



Saint John apartment code book

Fire, building and trade rules for maintenance work in apartment buildings

National Building, Fire and Plumbing Codes 2020, New Brunswick
regulations and Saint John by-laws, with section numbers on every rule.

Owner

Phone if found

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1 Stop, call or go

Go: no permit, no licence

- Paint, trim, caulk, finish flooring, hardware
- Small drywall patches outside fire-rated walls
- Battery smoke or CO alarm swapped like for like
- Full no-permit list: p. 6

Call One-Stop first: 506-658-4455

- Moving or removing a wall, or anything structural
- Stairs, fire escapes, second exits, decks 600 mm or higher
- Replacing windows or doors, new or bigger openings, siding on 25% of a wall or more
- Kitchen, bath and basement renovations
- Adding a unit or changing the use
- Exterior work in a Heritage Area, any work in a Flood Risk Area
- Anything that touches a fire separation (p. 11)
- Rental standards work starts with a pre-application meeting

Licensed or trained only

- Electrical: any wiring, even a like-for-like swap, unless you hold a written OK (p. 19)
- Plumbing: any piping change
- Gas: licence for all work, permit to install or alter
- Extinguisher servicing
- Sprinklers: certified Sprinkler System Installer
- Fire alarms: trained technician, testing to CAN/ULC-S536
- Asbestos beyond low risk (p. 8)

2

Never

- Block an exit, hall or stair, even with a ladder or tools NFC 2.7.1.6
- Wedge a fire door or remove its closer NFC 2.2.2.4(4)
- Leave a hole in a fire-rated wall, floor or ceiling NFC 2.2.1.2
- Store combustibles in exits, service rooms, shafts, ceiling or crawl spaces NFC 2.4.1.1
- Pull or disable a smoke or CO alarm NFC 6.7.1.1, M-14 s.13(4)
- Use a torch or grinder without a fire watch (p. 12) NFC 5.2
- Cut, drill or sand old tile, plaster or joint compound before testing (p. 8)
- Enter a unit without proper notice (p. 20) RTA s.16
- Close a wall before its inspection BC-3 s.15
- Touch wiring without a licence or a written OK from the Chief Electrical Inspector Bulletin 165-7-0

Phone

Emergency	911
One-Stop (permits)	506-658-4455
One-Stop (2026 forms)	506-658-4067
Fire Prevention	506-658-2962
Fire department, non-emergency	506-658-2910
Technical Inspection Services	1-888-659-3222
Tenant and Landlord Relations	1-888-762-8600
WorkSafeNB	1-800-999-9775
Fire Marshal	506-453-2004

onestop@saintjohn.ca, fireprevention@saintjohn.ca

3 Permit, licence or test?

Work down the list and stop at the first yes.

- | | | |
|----------|---|--|
| 1 | Built before 1990, or not sure, and you will cut, drill, sand or pull tile, plaster, joint compound or pipe wrap? | <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 10px; height: 15px; background-color: red; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div> <p>Stop.</p> <p>Test for asbestos, p. 8</p> </div> </div> |
| 2 | Wiring changes, new outlets, a panel, gas, or plumbing piping? | <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 10px; height: 15px; background-color: red; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div> <p>Stop.</p> <p>Licensed trade, p. 8</p> </div> </div> |
| 3 | Torch, grinder, solder, roofing or thawing pipes? | <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 10px; height: 15px; background-color: orange; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div> <p>Hot work.</p> <p>Fire watch rules, p. 12</p> </div> </div> |
| 4 | Through a wall, floor or ceiling between units, or a corridor or stair wall? | <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 10px; height: 15px; background-color: orange; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div> <p>Call One-Stop.</p> <p>Permit and firestop, p. 11</p> </div> </div> |
| 5 | Moving a wall, structure, stairs, decks 600 mm+, replacing windows or doors, new openings, siding 25%+ of a wall, or adding a unit? | <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 10px; height: 15px; background-color: orange; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div> <p>Call One-Stop.</p> <p>Permit first, p. 6</p> </div> </div> |
| 6 | Outside work in a Heritage Area, or any work in a Flood Risk Area? | <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 10px; height: 15px; background-color: orange; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div> <p>Call One-Stop.</p> <p>Approval first</p> </div> </div> |
| 7 | Paint, trim, caulk, flooring, hardware or a small patch outside rated walls? | <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 10px; height: 15px; background-color: green; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div> <p>Go.</p> <p>Tell the owner</p> </div> </div> |

The Act requires a permit for any “material alteration or repair” and doesn’t define “material.” Unsure? Call One-Stop first. Unpermitted work can be stopped at the owner’s cost. Building Act s.1, 4, 14(3); BC-3 s.28(2)

4 Job lookup

Job	Permit	Who	Watch for
Paint, flooring, trim	No	You	Keep exits clear
Drywall patch	No , if under half the wall and not rated	You	Rated wall: permit and firestop, p. 11
Pipe or wire through a wall or ceiling	Yes , if rated	You or trade	Tested firestop, photo, fire stopping inspection
Replace a door	Yes	You	Fire door: same rating, closer, gaps, p. 11
Replace a window	Yes	You	Escape size, child limiter, p. 14
Repair stairs, deck or landing	Yes	You	Rise, run, guards, p. 13
New deck under 600 mm high	No	You	Footings 1.2 m deep, p. 21
Roof repair or replacement	No	You	A torch is hot work, p. 12
Faucet, valve or fixture swap, clog, leak	Ask	You (no licence)	No piping change, p. 18
Water heater	Plumbing permit	Plumber, gas tech	Relief pipe, pan, anti-siphon, p. 18
Switch, outlet or light, same for same	No	Electrician, or approved qualified person	Written OK needed, p. 19
New outlet or circuit	If over limit	Electrician	Limit: 10 outlets, 5 kW, p. 19
Smoke or CO alarm swap	No	You (battery), electrician (hard-wired)	Match an interconnected set, p. 9
Thaw a frozen pipe with heat	No	Trained	Hot work rules, p. 12
Remove old tile, plaster or ceiling	Test first	You or abatement	Asbestos, p. 8
Move or remove a wall	Yes	You, with drawings	Structure, fire separation, p. 6

Yes = not on the apartment no-permit list (p. 6). Ask = the rules are unclear. Call One-Stop, 506-658-4455.

5 Every job

Before

- Permit needed? Page 3
- Fire-rated wall, floor or ceiling?
- Pre-1990 or unsure: asbestos, p. 8
- Hot work? Page 12
- Fire system to shut off? Tell the owner
- Written notice to the tenant
- Before photos

After

- Exits clear
- Fire doors close and latch
- Penetrations firestopped and photographed
- Alarms back on and tested
- Debris and rags out
- Inspection booked or passed
- After photos, invoice kept

Deadlines

Self-closing fire doors checked	every 24 h
Exit and fire doors operated	monthly
Dampers, fire safety plan review	every 12 months
Hot work fire watch, final check	60 min, 4 h
Fire system records kept	2 years+
Inspection notice	2 business days (Mon–Thu)
Permit valid	2 years, plus 1
Entry notice, routine or inspection	7 days, 24 h
High-risk asbestos notice to WorkSafeNB	10 days
Appeal a city property order	14 days

6 What needs a permit

No permit in apartment buildings

- Roofing repair or replacement
- Painting, finish flooring, masonry repointing, routine maintenance
- Siding: replacing under 25% of one wall
- Drywall or plaster repair under half the wall or ceiling, not in a fire separation or rated wall
- Maintaining or replacing mechanical equipment
- Electrical work exempt under provincial rules
- Decks and landings under 600 mm above grade
- Any building: sheds up to 55 m² with no sleeping, retaining walls under 1 m, tents up to 100 m², temporary buildings up to 28 days

Always a permit

- Moving or changing partitions
- Repairs or changes to a fire separation or structural part s.8(2)
- Everything else. Deck, stair, insulation, wall-finish and door exemptions apply only to 1–2 unit homes

Rental standards permit

- Pre-application meeting with Building Inspection first
- Signed form, fee, latest Minimum Standards Report
- Floor plans with room sizes and uses, exits and fire separations
- Materials list, plus elevations or photos
- Site plan: lot, setbacks, parking, decks, drainage
- Deck and fire escape construction details
- Foundation plan or cross-section for structural work
- Illegal unit: rezoning or a variance may come first
- Heritage Area: approval for exterior work. Flood Risk Area: analysis for any work

Fee = \$120 + \$8.90 per \$1,000 of the estimate. A \$30,000 job is **\$387**.

Deposit, estimate under \$90,000	\$0
Deposit, apartment job of \$90,000 or more	1%, max \$5,000
Work started before the permit s.13(2)	3 × the fee
Surcharge cap	\$25,000
Deposit lost if not closed s.14(4)	1 year after expiry
Extra inspections after 2–3 free	\$75–\$200
Inspection you request with no active permit	\$150

Running a permit

- Post the permit on site
- Book each inspection 2 business days ahead (only Mon–Thu count), and don't cover work until it passes s.15
- Skip an inspection and the city can order the work uncovered
- Stages: pre-footing, pre-slab, pre-backfill, framing, pre-drywall, drywall, fire stopping, pre-siding, plumbing, final
- No added scope after issue. 2 years to finish, one 1-year extension on request
- Ends with a certificate of completion or an occupancy permit

Larger buildings (over 3 storeys or 600 m² footprint)

- Owner and professional commitment forms, unless under \$25,000 with no structural, exit, fire separation or life-safety work
- Fire escapes and decks over two storeys need a professional engineer

Separate permits

- Electrical is provincial. One-Stop gives a waiver letter if no building permit is needed
- Plumbing is filed by the licensed plumbing contractor
- Heritage, Flood Risk, water and sewer, street excavation

8 Licences and asbestos

Electrical: circuits, outlets, panels, services **Electrician**

Reg 84-165

Electrical permit **over 10 outlets or 5 kW**

Like-for-like swap, no circuit change s.24; **approved qualified person**

Bulletin 165-7-0

Plumbing piping Reg 84-187 **Plumber**

Fixture, valve or faucet, clog, leak, no piping change s.4(3) **No licence**

Gas: install, repair or service Reg 84-176 s.16 **Gas licence**

Gas install or alteration s.8 **Permit too**

Extinguisher servicing Reg 82-239 **Licensed servicer**

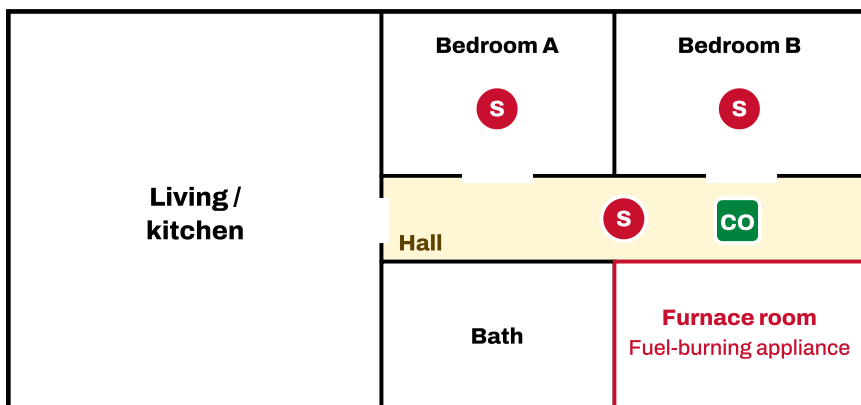
Asbestos

- Built before 1990, or unsure: assume asbestos. Some products to 1999; full ban only in 2018 WorkSafeNB
- Test before you disturb: competent person, lab analysis
- Samples, at least: 1 up to 9.3 m², 3 to 93 m², 5 to 465 m², 7 above Code 3.2
- Counts as asbestos at 1% or more

Risk	Examples
Low	Wet removal of vinyl or acoustic tile and cement products. N95, drop sheets, damp or HEPA clean-up
Moderate	Hand-tool cutting or drilling, drywall with asbestos joint compound, vinyl-asbestos flooring, under 2.8 m ² friable. Reusable N, R or P100 respirator, full coveralls
High	2.8 m ² (30 sq ft) or more friable, power tools without HEPA. Notify WorkSafeNB 10 days before

Stop at old pipe wrap, popcorn ceilings, floor tile and joint compound. Ask the owner for the written asbestos report.

9 Smoke and CO alarms



Smoke alarm



CO alarm

Smoke alarms

- Every unit: one in the hall between the bedrooms and the rest of the unit
NFC 2.1.3.3(2)
- New work: also one on every storey and in each bedroom, on or near the ceiling NBC 9.10.19.3
- Saint John: one within 5 m of every bedroom and on every floor M-14 s.13(3)
- Tenants may not disconnect alarms or remove batteries M-14 s.13(4)
- New work: hard-wired, no switch, battery backup, interconnected. Replace with a compatible model NBC 9.10.19.4–.5
- Test and maintain to CAN/ULC-S552 NFC 6.7.1.1(1)

CO alarms

- Needed if the suite has a fuel-burning appliance, or shares a wall or floor with a furnace room or garage NBC 9.32.3.9
- In each bedroom, or within 5 m of each bedroom door, measured along the hall
- A furnace room shared by suites gets its own; a garage does not 9.32.3.9(5)–(6)
- Mount at the maker's height and test per the maker NBC 9.32.3.9(2), NFC 6.7.1.1(2)
- Older buildings: keep existing alarms working; new work and alterations follow the NBC

10 Exits, fire doors, housekeeping

Exits

Exits and halls	NFC 2.7.1.6	clear
Exit doors tested	2.7.2.1	monthly
Outside exit stairs and walks	2.7.1.7	no snow or ice
Exit signs and emergency lights	2.7.3.1	lit, working
Exit door that cars or storage can block	2.7.1.8	sign or barrier

Fire doors

Closer, latch, hold-open parts	2.2.2.4(1)	working
Self-closing doors checked shut	2.2.2.4(2)	every 24 h
Every fire door operated	2.2.2.4(3)	monthly
Fire and smoke dampers inspected	2.2.2.4(5)	every 12 months
Replacement door	2.2.2.1	same rating

Fire separations

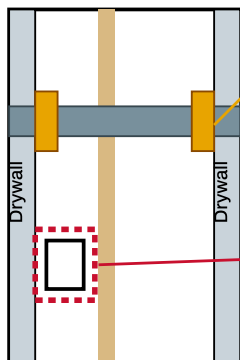
- Damaged separation or fire protection: repair it so the rating holds NFC 2.2.1.2
- Saint John: separations between units, halls, exits and floors; furnace rooms, storage rooms and garages closed off M-14 s.13(1)–(2)

Housekeeping

- No combustibles in exits, service rooms, shafts, ceiling or crawl spaces NFC 2.4.1.1
- Oily rags in a metal can with a self-closing lid 2.4.1.3
- Dryer lint trap cleaned after each use 2.4.1.4

11 Fire separations and fire doors

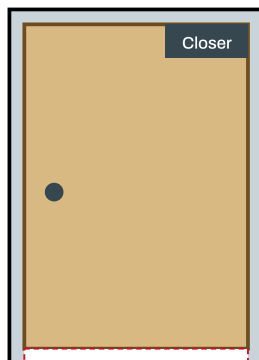
Wall between units



① **Firestop**
tested to CAN/ULC-S115,
rated as high as the wall

② **Outlet box**
plastic box: FT-rated pad
small steel box: see list

Fire door



Unit walls, small buildings (Part 9) 9.10.9.16	45 min
Unit walls, larger buildings (Part 3) 3.3.4.2	1 h
Part 9 door: 45 min wall / 1 h wall Table 9.10.13.1	20 / 45 min
Part 3 door, corridor to suite 3.1.8.12	20 min
Part 3 door, other 3.1.8.4	45 min
20 min door gaps: bottom / sides and top 3.1.8.12(3), 9.10.13.2	6 / 3 mm max

- Penetrations sealed with a firestop tested to CAN/ULC-S115, rated as high as the wall 9.10.9.6, 3.1.9.1
- Outlet boxes: FT-rated firestop, except steel boxes up to 0.016 m², 0.065 m² per 9.3 m² of wall, gap 3 mm or less 9.10.9.8
- Wood door as a 20 min door: 45 mm solid core, CAN/ULC-S113, frame 38 mm or more 9.10.13.2–3
- Labelled doors follow their label and NFPA 80 3.1.8.5
- Photograph each firestop, then book the fire stopping inspection

12 Hot work and fire systems

Hot work: cutting, welding, soldering, brazing, grinding, adhesive bonding, roofing, thermal spraying, thawing pipes. NFC 5.2.1.1

Who 5.2.1.2	trained people
Clear or protect combustibles within 5.2.3.1(2)	15 m (50 ft)
Fire watch during the work and after	60 min
Final check	4 h after
Gaps in walls, floors and ceilings 5.2.3.1(3)	covered
Containers or pipes holding, or that held, flammables 5.2.3.4(1)	only cleaned and gas-tested
Totally enclosed containers 5.2.3.4(2)	never

Extinguishers

- Required in every building except inside units; per NFPA 10 NFC 2.1.5.1
- Serviced only by a licensed servicer or a registered trainee they supervise Reg 82-239 s.3, 9

Fire alarm and sprinklers

- Alarm working at all times, tested to CAN/ULC-S536; never block a panel or device NFC 6.3.1.1-.2
- Before shutting any fire protection down: notify and arrange other protection 6.1.1.3-.4
- Test records stay in the building at least 2 years Div C 2.2.1.2

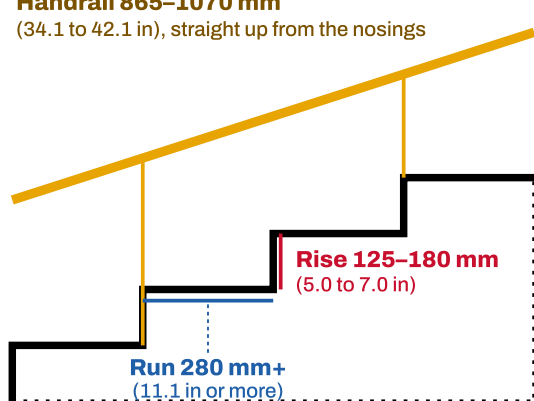
Fire safety plan

- Required where the NBC requires a fire alarm, reviewed every 12 months NFC 2.8.1.1, 2.8.2.1
- Alarm panel in the building? Ask the owner for the plan

13 Stairs and guards

Handrail 865–1070 mm

(34.1 to 42.1 in), straight up from the nosings



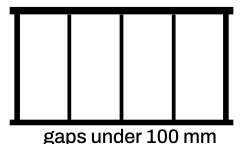
Headroom
2050 mm+
(6 ft 9 in)

Width 900 mm+
(36 in). Taller Part 3
exits: 1100 mm (44 in)

Rise 125–180 mm
(5.0 to 7.0 in)

Run 280 mm+
(11.1 in or more)

Guard: 1070 mm high



Common stairs	Metric	Inches	NBC
Rise	125–180 mm	5.0–7.0	9.8.4.1
Run	280 mm+	11.1	9.8.4.2
Width	900 mm+	36	9.8.2.1
Headroom	2050 mm+	81	9.8.2.2
Handrail height	865–1070 mm	34.1–42.1	9.8.7.4
Guard height	1070 mm+	43	9.8.8.3

- Larger buildings: exit stairs serving more than 2 storeys above (or 1 below) the exit level are 1100 mm wide 3.4.3.2
- Inside one unit: rise up to 200 mm (7.8 in), run 255–355 mm (10.1–13.9 in), guard 900 mm
- Adjacent risers within 5 mm; whole flight within 10 mm 9.8.4.4
- Handrails: one side under 1100 mm wide, both sides at 1100 mm or wider or curved 9.8.7.1
- Saint John existing stairs: handrails 800–965 mm. New rails at 865–965 mm (34.1–37.9 in) meet both M-14 s.21

14

Guards, windows, stair math

Part 9 covers buildings up to 3 storeys and 600 m² footprint. Bigger buildings follow Part 3. When unsure, use the stricter number. Div A 1.3.3

Guards

Needed where the drop is over 9.8.8.1	600 mm (23.6 in)
Height, general / inside a unit 9.8.8.3	1070 / 900 mm
Exterior stair more than 10 m up 3.4.6.6	1500 mm (59.1 in)
No gap passes a ball of 9.8.8.5	100 mm (build 3½ in)

Windows

Bedroom escape window, unless sprinklered 9.9.10.1	0.35 m ² , sides 380 mm+
Same in inches	543 sq in, sides 15 in+
Clear space in a window well	760 mm (30 in)
Child-fall limiter opening 9.8.8.1(4)	100 mm max

- Limiter or guard not needed if the drop outside is under 1800 mm (5 ft 10 in), or the sill is over 900 mm (Part 9) or the opening over 1070 mm (Part 3) 9.8.8.1(5), 3.3.4.8
- Glass below 1070 mm over stairs or landings (900 mm in a unit), or below 1 m in public areas above the 2nd storey: guard or fixed guard-strength glass 9.8.8.1(6)–(8)

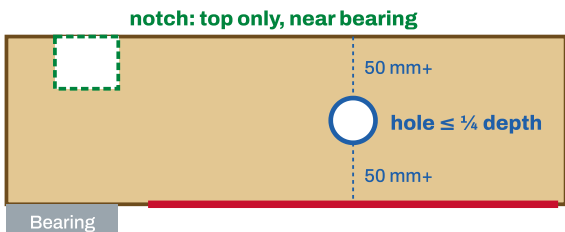
Bedroom escape window that needs a limiter: use a window opening control device made to ASTM F2090. It stops a child but releases for escape without tools. Never screw a stop on or pull the crank. Crank windows can't be limited to 100 mm. NBC Note A-9.8.8.1(4); M-14 s.13(6)

Stair calculator

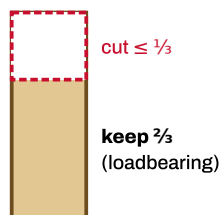
Risers = floor-to-floor ÷ 180 mm, rounded up. Each riser = total ÷ risers. Treads = risers – 1, each 280 mm+. 2600 mm gives 15 risers of 173 mm and 14 treads (3920 mm run). Inches: ÷ 7, round up.

15 Cutting and drilling framing

Floor / ceiling joist (side view)



Wall stud (top view)



Non-loadbearing: keep 40 mm+

Joist or rafter hole 9.23.5.1	$\frac{1}{4}$ of depth, 50 mm from edges
Joist or rafter notch 9.23.5.2	top only, $\frac{1}{3}$ of depth, within $\frac{1}{2}$ depth of bearing
Loadbearing stud: keep 9.23.5.3	$\frac{2}{3}$ of depth
Non-loadbearing stud: keep 9.23.5.3	40 mm
Top plate: keep 9.23.5.4	50 mm of width
Roof truss 9.23.5.5	never, unless designed for it

- Bigger cuts: joists and rafters only if made deeper by the cut size; studs and plates only if reinforced
- Treat I-joists like trusses: follow the maker's hole chart
- Cut out a fire block? Put it back 9.10.16.1
- These limits are for Part 9 wood frame. Concrete, steel or engineered framing: ask first

16 Framing math and ladders

Joist	Hole max	Notch max
2×8 (38 × 184)	46 mm, 1¾ in	61 mm, 2⅜ in
2×10 (38 × 235)	58 mm, 2¼ in	78 mm, 3 in
2×12 (38 × 286)	71 mm, 2¾ in	95 mm, 3¾ in
Stud	Loadbearing max cut	Other max cut
2×4 (38 × 89)	29 mm, 1⅛ in	49 mm, 1⅞ in
2×6 (38 × 140)	46 mm, 1¾ in	100 mm, 3⅞ in

Ladders

- Inspect before use; broken rungs or split rails: out of service s.122, 125(1)
- Face it, both hands, body between the rails; step ladder legs locked
- Secure the ladder (tie or foot it); rails 1 m (40 in) past the landing s.125(2)
- Not on a stepladder's top, top step or shelf, or the top 3 rungs of a straight or extension ladder s.125(3)
- Never in front of a door unless it is blocked open, locked or guarded s.125(3)

Fall protection

- Required at 3 m (9 ft 10 in) or more, and at any height over machinery, sharp objects or an open tank s.49(1)
- At 3 m or more on a ladder: skip it only for a light, short task, body between the rails, one hand free, away from edges s.124(3)

17 Trade math

Square a corner

Mark 3 on one side and 4 on the other. The diagonal is 5 when square. Scale up for accuracy: 6-8-10 or 9-12-15 ft, or 3-4-5 m. A rectangle is square when both diagonals match.

Drywall screws

Ceiling 9.29.5.9(1)	300 mm (11¾ in) max
Wall, studs 400 mm o.c. or closer 9.29.5.9(3)	400 mm (15⅝ in) max
Wall, wider studs, bracing or fire protection 9.29.5.9(3)–(4)	300 mm (11¾ in) max
Into wood, unrated Table 9.29.5.5	15 mm+ (⅝ in)
Into wood, rated wall Table 9.29.5.5	20 mm+
Into wood, rated ceiling 45 min / 1 h / 1.5 h Table 9.29.5.5	30 / 45 / 60 mm+

12 in is 305 mm and 16 in is 406 mm, both just over the limits. Lay out with the metric side of the tape.

Quick math

Slope %	rise ÷ run × 100
Steepest ramp, larger buildings 3.4.6.7	1 in 12 (8.3%)
Drain slope 1 in 50	2%, about ¼ in per ft
Concrete	$L \times W \times D \text{ in m} = \text{m}^3$
Concrete in feet	$L \times W \times D \div 27 = \text{yd}^3$
Drywall sheets	area ÷ 2.97 m ² (32 sq ft)
Ladder angle (standard practice)	1 out for 4 up, about 75°

Gauges

- Cut a block exactly 100 mm wide. If it passes through a guard, the gap is too big 9.8.8.5
- Story pole: mark floor-to-floor, divide by the risers, check each riser is within 5 mm 9.8.4.4

18 Plumbing

Piping changes: licensed plumber, and a permit only a plumbing contractor can get. Fixture, valve or faucet swap, clog or leak, piping unchanged: no licence. Reg 84-187 s.4(3); PI-1 s.4

Plumbing permit fee PI-1 s.5(2)(e) **\$70 + \$22 per fixture**

Open question. PI-1 has no permit exemption for fixture swaps, and only contractors can get one. If the owner wants it on paper, a plumber pulls it.

Hot water

At any tap Reg 84-86 s.23(2)	44 °C+ (112 °F)
Shower head or tub NPC 2.2.10.7(4)	49 °C (120 °F) max
Seniors' residence or healthcare 2.2.10.7(5)	43 °C (109 °F) max
Tub and shower valve 2.2.10.7(1)	anti-scald

Tank water heater

- Temperature and pressure relief valve, sensor in the top 150 mm (5.9 in) NPC 2.6.1.7
- Relief pipe: same size as the outlet, rigid, rated for 99 °C, sloping down, no thread at the end, ending within 300 mm (11¾ in) above a drain
- No shut-off valve on the tank-to-valve line or the relief pipe
- Drain pan where water can drain by gravity at tank level, or over a wood floor or in a ceiling: 50 mm (2 in) larger than the tank, 25 mm (1 in) sides, pan drain 2 pipe sizes larger than the relief pipe, directly below it
Reg 84-187 s.3(5), NPC 2.6.1.7(9)–(10)
- Anti-siphon: dip tube with a hole or a vacuum relief valve above the tank; bottom-fed tanks need the valve s.3(5)(a)

Drains

Slope, pipes 3 in and smaller 2.4.8.1	1 in 50 (¼ in per ft)
Toilet drain 2.4.9.2	3 in+
Fixture to trap 2.4.8.2	1200 mm (47 in) max
Pipe size downstream 2.4.9.1	never smaller
Floor drain trap 2.4.5.5	kept full (primer)
Outdoor or garage tap 2.6.2.7	backflow protection

19 Electrical

Swap a switch, outlet or light like for like, no **approved qualified person**
circuit change Reg 84-165 s.24

New circuits, added outlets, panels, **electrician**
services

No permit if existing service ≤ 200 A single **10 outlets, 5 kW max**
phase, no range, water heater or dryer s.16(5)

Approved = the employer holds a written OK from the Chief Electrical
Inspector (506-453-2336) naming the worker and tasks. No OK: the
electrician does it. Bulletin 165-7-0

What the outlet must be

Within 1.5 m of a sink, tub or shower, or outdoors **GFCI**
within 2.5 m of the ground CEC 26-704

3-prong outlet on a 2-wire circuit (no ground) 26-702; **GFCI**
Bulletin 2-5-1

Any outlet in a unit 26-706 **tamper-resistant**

Outlet circuits in a unit (a few exceptions, like the **AFCI**
fridge) 26-658

Lock out first

- Shut off at a lockable breaker or disconnect, then test that it is dead
- Your own lock and a tag: do not operate, printed name, signature, date and time
- Only you remove your lock. Exception: a designated competent worker, if you can't be reached or in an emergency Reg 91-191 s.239

Other rules

- No added load on a circuit already at or near capacity Reg 84-86 s.26(3)
- Hard-wired smoke and CO alarms: no switch between breaker and alarm NBC 9.10.19.4, 9.32.3.9
- Aluminum wiring: only devices marked CU/AL, or copper pigtails with CU/AL connectors Bulletin 4-1-0
- Call the electrician for warm or scorched outlets, a burning smell, flickering lights, breakers that keep tripping

Entry notice, in writing

Routine maintenance or repairs	7 days
Tenant asked in writing	none, within 2 working days
Not done within those 2 days	24 h
Inspection, or showing to buyers	24 h
Showing to new tenants	none in the last rental period if the lease allows; otherwise tenant's OK
Repairs ordered by an authority	24 h, with the order
Emergency	none

- Entry between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., not Sundays or holidays s.16(6)
- No deliberate cut-off of heat, water or power, except emergencies or needed repairs s.3.1

Minimum standards

Heating able to hold, 1.5 m up, at –30 °C outside s.25(1)	21 °C (70 °F)
Landlord-controlled heat s.25(3)–(4)	21 °C 7 a.m.–11 p.m., 18 °C (65 °F) overnight
Hot water at any tap s.23(2)	44 °C+ (112 °F)
Space per resident s.31	9.3 m ² + (101 sq ft)
Bedroom, one person / shared s.31	5.6 m ² / 3.5 m ² each
Ceiling over half the room s.31	2.2 m+ (7 ft 3 in)

People allowed = habitable area ÷ 9.3, rounded down. 46 m² allows 4. A 9 m² bedroom sleeps 2.

Also: no rodents or insects, screened vents, weekly garbage, handrails on open sides of stairs, balconies and landings. Saint John adds p. 21.

21 Saint John property rules

Saint John adopts Reg 84-86 by reference (s.4(1), p. 20) and adds these.

Fire safety

- Smoke alarm within 5 m of every bedroom and on every floor, kept working by the owner s.13(3)
- Tenants may not disconnect alarms or remove batteries s.13(4)
- Fire separations between units, halls, exits and floors; furnace rooms, storage rooms and garages separated s.13(1)–(2)
- Bedroom escape window unless sprinklered: 0.35 m², no side under 380 mm, opens without tools s.13(6)

Exits

- Two separate exits from every floor, reachable in opposite directions from each unit door, unless the unit has its own second way out s.14(2)
- A unit with its own door to grade may have one exit s.14(3)
- More than one flight of stairs to an exit: the unit needs a second exit s.14(4)

Building

Guards: floor openings / everywhere else s.15(2)	900 / 1070 mm
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Guard gaps s.15(2)	100 mm max
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Handrails, height s.21	800–965 mm
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Handrails, sides s.21	one; both at 1100 mm+ wide
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Deck, porch, exterior stair and fire escape footings s.20(1)	1.2 m (4 ft) deep, bedrock, or engineered
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Floor slope s.15(1)	10 mm in 2 m max
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Unit with cooking, one person s.9(1)	11.2 m ² +
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Also: basements dry, water-damaged parts repaired or replaced, rotted doors and frames and broken glass fixed, opening windows and exterior doors lockable. s.16–18

22

Orders and fines

- Fire officials can inspect any building and order repairs, hazards removed, safeguards installed, drills, or power cut to a dangerous installation Fire Act s.11–12
- Tenants must give the owner access for ordered work s.12(6)
- Building inspectors can stop work or order changes; the owner pays BC-3 s.28(2), Building Act s.14(3)

Fines

Tampering with fire equipment, blocking exits, ignoring a fire order

\$240–\$10,200

Obstructing a fire official

\$240–\$5,200

Building without a permit, breaking fire regulations

\$140–\$640

Ignoring a city Fire Prevention Officer’s order M-34 s.6

\$1,000–\$5,200

Ignoring a city property standards order M-14 s.28

\$1,000 min, more each day

- Ignoring a court’s order to comply after a fire conviction: fines multiply by the day Fire Act s.24(4)
- Paying a fine never ends the duty to fix
- City property standards orders can be appealed within 14 days M-14 s.27

Who is responsible

- The owner or agent carries out the Fire Code NFC Div C 2.2.1.1
- The landlord keeps units in repair and up to health, safety, housing and building standards, and common areas clean and safe RTA s.3

23 Free resources

Point a phone camera at a code.



Free building and fire codes

NBC 2020 and NFC 2020 as free PDFs from the National Research Council.



NB laws and regulations

Every act and regulation on these cards, free on laws.gnb.ca.



Saint John permits page

Forms, by-law links and the permit process.



Book an inspection

City online form. An inspector confirms within 2 business days.



Heritage Area map

Is the building in a Heritage Conservation Area? Check before any outside work.



PlanSJ map

City planning map: zoning and other layers for an address.



Landlord entry rules

Province's plain-language page on notice to enter.



Tenancy forms

Official NB landlord and tenant forms, including the standard lease.

24 Health and money help



Radon: free test kits

Free 90-day test kits at NB public libraries since Oct 2025. About 1 in 4 NB homes is high. Kits ran short at first, so ask the branch.



Lead paint (Health Canada)

Built **before 1960**: probably lead paint. **1960–1990**: outside may have it, inside smaller amounts. **Never** sand, heat-gun or torch it.



Mould (CMHC)

Small areas: clean yourself with precautions. Medium or large areas: trained professionals.



Asbestos guide (WorkSafeNB)

Plain-language asbestos page with the Code of Practice.



Free safety courses

WorkSafeNB e-courses, free to any NB worker or employer: hazard ID, inspections, incident reporting and more.



Rental rebates (NB Power)

Rental Owner's Rebate Program (July 2026) for energy upgrades in rentals, apartments included. **Check the rules before buying or starting.**



Tenants' rights booklet

Free plain-language guide from Legal Information NB.

Lead and asbestos both hide in pre-1990 buildings. Test first; never dry-sand or torch old paint.

25 Sources and limits

Codes in force

- NFC 2020 and NBC 2020, adopted by Reg 82-20 s.2. Fire regulations in force May 1, 2025; plans reviewed under the edition in force the day they're filed (OFM Bulletin 2025-01)
- NB uses its own barrier-free rules instead of NBC 3.8 and excludes NBC Parts 2 (farm) and 7 (plumbing)
- NPC 2020 (Reg 84-187, amended 2025); CSA C22.1-24 electrical (Reg 84-165)
- City by-laws BC-3 (building, 2025), M-14 (property standards), M-34 (fire protection)

Read in the original

- NBC, NFC and NPC 2020: free NRC PDFs
- NB acts and regulations: laws.gnb.ca
- City by-laws: records.saintjohn.ca; city forms: saintjohn.ca
- WorkSafeNB Code of Practice (2023) and OHS guide

Limits

- Canadian Electrical Code 2024 is a paid standard: its rule numbers here come from NB and Alberta bulletins and a published CEC 2024 guide
- Plumbing permit for like-for-like fixture swaps: By-law PI-1 s.4 has no exemption and Reg 84-187 s.4(3) needs no licence; neither settles it
- M-14 is the 2018 consolidation; its fine clause was read from the French text
- No NB licence found for fire alarm technicians; sprinkler installer is a compulsory trade

A memory aid, not legal or engineering advice. It summarizes the codes and does not reproduce them. Re-check yearly and when NB adopts a new code edition.

Revisions

Date	What changed
2026-10-12	First edition

Notes