

I am installing kitchen cabinets in my home. What does the Alberta Building Code require for clearances to the range?

Fires from cooking are a common occurrence. To reduce the risk of the fire spreading from the cooking surface and to allow time to extinguish the fire there are minimum clearances required from combustible materials. Note that these are minimum requirements for standard residential stoves. If you are installing a large or commercial type range in your home then you should check the manufacturer's clearances as they may be greater.

The minimum clearance required directly above the stove is 750 mm (approx 30") to combustibles. This clearance can be reduced to 600 mm or (approx 24") when the finish is non-combustible or protected as described in clause 9.10.2.1(2)(b), below. The clearances on the sides of the range to combustibles must be a minimum of 450 mm (18") above the level of the heating element. The horizontal clearance to combustibles must also be 450 mm (18"). Combustible material could include for example: cabinets, drop valances, appliance garages, breadbox, cabinet dividers etc.

Appliances such as microwave ovens intended to be installed above the range need to be certified for use in Canada by a recognized certification agency. The manufacturer's instructions should be checked, as clearances may vary depending on the model and manufacturer.

Some gas ranges may require increased clearances from the Alberta Building Code minimum. Please consult the appliance manufacturer's installation instructions to determine if increased clearances are required. Additionally a gas permit may also be required if changes to the gas piping system are made.

The 1997 Alberta Building Code (ABC) states the following:

9.10.21.2. Vertical Clearances

(See A-9.10.21. in Appendix A.)

- 1)** *Except as provided in Sentence (2), framing, finishes and cabinetry installed directly above the location of the range shall be not less than 750 mm above the level of range burners or elements.*
- 2)** *The vertical clearance described in Sentence (1) for framing, finishes and cabinets located directly above the location of the range may be reduced to 600 mm above the level of the elements or burners provided the framing, finishes and cabinets*
 - a)** *are noncombustible, or*
 - b)** *are protected by*
 - i)** *asbestos millboard not less than 6 mm thick, covered with sheet metal not less than 0.33 mm thick, or*
 - ii)** *a metal hood with a 125 mm projection beyond the framing, finishes and cabinets.*

9.10.21.3. Horizontal Clearances

(See A-9.10.21. in Appendix A.)

- 1)** *Except as provided in Sentences (2) and (3), combustible wall framing, finishes or cabinets within 450 mm of the area where the range is to be located shall be protected above the level of the heating elements by material providing fire resistance not less than that of a 9.5 mm thickness of gypsum board.*
- 2)** *Counter-top splash boards or back plates that extend above the level of heating elements need not be protected as described in Sentence (1).*
- 3)** *Except for cabinetry described in Article 9.10.21.2., cabinetry located not less than 450 mm above the level of the heating elements need not be protected as described in Sentence (1).*

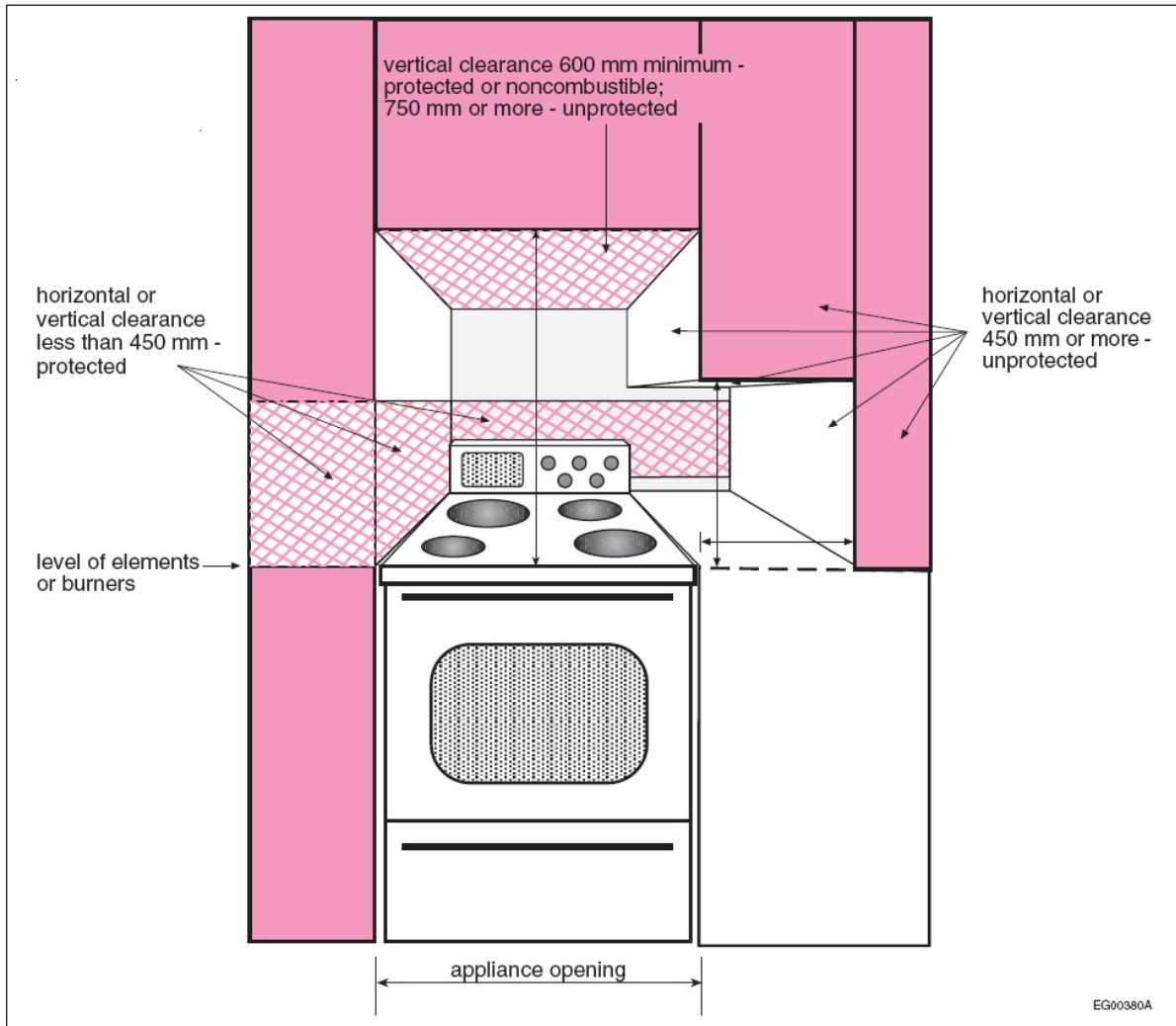


Figure A-9.10.22.
Clearances from ranges to walls and cabinetry

When you have safety-related questions, please contact either your local municipal safety codes officer, or the Safety Services Branch. Safety Services can be contacted by:

Telephone: 1-866-421-6929
 Email: safety.services@gov.ab.ca, or
 On our website at: ["Ask the Expert"](#)