



## Planning For the Future Creation of a Legal Secondary Suite

Property owners renovating or finishing their basement who do not wish at that time to create a legal secondary suite but think they *might* in the future want to have a legal suite may want to do all or some of the work described below while they are renovating or finishing their basement. Doing this work at the time of renovation will not require a significant additional expense but will greatly reduce the expense of creating the suite in the future.

1. Install hard-wired smoke alarms that are interconnected with smoke alarms in the rest of the house (i.e. when one smoke alarm goes off they all go off simultaneously).
2. If the heating system in the house is a forced-air system then the heating ducts in the possible future suite area should be blocked off and electric baseboards or some other kind of heating installed.
3. If there is a gas furnace in the basement that will either be inside the possible future suite area or directly adjacent to it, the furnace room should be drywalled inside and out (including the ceiling) with 5/8" Type X (Fireguard) drywall. The access door to the furnace room should be a 45-minute fire rated door with a self-closing mechanism.
4. If there is to be a door allowing access from a common area or principal unit area into the suite that door should also be a 20-minute fire rated door with a self-closing mechanism.
5. Install 5/8" Type X (Fireguard) drywall on the ceiling of the possible future suite area and on any walls that are shared by common areas or principal unit areas in the basement.
6. Ensure that each bedroom contains a window that has an *openable* area of at least 3.8 sq. ft. (.35 sq. metres), has no *openable* dimension less than 15 inches (38 cm) and whose window sill is no higher off the floor than 4 ft. 11 inches (1.5 metres)

If you have any questions about secondary suites, present or future, please feel free to contact the Single Detached Dwelling Coordinator at 604-527-4503.