

Consultation opens on the 2021 Building Code update

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This year's proposed changes aim to make homes and buildings warmer, drier and healthier, with less impact on our environment, while also bringing New Zealand more in line with international standards.

The update of the Building Code is done annually, to provide an opportunity for the public and the building and construction sector to have their say on the proposed changes.

The consultation will run until Friday, 28 May 2021.

Proposed changes

Energy efficiency

Our aim is to make sure homes and buildings are better suited to the climate where they're being built. To do this, we're proposing new climate zones to better reflect the specific weather different parts of New Zealand experience. For example, we're proposing that Queenstown no longer be in the same climate zone as Nelson, as clearly the weather these areas experience is very different.

Climate zones

Changing the climate zones also presents an opportunity for us to look at the current insulation requirements and ask New Zealanders if they think the requirements need to change. We want to hear what people think of the proposals we present – do you think insulation requirements should change, and if so, how fast the changes should be made, and how far the changes should go?

Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems

We're also proposing to introduce a new verification method to ensure heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems in commercial buildings are designed and installed to reduce the load on the national grid, making it easier to comply with the Building Code. This will also give building owners confidence their HVAC system is using energy efficiently.

Natural light

We're also proposing changes to ensure apartment and other high rise buildings have enough natural light. Currently, the requirements are not suitable for many building types. These requirements will be updated to reflect that buildings with more storeys, such as apartment buildings, will have different needs for natural light, and need different lighting solutions.

[Video transcript\(https://www.building.govt.nz/about-building-performance/transcripts/consultation-2021-building-code-update-transcript/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/about-building-performance/transcripts/consultation-2021-building-code-update-transcript/)

Additional consultation on developing and maintaining standards

In addition to the annual Building Code update, we are also consulting on the role of MBIE, as the regulator, in the upkeep and referencing of building and construction standards.

We have proposed "operating protocols" which identify criteria to guide this work. In the protocols, we provide greater clarity on what the regulator is looking for in terms of standards being referenced in the Building Code system, and we also identify a group of approximately 40 standards which we plan to focus our resources on supporting.

This is the first in a series of operating protocols that MBIE is developing, to provide increased transparency and certainty about the activities we undertake as stewards of the Building Code. Each protocol will provide information about an aspect of Building Code-related work, and rules and/or principles that will help guide that work.

Find out more

A webinar is taking place on 21 April 2021 to provide more details on the proposed changes, and answer any questions. [Register for the webinar \(https://www.building.govt.nz/https://mbie.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_jFp8N3auRyGZ8hM5d9w4ew\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/https://mbie.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_jFp8N3auRyGZ8hM5d9w4ew)

[Find out more about the proposed changes or submit feedback](https://www.building.govt.nz/https://www.mbie.govt.nz/have-your-say/building-code-update-2021/)

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