

## Alberta's Safety System

Alberta Municipal Affairs works in partnership with the Safety Codes Council, municipalities, corporations, agencies, and other organizations, to deliver effective community-focused public safety programs and services to Albertans.

## Installation of Cooktops

**Natural gas & propane cooktops** shall be installed in accordance with the gas regulations made under the *Safety Codes Act*.

**Electrical cooktop installations** shall conform to the electric regulations made under the *Safety Codes Act*.

**Clearances for and protection around gas, propane and electric cooktops** shall be not less than clearances provided in the current edition of the Alberta Building Code.

## Do you need a permit?

Yes, you must obtain appropriate permit(s) for your kitchen development as well as any gas, propane and electric cooktops installations. Local bylaws and provincial regulations governing when you need a permit may vary with the specific circumstances surrounding your project.

*If you are not certain on where to obtain the required permit(s) for projects located in your area or you have further questions on requirements for kitchen development and cooktop installations, please contact Alberta Municipal Affairs using the contact information provided in this brochure to find out more.*

## Importance of permits

The *Safety Codes Act* requires that permits in Alberta be obtained prior to commencing work on any buildings covered by the Alberta Building and Fire Codes, the Canadian Electrical Code, the Gas Code, or the National Plumbing Code.

Permits are part of a process to access compliance to a minimum standard of construction safety for the benefit of all Albertans. If construction projects are undertaken without required permits, the owner may be subject to penalties and extra costs incurred to bring a project into compliance.

As the property owner, you are responsible to obtain all necessary permits. A contractor can look after this on your behalf; however, you should specify in writing, who will get the required permits. Some jurisdictions may require a letter of authorization before a contractor can apply for permit(s) on your behalf.

**Clearances from Gas, Propane and Electric Cooktops**

The keys to safe and effective use of gas and electric cooktops in residential applications are good planning, careful installation and proper maintenance.

Fires from cooking are a common occurrence. To reduce the risk of a fire spreading beyond cooking surfaces of your appliance, minimum clearances are required from combustible materials as prescribed in the 2014 Alberta Building Code. Improper installations may create a fire hazard that places your life and the lives of your family at risk.

**IMPORTANT:** Some gas cooktops may require increased clearances exceeding the Alberta Building Code. Please consult the appliance manufacturer's installation instructions to determine if increased clearances are required. A gas permit may also be required if changes to the gas piping system are made.

**NOTE:** This brochure is intended to provide information relative to the minimum requirements for standard residential stoves. If you are installing a large or commercial type cooktop in your home then you should check the manufacturer's clearances as they may be greater.

**Microwave Ovens**

The Alberta Building Code 2014 does not regulate portable plug-in appliances such as over the cooktop microwaves. The manufacturer's installation manuals for over the cooktop microwave ovens typically cover clearances and other specifications related to their installation, and they should be installed in accordance with those instructions.

**Benefits of getting a permit**

When you get a permit, certified safety codes officers (inspectors) will:

- give you expert advice,
- review your plans to find any potential problems,
- inspect your project, and
- make sure your project meets the Alberta Building Code.

Making changes at the planning stage can save you money, rather than making costly corrections after construction. Certified safety codes officers will give you an inspection report(s) and follow-up on deficiencies to make sure your project is safe and in compliance.

**Where do you get a permit?**

Permits are available through municipalities that administer the *Safety Codes Act* and through agencies that provide inspection services on behalf of municipalities or the province. If you don't know whether your municipality issues permits, contact the Alberta Safety Codes Authority (ASCA) at 1-888-413-0099 or visit [safetycodes.ab.ca/ASCA](http://safetycodes.ab.ca/ASCA).

## Combustible Material Clearances

Clearances are required to limit the probability that heat radiating from a cooktop or from open fire will ignite nearby combustible materials which could lead to the spread of fire.

## Vertical Clearances above Cooktops

The minimum clearance required directly above the cooktop is 750 mm (30") to combustibles. The clearance can be reduced to 600 mm (24") above the level of the elements or burners provided the framing, finishes and cabinets **noncombustible** or has a metal hood with a 125 mm (5") projection beyond the framing, finishes and cabinets.

## Protection around Cooktops

Cabinetry adjacent to the cooktop and located above 450 mm (18") the level of the heating elements or counter-top splash boards or back plates that extend above the level of heating elements do not require additional protection.

Combustible wall framing, finishes or cabinets within 450 mm (18") of the cooktop is required to be protected above the level of the heating elements by material providing fire resistance not less than that of a 9.5 mm (3/8") thickness of gypsum board.

## Backdrafting Hazard

Kitchen exhaust fans, especially downdraft cooktop fans, can depressurize a house and cause fuel-fired appliances that do not have sealed combustion venting systems (such as older wood burning fireplace or fuel-fired furnaces and water heaters) to backdraft into the living space. Be sure to take note of any fuel-fired appliances that might represent post-retrofit backdrafting risks if a new range hood or cooktop fan is installed.

Consult with a ventilation system installer or blower door technician familiar with testing homes for depressurization problems if non-sealed combustion appliances are present. This is known as house depressurization limit testing.

### Applying for a building permit

When applying for a building permit, you must submit the following information to your local authority:

- details of the project or occupancy to be covered by the permit.
- details of the land on which the project will be located, including a description that will easily identify and locate the building lot.
- plans, specifications and other documents showing, in detail, the proposed occupancy of all parts of the building, state the value of the proposed project.
- state the names, addresses and phone numbers of the project owner, designer and contractor.

### Hire qualified tradespeople

Specific trades such as electricians, plumbers and gasfitters must be certified to work in Alberta. To find out if the tradespeople you are hiring need to be certified in Alberta or to verify an individual's status, you may contact *The Apprenticeship and Industry Training* office by calling 310-0000.

## Clearances from Gas, Propane and Electric Cooktops

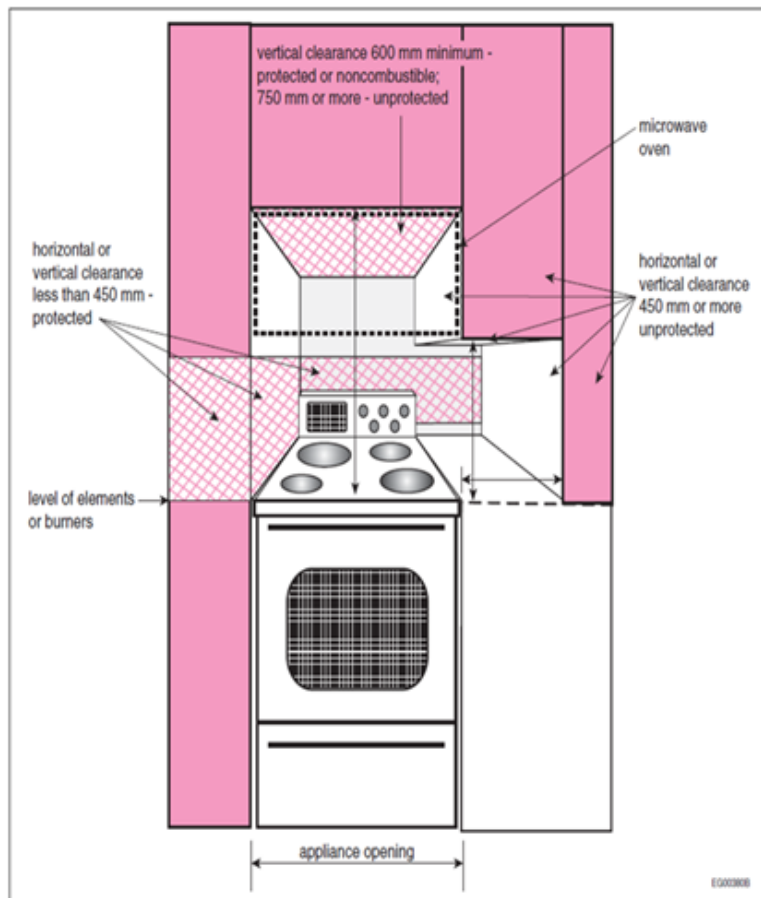
Potential solutions may include installing a make-up air system to replace the air vented by the range hood/cooktop fan or converting fuel-fired appliances to newer models with sealed combustion venting systems.

Discuss the options with a qualified mechanical contractor.

### Illustration

#### Clearance from cooktops to walls and cabinetry

Alberta Building Code 2014



### More information:

#### Alberta Municipal Affairs

Community & Technical Support  
16<sup>th</sup> Floor, Commerce Place  
10155 - 102 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4L4

- Toll-free: 1-866-421-6929
- [safety.services@gov.ab.ca](mailto:safety.services@gov.ab.ca)
- [municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca](http://municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca)

#### Safety Codes Council

Suite 1000  
10665 - Jasper Ave NW  
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3S9

- Toll-free within Alberta:  
1-888-413-0099  
1-888-424-5134
- [webmaster@safetycodes.ab.ca](mailto:webmaster@safetycodes.ab.ca)
- [safetycodes.ab.ca](http://safetycodes.ab.ca)

#### Alberta Safety Codes Authority (ASCA)

- Toll-free within Alberta:  
1-888-413-0099
- [askasca@safetycodes.ab.ca](mailto:askasca@safetycodes.ab.ca)

### Call (or click) before you dig!

**Alberta One Call** will locate utility lines on your property. Call or click before you start any project that involves digging in your yard. Alberta One Call will locate gas, water, electricity, drainage, telephone and cable TV lines. Allow at least two full working days for Alberta One Call to locate your utility lines.

*These brochures may be updated periodically. They have no legal status and cannot be used as an official interpretation of the various bylaws, codes and regulations currently in effect.*