

THE IMPORTANCE OF OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATES

What is an Occupational Certificate?

A certificate of occupancy is issued by the Municipality for every building that is built prior to it being occupied. They are required for free-hold properties, including those which have been altered or extended. This is a requirement of the National Building Regulations (NBR) and the Building Standards Act. This certificate shows that all municipal requirements have been met.

How do I get it?

When you renovate or plan to build a brand-new home, the first step is to have a building plan prepared. This building plan has to be approved by your municipality. Once all your building work has been completed you and the contractor or builder may apply for a certificate of occupancy to be issued by your Municipality.

Usually within 14 days of the request, this certificate will be issued provided that the work done was in compliance with the approved plans and that all the relevant certificates have been submitted. The following certificates might be requested:

- Electrical compliance
- Structural system compliance
- Fire and protection system compliance
- Fire installation compliance
- Energy efficiency compliance
- Mechanical ventilation system compliance
- Drain

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- Municipal services cannot be connected without proof of occupational certificates
- Mortgage bonds are only granted and authorised once confirmation is available that the buildings they are taking up as security are legally and factually sound.
- The safety of occupants, be it owners or tenants, are ensured through the issuing of certificates to confirm compliance with building legislation and standards.
- Insurance coverage cannot take place for damage to a building, or to a member of the public, or house occupants, regard less of whether a fault lies with a builder, electrician, engineer or architect.
- It is an offence for an owner of a building to occupy, use or permit occupation or use of such building unless a certificate of occupancy has been issued.