

Design Guidelines for Smudging Rooms in Alberta Infrastructure Facilities

1. Purpose

This section is intended to provide practical guidance on the provision of facilities for Indigenous smudging practices for Alberta Infrastructure projects. To achieve a culturally appropriate and functional design, respectful consultation with Indigenous stakeholders is encouraged. This document is not a policy on operations and/or procedures for usage of such facilities.

2. Planning Requirements

- 2.1. All current regulatory building and fire codes, and the Technical Design Requirements (TDR), must be adhered to, and universal and barrier free design incorporated.
- 2.2. In keeping with the Guiding Principles outlined in TDR Section 3, spaces should be designed to be shareable, multi-functional, flexible, and adaptable.
- 2.3. The area used for smudging shall be shared with the allocated programmed space, with no additional space added to the program to accommodate a smudging room.
- 2.4. Equitable user access from a public area or common corridor should be prioritized.
- 2.5. Common amenities such as universal washrooms and kitchen facilities should be in convenient proximity, to share resources and assist in wayfinding and navigation.
- 2.6. The size should be appropriate to the maximum number of participants based on the meeting room sizes outlined in the TDR.
- 2.7. The room shape should be square or rectangular to allow a multi-functional, flexible, and adaptable space. If desired, a circular gathering can be achieved through creative application of non-permanent decorative elements or placement of non-fixed furnishings.

3. Interior Finishes and Materials

- 3.1. Finishes and furniture must be fire-resistant and in accordance with all applicable fire codes.
- 3.2. Materials that absorb smoke and odours, such as fabrics or other soft materials, should be avoided.
- 3.3. Interior finishes and materials should be neutral in colour.
- 3.4. Flooring
 - 3.4.1. Carpet should be avoided in environments where smudging takes place, as smoke odour can linger in the fibers. A smooth flooring material, such as resilient flooring, should be used.
- 3.5. Walls
 - 3.5.1. Wall finishes and other surfaces must be highly cleanable (such as a scrubbable paint).
 - 3.5.2. Vinyl graphic images are acceptable solutions for wallcoverings, however, must be approved for appropriateness prior to application, by Alberta Infrastructure Technical Services (Interior Design section).

3.6. Ceilings

- 3.6.1. The smoke from smudging can cause ceiling surfaces surrounding mechanical vents/grilles to discolour over time. For this reason, it is recommended that the ceiling colour be beige or grey. Consider the use of ceiling tile, as it can be easily replaced.

3.7. Doors

- 3.7.1. Doors must have gaskets or sweeps to seal any openings and prevent leakage of smoke or fumes from the room.

4. Furnishings, Fixtures and Equipment (FF&E)

- 4.1. Consider the provision of furniture or millwork to store smudging materials.
- 4.2. Provide storage for coats, shoes, and personal belongings if the program requirement includes outside visitors. It is best to avoid a coat hanging rod to avoid the continuous task to oversee the provision of coat hangers.

5. Signage

- 5.1. Where applicable, ensure signage aligns with the Government of Alberta Visual Identity Standards.
- 5.2. Consider using signage to inform that smudging will be occurring in the building. Examples of text: *'This is a smudging environment and smudging occurs regularly in this facility. All are welcome to participate as a matter of choice.'*

6. Acoustics

- 6.1. Interior partitions must have an ASTC rating of 45 (STC 50) or meet the ASTC rating for the room's primary usage, as identified in the TDR, whichever is higher.
- 6.2. Doors shall be solid wood or insulated metal.
- 6.3. If the room has a volume lower than 800 m³, the reverberation in the unoccupied room must not exceed RT 0.8 seconds, averaged over the frequency range of 500 Hz – 2,000 Hz. If the volume is larger than 800 m³, the reverberation in the unoccupied room must not exceed RT 1.2 seconds, averaged over the frequency range of 500 Hz – 2,000 Hz.
- 6.4. If ceiling tiles or acoustical wall panels are used, they should be a cleanroom-type product that does not have porous surfaces.
- 6.5. Design mechanical systems to provide a background noise level maximum RC-N 30. Select a low-noise exhaust fan option.

7. Mechanical

- 7.1. Provide dedicated exhaust and negative pressure relationship to the adjacent spaces to contain, capture and remove smoke.
- 7.2. At minimum provide 12 air changes per hour (ACH) of dedicated exhaust.
- 7.3. Provide control damper for isolating the return air from the smudging room during the ceremony.
- 7.4. Provide a manually operated switch with timer to activate the exhaust fan and close the control damper on the return side during the ceremony.

8. Electrical

- 8.1. Where the fire alarm system could be activated by smudging activities, consider providing by-pass switch(es) at the main fire alarm control panel for the affected devices/areas and having an acceptable alternate procedure in place that is coordinated with the AHJ. Activating by-pass switch(es) shall trigger a trouble on the fire alarm system until the by-pass is de-activated.