



BEFORE YOU BUILD...



COMMERCIAL COOKING AND VENTILATION – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is NFPA 96?

NFPA 96 is a standard that was created by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) to provide preventive and operative fire safety requirements intended to reduce the potential fire hazards of commercial cooking operations.

As per Article 6.2.2.7 of the National Building Code of Canada, NFPA 96 is required to provide guidance on the design, installation, operation, inspection and maintenance of commercial cooking ventilation equipment.

Dwelling units, including Alternative Family Care Homes, do not require ventilation in conformance to NFPA 96.

Why was the application process for commercial cooking systems updated?

The Saskatoon Fire Department and Building Standards Division created a committee in 2015 to evaluate current review and inspections issues associated with commercial cooking equipment and ventilation systems. The process was re-evaluated and the *Installation of Cooking and Ventilation Equipment* form was created.

The *Installation of Cooking and Ventilation Equipment* form requires a mechanical engineer to confirm the design of new and altered systems, along with their installation, meet the requirements of NFPA 96. The involvement of a design professional with expertise in these mechanical systems helps to ensure life safety requirements will be met.

When do I require a building and development permit application for commercial cooking equipment?

A building and development permit application is required for the following circumstances where cooking operations create smoke or grease laden vapours:

- New cooking equipment and ventilation systems in a new or existing building, or
- Alterations to an existing cooking equipment and ventilation systems that involve a new exhaust hood, makeup air unit or new cooking equipment that does not fit under the footprint of the existing exhaust hood.
- ***Note** – residential cook tops and ovens used in a commercial application shall conform to NFPA 96 and be addressed under this form.

Do I have to upgrade my existing system now?

The new procedure will only apply when existing systems are being altered. A building and development permit application is not required for changing equipment or altering equipment layout. Existing systems will be assessed by the Saskatoon Fire Department and

if they considered a fire hazard, a building and development permit application may be required at the discretion of the Saskatoon Fire Department.

When will the new application process be implemented?

The new NFPA 96 building and development permit application process will apply to permit applications submitted after January 1, 2018.

What important changes were made to the building and development permit application process for commercial ventilation equipment?

Building Standards requires *Installation of Cooking and Ventilation Equipment* form and sealed mechanical drawings to be submitted prior to building and development permit approval for all commercial cooking equipment ventilation systems that comply with NFPA 96.

The involvement of a design professional with expertise in mechanical systems helps to ensure life safety requirements are met and limit future issues that are often noted during the Saskatoon Fire Department annual fire inspection.

What documentation is required for a new building and development permit that includes an existing NFPA 96 ventilation system that was constructed without a permit?

A submitted letter that confirms the existing ventilation system has been designed and installed in conformance to NFPA 96 is required from a mechanical engineer licensed to practise in the province of Saskatchewan. If substantial modifications are required, the *Installation of Cooking and Ventilation Equipment* form, along with its referenced documentation, shall be completed and submitted for review.

Do I need to complete the form and submit signed and sealed mechanical drawings for the following scope of work?

If I am relocating a deep fryer, oven, range, etc. from its current position?

No, provided the appliance is still located under the existing exhaust hood.

If I am replacing my existing deep fryer and installing a new larger deep fryer?

Yes. The existing system may not have been designed to adequately ventilate the larger equipment.

Note: If a letter from a mechanical engineer is provided that states that mechanical upgrades are not required to properly ventilate the new equipment, mechanical drawings will not be required for review.

If I am installing a pizza oven?

No, provided the oven is not being used in processes that create grease laden vapours. If the pizza oven is only being used to bake pizza dough and reheat previously cooked or cured meat, an NFPA 96 system is not required.

**The above examples are used for a guide only. Additional requirements such as steam and heat removal may be required by the equipment manufacturer.*

Do all cooking operations require NFPA 96 ventilation systems?

No, only cooking operations that produce smoke or grease laden vapours are required to comply with NFPA 96. Operations that may not require an NFPA 96 system include:

- Reheating of previously prepared food (soup, stews, etc.)
- Boiling water (pasta, rice, etc.),
- Melting Chocolate,
- Self-contained cooking systems, or
- Portable appliances used on a temporary basis, that are not hardwired or connected directly to the building services, such as panini grills, slow cookers, toaster ovens, hot plates, etc.
- directly to the building services, such as slow cookers, toaster ovens, hot plates, etc.
- Written confirmation from a mechanical engineer which confirms the equipment and its specified use to do not create smoke or grease laden vapours.
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* Residential cook tops used in a commercial application shall conform to NFPA 96.

Will the new procedure increase the turnaround time of a building and development permit application?

If all the documentation required by the *Commercial Cooking Equipment Ventilation* form is submitted at the time of application there will be no additional time required for the review by Building Standards Division.

What documentation is required for a new building and development permit that includes an existing NFPA 96 ventilation system that was constructed without a permit?

A submitted letter that confirms the existing ventilation system has been designed and installed in conformance to NFPA 96 is required from a mechanical engineer licenced to practice in the province of Saskatchewan. If substantial modifications are required, the *Installation of Cooking and Ventilation Equipment* form, along with its referenced documentation, shall be completed and submitted for review.

How is the installed system inspected?

The mechanical engineer shall provide a *Letter of Assurance* which confirms the system has been installed in conformance to their design and to NFPA 96.

The City of Saskatoon building inspectors will perform an audit of the system during one of their scheduled site visits.