

Manitoba Building Code and Fire Code Updates

Farm Buildings



Background

- Effective **January 1, 2024**, Manitoba will be adopting the 2020 editions of the National Building Code of Canada (NBC) and the National Fire Code of Canada (NFC) published by the National Research Council (NRC).
- The 2020 NBC includes the first major update for large farm buildings since 1995 and the 2020 NFC adds some minimum maintenance requirements for farm buildings.
- In coordination with Manitoba's Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) partners, the national model codes are now freely available online through the NRC's website:
<https://nrc.canada.ca/en/certifications-evaluations-standards/codes-canada/codes-canada-publications>.

Background (continued)

- The 2020 NBC is adopted with amendments under the Manitoba Building Code (MBC) regulation which is available on the Manitoba Laws website:

<https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/annual/2023/078.php?lang=en>

- The 2020 NFC is adopted with amendments under the Manitoba Fire Code (MFC) regulation which is available on the Manitoba Laws website:

<https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/annual/2023/082.php?lang=en>

2020 NBC – Large Farm Buildings

- The Manitoba Building Code does not regulate small farm buildings, which are buildings up to 600 square metres in size (footprint) and up to three storeys in height, but small buildings may have minimal fire code requirements (see slide 9 regarding fire code).
- Please note that plans, drawings and related documents submitted with an application to build a large farm building in Manitoba must be prepared, signed and sealed by an architect or a professional engineer.
- Most of the updated NBC requirements can be found under the new Part 2 Farm Buildings of Division B (starting on page 108 of the 2020 NBC).

2020 NBC – Large Farm Buildings (continued)

- The 2020 classifies farm buildings as “Group G” agricultural occupancies with four types:
 - G1 – High-hazard agricultural occupancies (currently these are not treated as farm buildings, but as high-hazard industrial occupancies);
 - G2 – Agricultural occupancies not elsewhere classified in Group G (most farm buildings);
 - G3 – Greenhouse agricultural occupancies; and
 - G4 – Agricultural occupancies with no human occupants (e.g., potato storage).

2020 NBC – Large Farm Buildings (continued)

- The biggest difference from Manitoba's previous requirements is that the 2020 NBC allows most farm buildings to be built to any size (footprint).
- Under the previous Manitoba requirements, buildings are restricted in size, unless the building is separated into sections.
- Under the 2020 code, this type of size restrictions would only be for high hazard buildings, which were previously treated as industrial buildings.

2020 NBC – Large Farm Buildings (continued)

- Otherwise 2020 NBC requirements mostly follow a similar approach to the previous Manitoba requirements but give designers more options and flexibility.
- Several Manitoba Building Code amendments are being carried over until later editions of the National Building Code are adopted to allow industry time to adjust, including:
 - exclusions for covering foamed plastic insulation in potato storage areas;
 - provisions for perimeter exiting in most buildings; and
 - exclusions for emergency lighting in areas of poultry production.

2020 NBC – Large Farm Buildings (continued)

Inspection and Technical Services (ITS) is responsible for the Manitoba Building Code and is available to answer questions about the code.

The Building Code Section at ITS can be reached at TechnicalServices@gov.mb.ca or by phone at:

Winnipeg: 204-945-3373

Dauphin: 204-648-7413

2020 NFC – Farm Buildings

- The 2020 NFC adds minimum maintenance requirements for farm buildings under Section 2.14 Farm Buildings of Division B (starting on page 97 of the 2020 NFC).
- Large farm buildings (over 600 square metres or three storeys in height) will have to have their electrical installations inspected by a qualified person (an electrician) at least every:
 - a) 12 months for large farm buildings containing wet or corrosive environments, and
 - b) Three years for all other large farm buildings.

2020 NFC – Farm Buildings (continued)

- The electrical inspection requirement includes thermographic inspection of electrical systems at least every three years in large farm buildings.
- Large farm buildings will also have to have their mechanical installations inspected by a qualified person (someone familiar with the equipment, which may include the owner or an operator) at least every 12 months in large farm buildings.

2020 NFC – Farm Buildings (continued)

All farm buildings, regardless of size must follow requirements for:

- Warning signs for toxic gases, silo gas, entrapment, stored pesticides, unsafe O₂ levels;
- Ventilation for flammable/toxic gases and vapours;
- Ventilation for below floor manure storage; and
- Storage of flammable/combustible liquids
 - For containers and tanks, and
 - For flammable pesticide storage areas.

2020 NFC – Farm Buildings (continued)

Manitoba's Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC) is responsible for Manitoba's fire code and is available to answer questions about the code.

The Fire Safety Section of the OFC can be reached at firecomm@gov.mb.ca or by phone at:

Winnipeg: 204-945-3322 or 1-800-282-8069 (toll free)

Brandon: 204-726-6855 or 1-888-253-1488 (toll free)

Code Development

Under CFTA commitments Manitoba adopts the national model construction codes and is limited in its ability to make amendments.

Anyone interested in contributing to the national code development process can visit:

<https://ccbfc-cccbpi.ca/en/get-involved/>

The NRC also offers an e-mail newsletter and alert subscription service for those who want to stay notified about changes at the national level:

<https://nrc.canada.ca/en/subscribe/>