

WEST VANCOUVER FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES

760-16TH STREET, WEST VANCOUVER BC V7V 3S1

T: 604-925-7375 | F: 604-925-5911

E: firedepartment@westvancouver.ca



Construction Site Safety

External Guide (2026)

A comprehensive understanding of the hazards and their potential risks is the first step towards fire prevention and mitigation. West Vancouver Fire Rescue Services is dedicated to improving the overall fire safety of construction sites within our community. The following information is provided as a guide to assist you with reducing the risk of a fire on your construction site as outlined in the BC Fire Code.

General Requirements

The requirements of responsibility for compliance are outlined by the BC Fire Code, Division C - 2.2.1.1. (1) which states, *"Unless otherwise specified, the owners or the owner's authorized agent shall be responsible for carrying out the provisions of this code."*

The Site Superintendent is encouraged to contact the Fire Prevention Office early in the construction phase to establish a working relationship between the Fire Department and the Developer at the site. Email fireprevention@westvancouver.ca

Construction Fire Safety Plans

Where construction, alteration or demolition operations occur in an existing building that is required to have a CFSP conforming to Section 2.8. and Article 5.6.1.3. of the BC Fire Code, the CFSP shall consider the changes occurring to the building. Fire Safety Plan and Construction Fire Safety Plan Guidelines can be viewed at [Fire Safety Plan and Pre-Incident Plan Program](#).

All CFSP Appendices to include:

- "Protection of Adjacent Building" report relative to Article 5.6.1.2 of the B.C. Fire Code 2018.
- Copy of DWV's [Hot Works Permit](#)
- Copy of DWV's [Dangerous Goods/Compressed Gas Permit](#)

Tower Cranes

The setup and de-mobilization of a tower crane in West Vancouver will require a Street Occupancy Permit.

Engineering & Transportation: streetoccupancy@westvancouver.ca

A Rescue Service Agreement with West Vancouver Fire & Rescue must be entered into before a tower crane becomes operational. An application for this service is made through THARRP (Technical High Angle Rescue Rope Program) which is administered by the BC Safety Construction Alliance (BCSCA)

Visit: <https://tharrp.bccsa-services.ca/> to create an account with the BC Safety Construction Alliance or email your enquiry to info@bccsa.ca to start the application process. After setting up your BCSCA account and submitting your application, contact the West Vancouver Fire Rescue Services Training Division at wvfrtraining@westvancouver.ca to schedule a site visit from the Fire Department for tower crane rescue planning.

⚠️ INDUSTRY ALERT: THERMAL RUNAWAY HAZARD

Safety authorities including the NFPA, OSHA, and provincial Fire Marshals now classify unregulated lithium-ion charging banks as a critical life-safety hazard due to the explosive, rapid-heating nature of "thermal runaway." The following requirements reflect enforceable North American standards designed to prevent catastrophic fire spread and protect worker egress. To mitigate this hazard, all battery charging stations must adhere to the following strict safety protocols:

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- Do not leave batteries charging unattended overnight unless housed in a certified, fire-rated charging cabinet.
- Locate charging banks on non-combustible surfaces, at least 3 metres away from combustible storage, waste bins, and flammable liquids.
- Never place charging stations in stairwells, corridors, or primary exit routes.
- Use only Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) chargers and batteries. Aftermarket or modified batteries are strictly prohibited.
- No Daisy-Chaining: Plug chargers directly into approved receptacles. Do not link multiple extension cords or power bars.
- Isolate: Immediately remove any dropped, swollen, punctured, or abnormally hot batteries from the building. Store them outside in a non-combustible container (e.g., a metal bucket with sand) pending safe disposal.

Site Security & Fire Watch Requirements

To protect your site and the community, implement the following security measures once combustible construction begins to address fire risks and unauthorized intrusion:

- Continuous Monitoring: Install 360-degree video surveillance linked to a 24/7 monitored station.
- Perimeter Security: Maintain a locked 1.8m fence with a 6m clear opening for Fire Department access.
- Hourly Patrols: Security must conduct physical fire watch patrols every 60 minutes (interior and exterior) during all non-working hours.
- Focus Areas: Patrols must prioritize hot work zones, material laydown areas, and any impaired or incomplete fire protection equipment.
- Documentation: Maintain an on-site log of all patrols and active Hot Work Permits for Fire Department review.

Protection of Adjacent Buildings

Article 5.6.1.2. of the BC Fire Code states that protection shall be provided for adjacent buildings and facilities that would be exposed to the fire originating at the construction site. Methods and materials used to protect adjacent buildings may include active or passive systems such as:

- spatial separation
- water curtains
- fire-resistant construction methods and materials

Interface Construction Protocols

As per [Fire Rescue Bylaw No. 5163, 2021 | District of West Vancouver](#) 8.12 – 8.14 and *North Shore Interface Construction and Maintenance Protocol for High-Risk Work during Periods of Extreme Fire Danger Ratings*. [2022 WVFR - High Risk Work During Extreme Fire Danger - Contractors.pdf](#)

Site Identification

A sign identifying the civic address of the construction or demolition site shall always be legible and visible from the access route entrance to the site from a minimum distance of 15 metres.

The address must be a minimum of 18 inches in height, and the letters or numbers must be of a colour that contrasts with the background colour of the building or sign.

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Access for Firefighting

Article 5.6.1.4. of the BC Fire Code states:

- Unobstructed access to fire hydrants, portable fire extinguishers and to fire department connections for standpipe and sprinkler systems shall be maintained.
- A means shall be provided to allow firefighters to perform their duties on all levels of the building.
- Provision shall be made for the use of existing elevators, hoists or lifts to assist firefighting personnel in reaching all levels of the building.
- Access routes to construction and demolition sites for fire department vehicles shall be provided and maintained.
- Where a construction or demolition site is fenced to prevent general entry, provision shall be made for access by fire department equipment and personnel.

Temporary Standpipe and FDC Connections

BCFC Section 5.6. Construction and Demolition Sites: Prior to construction proceeding above grade, a water supply must be connected to the fire suppression system. The water supply must be capable of supplying full water demand to the system as designed by the sprinkler engineer. The standpipe systems will be installed progressively in conformance with BCBC 3.2.5. The Standpipes must be wet unless there is a threat of freezing as per A- 5.6.1.6. Manual dry standpipes do not comply with the BC Building. Code 3.2.5.9. (A dry standpipe that is not connected to a water supply shall not be considered as fulfilling the requirements) The Fire Department Connection (FDC) must always be accessible from the exterior of the construction fencing. Signage shall be posted at the location of the fire department connection.

Portable Fire Extinguishers

Article 5.6.1.5. of the BC Fire Code states that portable fire extinguishers shall be provided in unobstructed and easily accessible locations in any areas:

- where hot work operations are carried out
- where combustibles are stored
- near or on any internal combustion engines
- where flammable liquids and combustible liquids or gases are stored or handled
- where temporary fuel-fired equipment is used
- that are designated for smoking

Shipping Containers in West Vancouver

Shipping containers used on-site must comply with [Fire Rescue Bylaw No. 5163, 2021](#) Shipping Containers Part 9.65 – 9.72. Expect compliance inspections.

Hot Works

Permits must be obtained as per Fire Rescue Bylaw No. 5163, 2021 Part 11. [Fire Permits | District of West Vancouver](#) Permits are to be available for inspection on site. Maintain a signed Hot Work Permit and Fire Watch Log on-site for the duration of the project. Fire Equipment Provide a minimum of two functionally operating 20-lb ABC dry chemical fire extinguishers immediately accessible within the hot work area.

Fire Watch

Fire watch intervals for combustible construction (or if combustibles are within 15m):

- Continuous observation during.

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- 60 minutes of continuous monitoring after completion.
- Periodic checks at 60-minute intervals for the next two hours.
- A final inspection 4 hours after completion.
- Fire watch for non-combustible construction (no exposed combustibles within 15m):
- Visual checks at 30 minutes and 60 minutes after completion.

Designated Smoking Areas

If smoking is permitted on your construction site, it must be strictly confined to clearly marked Designated Smoking Areas. These areas must:

- Maintain Clearance: Be located at least 3 metres away from any building under construction, combustible storage, or refuse bins.
- Provide Receptacles: Be equipped with safe, non-combustible disposal receptacles.
- Be Posted: Feature highly visible signage.