

15. Will safety be compromised if an inspection doesn't occur?

Builders and Contractors will continue to be responsible for ensuring their work is done safely, correctly and up to code. All mandatory and most discretionary inspections will continue to happen by Safety Codes Inspectors who will continue to support homeowner's safety by confirming that the work aligns with current applicable codes..

16. Who else is supportive of this work?

The software and process has been reviewed and supported at the Provincial level. In addition, to ensure the software is technically sound, it was reviewed and validated by the machine learning institute at the University of Alberta.

17. Have you spoken with insurance companies?

We are in ongoing communication with the Insurance Bureau of Canada. They confirmed actual premium rates are set by the individual insurance companies. Given our project scope, they do not expect any impacts or changes.

18. Have you talked to homeowners?

Yes. We conducted an online survey, focus groups and stakeholder interviews with the goal of understanding stakeholder and public perceptions about safety codes. Some highlights include:

- 78% of homeowners were less than familiar with safety code inspections.
- 71% of homeowners stated they rely on their contractor and builder to tell them which inspections they need.
- Approx 65% of homeowners confirmed it was the contractor, builder or homeowner who is ultimately accountable to align with the standards.
- 75% of builders and contractors are aware of the SCIE project but need more information.