



## **Backgrounder for National Building Code in PEI**

### **BACKGROUND:**

- Executive Council Decision 2008-1.35 authorized the Department of Environment to proceed with the planning process for the adoption of the National Building Code (NBC), National Fire Code (NFC) and Energy Efficiency Standards.
- In 2011 the PEI Building Standards Council appointed by Executive Council began meeting to draft a new Provincial Building Code Act and Regulations to enable the adoption of the NBC, NFC and Energy Efficiency Standards.
- Building Standards Council membership include: Engineers PEI, Architects Association, Construction Association of PEI, PEI Federation of Municipalities, Disability Action Council, City of Charlottetown and City of Summerside. Advisors to the Council included representatives from TIR and Inspection Services. Nazmi Lawen was appointed Chair of the Council and is currently Engineer's PEI representative at Engineers Canada.
- First drafts of a new Provincial Building Code Act and the associated regulations have been prepared and has been submitted to legislative counsel for review. It is the Engineers PEI's hope that the process to adopt the Provincial Building Code Act and Regulations be initiated as soon as practicable for the Provincial Government.

### **FACTORS:**

- The National Building Code of Canada (NBCC) has been in use since 1941.
- NBCC is a minimum construction standard that is presently required to be met in every province in Canada with the EXCEPTION of Prince Edward Island.
- Construction to meet NBCC standards with will result in healthier, safer, and more energy efficient homes and buildings with no additional construction costs.

- The plans review, building permitting and inspection process required by the new Act and Regulations will protect home owner interest by ensuring that all construction is safe, sound and compliant with standards.

#### **BENEFITS:**

- **Health & Safety:** The province wide adoption of both the National Building and Fire Codes will help to ensure that minimum standards are met to ensure safety of building occupants, with specific regard to public health, fire protection, structural sufficiency, and accessibility for peoples with disabilities.
- **Financial:**
  - Homes built to NBCC will result in lower operational and maintenance costs over the life of the dwelling. Homes not built to this minimum standard can quickly require expensive repairs that could have been avoided.
  - A uniform application process and building requirements province-wide will help reduce red tape for builders and level the playing field for competitive pricing amongst all construction companies.
- **Consistency:**
  - It will eliminate confusion for builders, home owners and developers in different parts of the province by ensuring that each jurisdiction follows the same version of the National Building Code. When the Councils work is completed the province will require all construction, renovations and demolition meet the same minimum standards now required by the rest of the Canadian provinces as well as for residents of Charlottetown, Summerside, and Stratford.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Engineers PEI along with other associates recommend that Provincial Government expedite the approval and adoption processes of the PEI Building Code Act and Regulations.

#### **What can PEI expect to see when these codes are adopted?**

For residents of Charlottetown, Summerside, and Stratford it will be business as usual as these municipalities currently require construction meet the requirements of the National Building Code. For the rest of the province, inspections will be carried out to ensure that construction also meets these same minimum standards.

*The Provincial Building Code Act will protect the public health, safety and welfare by requiring safe construction.*