



# southburlington

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V E R M O N T

## Heating and Service Water Heating Systems in New Buildings Frequently Asked Questions

The City Council adopted “An Ordinance Relating to Building and Building Construction: Regulation of Heating and Service Water Heating in New Buildings” on November 7, 2022. The following FAQs have been prepared and will be updated as needed.

### General Questions:

#### **Where can I find the Ordinance?**

The [Heating and Service Water Heating Ordinance](#) is posted on the City’s website, under Existing Ordinances.

#### **What does the Ordinance require?**

The Ordinance requires a *renewable primary heating system* and *renewable service water heating system*, as defined in the Ordinance, for all new buildings.

#### **What is the effective date of the Ordinance?**

The Ordinance applies to all new buildings for which a complete construction permit is submitted to the Fire Marshal’s office (or, for new owner-occupied single-family homes, submission of a complete zoning permit to the Zoning Administrative Officer) on or after February 15, 2023.

For service water heating systems only (aka. domestic hot water system), the Ordinance also contains a two-year waiver period for new multi-family residential and commercial/industrial buildings. Where a builder certifies that the new building applied for between February 15, 2023 and February 14, 2025 qualifies for the waiver, the requirement for a renewable service water system does not apply.

#### **What is the certification process?**

Prior to occupancy of a new building, and where applicable, issuance of a certificate of occupancy by the Fire Marshal or Zoning Administrator, the applicant shall submit a completed self-certification of the heating system and service water heating system. The [self-certification form](#) can be obtained through either office.

#### **Is a waiver available?**

A waiver is available where the applicant demonstrates that the renewable primary heating system or renewable service water heating system is uneconomical pursuant to the methodology presented in the Ordinance.

For service water heating systems only, the Ordinance also contains a two-year waiver period for new multi-family, mixed-use multi-family, and commercial/industrial buildings. For applications submitted between February 15, 2023 and February 14, 2025, the requirement for a renewable

service water system does not apply to any new building the developer certifies as meeting the definition of a new multi-family, mixed-use multi-family, or commercial/industrial building.

**If a service water waiver is granted under this two-year period, do I have to bring the system(s) into compliance with the ordinance after February 14, 2025?**

You do not. The waiver is in effect until the service water system is no longer serviceable or is otherwise replaced.

**How do I reach the Fire Marshal's Office?**

The Fire Marshal can be reached at (802) 846-4134 or [tfrancis@southburlingtonvt.gov](mailto:tfrancis@southburlingtonvt.gov)

**How to I reach the Planning & Zoning Department?**

The Planning & Zoning Department can be reached at (802) 846-4106 or [planning@southburlingtonvt.gov](mailto:planning@southburlingtonvt.gov)

**System-Specific Questions:**

**Is a dual-fuel / hybrid heating or service water system, with electric heat pump(s) and combustion-fired furnace allowable?**

Yes.

The primary heating system must be designed and programmed to meet at least 85% of the building's design heat load. A secondary system that relies on fuels or technology not otherwise allowable for a primary heating system, is permissible, may be designed and programmed to operate for the supplemental 15% of the building's design heat load. The secondary system may be an integrated hybrid system or separate system.

Where a hybrid system, or separate secondary system is installed, the installer must clearly indicate following on the form provided:

- The building's design heat load
- 85% of the building's design heat load
- The estimated outside air temperature that represents the building operating at 85% of the design heat load.

Systems designed to automatically switch from a primary to a secondary heating system must be set for the primary heating system to be in operation up to at least the identified 85% threshold.