


BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 24-0016

INTERPRETATION

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Interpretation Date:	July 16, 2024
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2024, Book I: General
Subject:	Accessory Building
Keywords:	Accessory building, storage shed; ancillary
Building Code Reference(s):	Division A, 1.4.1.1.(1); Division B, 9.12.2.2.
Question(s):	Is storage shed the only form of accessory building under the BCBC?
<p>No.</p> <p>The term “Accessory Building”, is undefined in the BC Building Code, but is commonly associated with provisions in the Code to exempt certain types of structures, which would otherwise be classified as buildings, from complying with requirements which might prove to be overly onerous relative to the size, purpose or use of that building. The most common usage of the term “accessory building” is that of Division A, Clause 1.1.1.1.(2)(e) which waives the application of the Building Code to small ancillary buildings under 10 m² that do not create a hazard.</p> <p>As an undefined term, common practice has been to consider the common usage of the term “ancillary building”, which is further clarified in Sentence 1.4.1.1.(1), which identifies that non-defined terms should be attributed the meanings commonly assigned to the words in the context used, with special attention to its usage in building construction or design. From this guidance, it can generally be established that this is typically viewed as a subordinate structure to a principal building, providing support¹ to the usage of the principal building.</p> <hr/> <p>¹ Ancillary: 1. Ancillary (to something) providing necessary support to the main work or activities of an organization 2. in addition to something else but not as important (Oxford English Dictionary (2024May) - https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/ancillary?q=ancillary)</p> <p></p> <hr/> <p>Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair</p>	

The views expressed are the consensus of the joint committee with members representing AIBC, EGBC and BOABC, which form the BC Building Code Interpretation Committee. The Building and Safety Standards Branch, Province of BC and the City of Vancouver participate in the committee's proceedings with respect to interpretations of the BC Building Code. The purpose of the committee is to encourage uniform province wide interpretation of the BC Building Code. These views should not be considered as the official interpretation of legislated requirements based on the BC Building Code, as final responsibility for an interpretation rests with the local *Authority Having Jurisdiction*. The views of the joint committee should not be construed as legal advice.

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However, in many cases this may not provide sufficient context for interpretation and so it may be useful to consider local developmental regulations with respect to this term, as this often outlines broad developmental goals of a municipality that can help guide code users in determining what should be considered to be “ancillary” with respect to those regulatory objectives.

By inspection, it can readily be seen that there is broad variation between local municipalities with respect to what should be regulated, and so it may likewise be inferred that it is not solely storage sheds which might be considered as “ancillary buildings” – provided that this fits within the regulatory goals of that municipality. Structures such as greenhouses, detached storage garages, or other subordinate structures may potentially be seen as an “ancillary building” within a given municipality along with the consequential allowances within the BC Building Code.

If the interpretation of whether a given building is unclear within a particular jurisdiction, the code user is encouraged to contact the local Authority Having Jurisdiction so they can provide additional guidance.



Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair

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