Office *of the* Fire Commissioner

Codes and Standards

Frequently Asked Questions about the Manitoba Energy Code for Buildings (MECB)

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1. **What is the purpose of the Manitoba Energy Code for Buildings (MECB)?** The purpose of the MECB is to reduce building energy use. Building energy use accounts for about 40% of the production of greenhouse gases. The MECB is estimated to make buildings about 25% more energy efficient.

2. **When did the MECB become law?** The MECB became effective December 1, 2014, and supplements the Manitoba Building Code 2011 (MBC).

3. **What is the difference between the National Energy Code of Canada for Buildings 2011 (NECB) and the Manitoba Energy Code for Buildings (MECB)?** The MECB is the same documents as the NECB with the exception of a few amendments. These Manitoba amendments can be found at: http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/current/_pdf-regs.php?reg=213/2013
The MECB is also sometimes referred to as the MECB 2011, in reference to its development in 2011, and to distinguish it from any potential future MECB editions (Ex: MECB 2016).

4. **What buildings does the MECB apply to?** Any new buildings and new additions that are referred to as "Part 3 Buildings" under the MBC. Part 3 Buildings are generally larger buildings (greater than 600 square meters of floor area).

5. **What about small buildings such as houses?** The new MBC Section 9.36 "Energy Efficiency" will apply to Part 9 buildings starting April 1, 2016. "Part 9 Buildings" under the MBC, applies to smaller buildings, including houses. The MECB may apply to some of the larger Part 9 buildings under Section 9.36. We recommend that you check with your local building code authority, or contact the Office of the Fire Commissioner Codes and Standards section to confirm.

6. **Does an existing building with a new addition need to comply with the MECB?** The design professional could make the existing building and new addition comply together with the MECB, or just make the new addition comply with the MECB, provided there are no heating and cooling system crossovers from the existing building into the new addition. These decisions should be made in consultation with the local building code authority.

7. **How does the MECB reduce building energy use?** By increasing the wall, roofing and floor insulation; improving lighting and heating efficiency; and by reducing electricity waste by using proven building construction methods. It does not speak to green initiatives such as recycling construction materials, water conservation or using renewable power sources.

8. **Will building construction costs increase?** It is expected that constructions costs will increase and annual operating energy costs will decrease; exact figures will vary from project to project.

9. **Is there any flexibility in the MECB?** The MECB does prescribe specific building solutions. However, various construction, material and building systems can be used so long as overall building energy consumption is not increased.

10. **What design professional will be responsible for the MECB?** A single design professional (registered architect or engineer) will be responsible for insuring overall compliance with the MECB, but design input will be required from the architect, mechanical engineer and electrical engineer.

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