

Wood-frame building codes changing across Canada

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The case for building taller wood-framed buildings is gaining traction with provinces and cities adapting their building codes to allow for taller wood structures.

Most recently, Calgary announced a change to its rules allowing for six-storey buildings with wood frames, an increase from four-storeys. City planners hope this will encourage developers to build more mid-rise condos since wood frames are cheaper and more environmentally friendly, [according to the Calgary Herald](#). The forestry industry is also expected to benefit from this change in policy.

British Columbia was the first province to adapt the guidelines for wood-framed structures back in 2009 and since then, provinces such as Quebec and Ontario have followed its lead. The National Building Code of Canada is also currently working on revisions to its code, which happens every five years, and it's expected that they will approve a similar standard.

Other countries across the world have also embraced higher wood-framed buildings with Melbourne currently boasting the tallest building of ten-storeys with London not far behind with a nine-storey structure. Australia won't hold the title for long since a 14-storey wood structure is being built in Norway.

UBC in Vancouver is looking to up the ante with a 16 to 18 storey student residence that's expected to be finished by 2017. The structure will cost \$40 million and will house 400 students.

In the past, developers looking to build structures higher than four floors were only allowed to use concrete or steel since they were deemed as the only structurally sound materials. Now, thanks to improvements in wood beam strength and working sprinkler systems during a building's construction, developers can now build higher with wood frames.

But this change in legislation has firefighters concerned that these buildings will be a greater fire hazard. While Ontario's wood-framed buildings have additional safety features such as stairwells built from non-combustible material and combustion resistant roofs, this isn't enough, [a firefighter with the International Association of Fire Fighters told CBC News](#).

The Kingston blaze at an under construction housing complex is an example of the dangers of wood-framed buildings. The five-storey structure was quickly engulfed in flames with [bystanders telling the Toronto Star](#) that the fire was out of control by the time the first fire truck arrived. There was a dramatic helicopter rescue to save a worker who was trapped on a construction crane.

Before purchasing any newly built building, it's important to do your [research into the builder](#). Once you've decided where you plan to purchase a house and put money down on the sale, your job isn't over yet. The pre-delivery inspections on your home's [interior](#), [exterior](#) and [systems](#) are crucial to ensuring that your home meets your expectations and is a chance for you to double check that construction was done well.

If you've bought a [newly built house or condo unit](#), you're eligible for an HST rebate from the CRA. Whether you purchased the property as an [investment](#) or for personal use, you still qualify. Rebate4U can help you [claim money back from the CRA](#). Our priority is to provide our clients with the most professional and quality service in obtaining rebates for their new and renovated homes. We are proud to offer our clients the most personal and attentive service, and we make sure that all of our clients are 100% satisfied.