Guide to Finding Standards and Regulations

# Overview

Standards and regulations provide important information to help you ensure that your work is safe, reliable, efficient, and conforms to established practices.

Standards and regulations can be produced by bodies that might be organizations or different levels of government, so it can be challenging to identify the relevant standards for a project. It is often worthwhile to try searching in **multiple sources** to try to find the standards and regulations that you need, including different websites, databases, and using a search engine. If you know the standard or regulation you are looking for, you can search by its number or title. If you don’t know what standards or regulations exist on a topic, you can search with keywords.

Many standards are expensive and are behind paywalls, but some standards are publicly available or available to you through McMaster University Library subscriptions. Regulations are freely available.

# International Standards

Some tools for identifying international standards are listed. Many of the standards you will find using these tools are not freely available and are listed for purchase.

* [IEC WebStore](https://webstore.iec.ch/) (International Electrotechnical Commission)
* [IHS Markit Standards Store](https://global.ihs.com/)
* [ISO Standards](https://www.iso.org/standards.html) (International Organization for Standardization)
* [Techstreet Store](https://www.techstreet.com/pages/home)

# National Standards and Regulations

Relevant sources for identifying national standards and regulations in Canada include:

* [Canadian General Standards Board Catalogue](https://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/ongc-cgsb/publications/catalogue/index-eng.html)
* [Government of Canada Consolidated Regulations](https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/)
* [Standards Council of Canada](https://www.scc.ca/en/search/standardsdb)
* CSA Standards (see **Library standards collections** below)

# Provincial Standards and Regulations

Relevant sources for identifying provincial standards and regulations in Ontario include:

* [Ontario Regulations](https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulations)
* [Ontario e-Laws](https://www.ontario.ca/laws)

# Municipal Information

Depending on your project and geographic area of interest, you may want to identify relevant municipal policies and guidelines. You can search the relevant city or region’s website, or search for this information using a search engine.

# Library standards collections

The McMaster University Library provides digital access to standards from the following organizations:

* [ASCE](https://library.mcmaster.ca/databases/asce-journals-e-books-and-standards) (American Society of Civil Engineers)
* [ASTM](https://library.mcmaster.ca/databases/astm-standards-and-digital-engineering-library) (American Society for Testing and Materials)
* [CSA](https://library.mcmaster.ca/databases/csa-standards-csa-ondemand) (Canadian Standards Association)
* [IEEE](https://library.mcmaster.ca/databases/ieee-xplore) (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers)

For information about standards available in print in the library, see the [guide to finding standards](https://libguides.mcmaster.ca/standards).

# Search Engines

Search engines are a useful tool for identifying standards and regulations that are relevant to your project. Here are some tips for how to approach this:

* Use an Advanced Search tool (such as the [Google Advanced Search](https://www.google.ca/advanced_search)) to allow you to search more precisely.
* Try searching a variety of keywords that are relevant to your project.
* In addition to your keywords, add search terms such as **standard, regulation,** or **code**.
* Limit your search by site or domain, for example:
  + Search any website ending in .ca using **site:.ca** in a Google search.
  + Search the Government of Ontario website using **site:ontario.ca** in a Google search.

# Resources

For more general information about standards, see the following sources.

* Engineering and Information: Research Skills for Engineers. [Module 6 – Standards](https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/engineeringandinformationresearchskillsforengineers/chapter/standards/).
* Standards Council of Canada. [Types of Standards.](https://www.scc.ca/en/types-standards)