New Westminster

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# Addressing and Suite Numbering

Fire & Rescue Services – Fire Protection Division Phone: 604-519-1004

## Purpose:

To put in place consistent and reliable numbering schemes for building addresses, floors and suites to improve emergency response, reduce confusion, and facilitate non-emergency access to suites. This requires that all new applications follow a consecutive, numerically increasing and consistent numbering system for addressing, floor and suite numbers.

## Background:

In recent years, the City of New Westminster has attempted to accommodate requests to provide street addresses, floor, and suite numbers based on individual preferences. These requests have steadily been increasing in number and are without consistency. Owing to the increasing densification of the urban environment, it is no longer possible or reasonable to accommodate these requests. Furthermore, unusual or non-sequential numbering schemes that omit numbers have become confusing to first responders, designers, and visitors since these have not been provided on a systematic basis between buildings.

As delays in fire department and emergency response may well have potentially serious consequences or be inconvenient under less urgent circumstances, requests to provide non-standard numbering which either omits numbers or has a non-standard sequence will not be accepted.

## Implementation:

All new development and building applications will be required to use a consecutive increasing numbering system for storey and suite numbering without the skipping of any numbers.

Acceptable Street addressing, floor and suite numbering shall be provided in a manner respecting established numbering conventions. Note that some variations are suitable for street addressing to allow for additional addresses and where changing addresses meets the intent of this bulletin. Floor and suite numbering sequences generally accepted as satisfying established conventions shall include:

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1. Floor numbers in increasing numerical sequence starting from either the primary addressed street entrance or the first storey as established by Division A, Article 1.4.1.1. of the BC Building Code;
2. Numbering shall not skip numbers between adjacent floor levels; and
3. Suites shall be numbered in increasing numerical sequence, in a clockwise fashion starting from the first and closest suite located directly to the left when entering the floor space through either the primary addressed street entry or the passenger elevator serving the primary addressed street entry, and ending to the right of the elevator. In some cases, at the City's discretion, suite numbers may be altered to allow for additional suites or combining of suites with missing numbers being an exception only.

Where double height floors are proposed, these shall be addressed with respect to the entry level and the adjacent occupied floor levels, and shall otherwise conform to the above requirements.

**Existing Buildings:**

For existing buildings with "non-compliant" numbering schemes, the fire department may require mitigating measures to be added to these buildings on a case by case basis. The building owner/applicant must demonstrate to the Chief Building Official and Fire Department's satisfaction that the existing sequence is logical and will not cause undue confusion for or delay emergency response and operation. All application drawings, and documentation provided to the City shall be coordinated with respect to floor and suite numbering. The proposed mitigating features shall be documented in the building code compliance report and identified on the building permit drawings. These may include redundant numbering on plans, additional signage at low level, passive graphic systems for wayfinding, strobe lights to identify floors under alarm both in stairwells and on the exterior, signage on fire department connections, alarms panels and entrances, or other suitable measures.

Notwithstanding the above requirements, in specific cases where unusual circumstances exist, the Chief Building Official or a designated representative may at their discretion refuse or require the implementation of an alternative numbering system as deemed suitable to the specific circumstances.