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| Reducing red tape for wood-building construction January 24, 2020 [Media inquiries](#media-contacts)  Alberta will now allow wood-building construction for up to 12 storeys.  Municipal Affairs Minister Kaycee Madu announced the change Friday, as part of Red Tape Reduction Awareness Week.  While other jurisdictions in Canada, like British Columbia, currently allow for 12-storey wood construction, Alberta will become the first province in Canada to allow the practice province-wide.  “Not only will this decision support the forestry industry and land developers, it will provide affordability to homebuyers, bolster employment, and give Alberta a competitive advantage. We made this change knowing that mass timber products are safe and that these buildings will meet all necessary standards.”  Kaycee Madu, Minister of Municipal Affairs  Current Alberta and national building codes allow wood-building construction for up to six storeys, but the next edition of the National Building Code – anticipated for publication at the end of 2020 – will allow for the use of tall wood construction with fire-resistant material for up to 12 storeys.  Alberta will issue a notice – based on technical provisions developed for the next edition of the National Building Code – to allow early use of tall wood or mass timber construction for up to 12 storeys using fire-resistant material in time for the upcoming construction season.  “We commend the Government of Alberta for advancing the use of wood-building construction of up to 12 storeys with this province-wide variance. By building with products that are made locally, we are supporting thousands of jobs in small communities and large cities throughout the province. From people working in sawmills, to value-add facilities, to jobs in construction and transportation, everyone benefits from this change. Moreover, because wood is fully renewable and has a low carbon footprint, our environment benefits, too.”  Paul Whittaker, Alberta Forest Products Association President New technology makes taller wood construction feasible Advancements in fire-protection and wood-product technology are allowing for the construction of taller wood buildings without compromising safety.  The building codes will require tall wood buildings to be built as encapsulated mass timber construction, where the solid or engineered wood has been surrounded by fire-resistive material. Buildings of mass timber construction will also be fully sprinklered.  “BILD Alberta is excited to see the Government of Alberta take steps to modernize construction, reduce red tape and address environmental needs by allowing innovative techniques to deliver the homes and buildings people need. This provides our industry and member companies with more options in meeting the housing affordability needs of Albertans.”  Patrick Shaver, chair, BILD Alberta Chair and president of Avillia Developments Quick facts  * Wood buildings taller than six storeys have been built in Vancouver (University of British Columbia’s 18-storey Brock Commons), Europe, the United States, and other jurisdictions around the world. * Mass or laminated timber has excellent durability and seismic, fire, and acoustic safety performance. * The encapsulated mass-timber construction component of the 2020 National Building Code has already been reviewed by the National Building Code committees and fire-safety specialists, structural engineers, architects, scientists, and builders.  Economic impact of tall wood buildings  * Potential to create about 60 jobs per construction site and up to 400 jobs per new sawmill and production sites. * A growth in demand for lumber, for example, 100-million board feet, about $40-million worth of lumber, is the equivalent to about two mills the size of Boucher Bros Lumber.  Red Tape Reduction Awareness Week Alberta has [declared Jan. 20-24 Red Tape Reduction Awareness Week](https://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=67448A73329AB-B74C-0527-5C70E0337660F045). This coincides with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business’s own Red Tape Awareness Week, which aims to raise awareness of the costs of regulatory burdens to businesses across Canada. This year, the CFIB gave Alberta B-minus for its efforts to cut red tape, the highest grade the province has ever achieved. Quick facts  * To date, [CutRedTape.Alberta.ca](http://cutredtape.alberta.ca/) has received more than 4,500 submissions. * Ministries are currently taking inventory and analyzing the regulatory burden imposed on Albertans and businesses, modernizing regulation requirements, processes, forms and policies, and eliminating those that are unnecessary. * The Canadian Federation of Independent Business estimates that in 2017, the cost for businesses in Alberta to comply with regulations was about $4.4 billion.    Media inquiries[Tim Gerwing](mailto:Timothy.Gerwing@gov.ab.ca)  780-427-3744 Press Secretary, Municipal Affairs |
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