



Why we did this investigation

Through the City's Fraud and Waste Hotline (FWHL), the Office of the Auditor General (OAG or Office) received allegations in relation to the issuance of building and occupancy permits under the [Ontario Building Code](#). Our Office undertook an investigation to assess the concerns raised in the FWHL reports and to determine whether the allegations had any merit.

What we found

The work performed highlighted the need to improve processes and documentation within Building Code Services to consistently demonstrate the due diligence undertaken to support the issuance of a building permit and an occupancy permit.

Evidence assessed demonstrated that some Building Code Services review and inspection activities were being undertaken; however, the documentation available did not allow the OAG to conclude that all due diligence activities were completed before the permits were issued.

In some cases, evidence could not be provided to demonstrate how previously identified deficiencies were resolved before the issuance of an occupancy or final occupancy permit. In other cases, we found that no overall occupancy permit was issued and evidence on file only covered partial permits for specific floors/areas.

Similarly for permit applications, we noted examples whereby evidence could not be provided to demonstrate how previously identified deficiencies were resolved prior to issuing the building permit.

We made five recommendations to ensure that:

- There is proactive and timely monitoring of open inspection files for evidence of inspection activities and results;
- There are enhanced operating protocols with defined guidance on how to review files, document results and resolve/track deficiencies;
- A risk-based quality assurance program is established to review the completeness of building permit and inspection files at key stages of the process;
- A prioritization scale for identified deficiencies is developed such that critical/high risk items are addressed before a permit is issued; and
- A formal program is established to follow-up on the status and close, as applicable, dormant building application files.

For more details on this report please visit our [website](#).

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