

Service and Panels in Secondary suites

Date Of issue, August 18, 2011

Affects Homeowners, Electrical Contractors, and Building Contractors.

Canadian Electrical Code rules 6-206(2)(b) and 26-400 are interpreted to require immediate access to the overcurrent devices associated with each individual occupancy without requiring either occupant to enter into the other occupancy to access their overcurrent devices.

Actions arising

1. For new construction, a separate panel and meter must be supplied for each occupancy. All wiring must be supplied from the individual panels and may not supply loads located in the alternate occupancy.
2. For an existing Single family dwelling, converted or altered, to create a secondary suite, the following shall apply.

A where the existing electrical service is of adequate ampacity, calculated using 8-200(2) to supply loads for both occupancies and the panel is located in an area of the house for the common use of both occupancies all circuits for both occupancies may be supplied from a common panelboard.

B Where the service panelboard is located within 1 occupancy and of adequate ampacity, calculated using 8-200(2) to supply both occupancies, the circuits shall be separated and a second panel, complete with a main breaker, shall be located in the other occupancy to supply the loads within that occupancy. (i) This second panel may be metered by an owner supplied revenue meter to indicate the electricity use of the second occupant. (ii) the rate for the electricity use shall not exceed the rate charge by the utility.

C Where the installed service is of insufficient capacity to supply the required load as calculated using 8-200(2), the upgraded service shall comply with point 2 A or 2 B.

It is our recommendation that all secondary suites should be supplied by a separately metered panel.

Michael Shea

Chief Electrical Inspector
Local Safety Manager
City of Victoria
mshea@victoria.ca