



CITY OF FOSTER CITY

Community Development Department | *Building Division*

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Special Inspection Guide

The purpose of the Special Inspection Agreement Form is to identify the structural systems and/or elements which require special inspection(s) per Chapter 17 of the California Building Code, the condition of use for the product specified by the manufacturer, and/or the registered design professional having responsible charge or control.

Before a permit can be issued

If special inspection and/or structural observation are required, the owner, engineer or architect of record acting as the owner's agent shall read and be familiar with this policy and complete one (1) copy of the Special Inspection, Structural Observation and Testing Agreement. The completed agreement shall become a part of the approved construction documents. A pre-construction meeting may be required prior to the permit being issued. A copy of this Special Inspection, Structural Observation and Testing Agreement will be attached to the approved plan set.

Approval of Special Inspector

Each special inspection agency, testing facility, and special inspector shall be recognized by the Building Official prior to performing any duties. Each special inspection agency must submit to the Building Official, a company profile including resumes of all employees, their certifications, and a list of the type of work for which recognition is requested. Special inspectors shall carry approved identification when performing the functions of a special inspector. Identification cards shall follow the criteria set by the California Council of Testing and Inspection Agencies. No personnel changes shall be made without first obtaining the approval of the Building Official. Any unauthorized personnel changes may result in a "Stop Work Order" and possible permit revocation.

Approved Fabricators

Each fabricator shall be approved by the Building Official. Qualifications of approved fabricators shall be in compliance with 1704.2.5.1 of the California Building Code, 2022 edition. The approved fabricator shall submit a Certificate of Compliance that the work was performed in accordance with the approved plans and specifications to the Building Official and the engineer or architect of record. Note: Fabricator approval may be revoked by the Building Official for just cause.

Structural Observation

The engineer or architect of record shall provide structural observation per Section 1704.6 of the California Building Code, when required by the Building Official or engineer or architect of record. This requirement and frequency of observation shall be put forth in the Statement of Structural Observation (SSO) prepared by the design professional or as determined by the Building Official prior to permit issuance.

In accordance with Section 110 and the structural observation requirements of Section 1704.6 of the California Building Code, the Building Official may require that the architect or engineer of record attend a preconstruction meeting prior to the commencement of work. When structural observation is required by the Building Official, the engineer or architect of record shall periodically perform visual observation on the project, as outlined in the SSO, for general conformance to the approved construction documents. The minimum observations are at foundation stage, at shearwalls /diaphragms stage, and at final framing stage. Additional observations may be required as the result of deficiencies or corrective actions or special circumstances as agreed upon in the pre-permit stage of the project. Any observed deficiencies or changes to the approved plans must be brought to the attention of the Building Official as soon as possible, and no more than three (3) working days or before subsequent inspections. This observation is in addition to other required special inspections and is not intended as a substitution of other required inspections. At the conclusion of work included in the permit, the structural observer shall submit to the building official a written statement that the site visits have been made and identify any reported deficiencies that, to the best of the structural observer's knowledge, have not been resolved.

Special Inspection and Testing: General

Special Inspection and Testing shall meet the minimum requirements of the California Building Code, Chapter 17. Duties and responsibilities of the Special Inspector and/or Architect or Engineer of Record – Limit of Authority: The Special Inspector and/or Architect or Engineer of record is NOT AUTHORIZED to do any of the following:

- i. To inspect or approve any work for which the building permit has not been issued.
- ii. Direct any work to commence before the Foster City Building Inspection Division has completed its inspection. Deviations from this procedure must be requested in writing from the Building Official. Exception: Prefabrication components per Section 1704 of the California Building Code.
- iii. To inspect or approve any work other than that for which they are specifically certified.
- iv. To approve alternative materials, structural changes, or revisions to plans without prior approval of the Building Official.

Contractor Responsibilities

1. **Quality control and Code Compliance:** The contractor is primarily responsible for quality of the work performed and compliance with code requirements.
2. **Inspector notification:** The contractor shall notify the special inspector at least 24 hours prior to performing any work that requires special inspection and shall provide sufficient lead time for the special inspector at the job site to review the construction documents and perform preparatory work.
3. **Provide access to plans:** The contractor is responsible for providing the special inspector access to the City **approved** plans and specifications at the job site.
4. **Retain special inspection records:** The contractor is also responsible for retaining at the job site all special inspection records submitted by the special inspector and providing these records for review by the Building Inspector upon request.
5. **Inspection and approval of work:** The contractor shall not perform any work that requires special inspection without the presence of the inspector(s) during the performance of that work. Work performed without special inspection is to be removed.
6. **Final Inspection:** The final inspection may not be scheduled until all reports documenting the special inspection work have been submitted and approved by the Building Official.
7. **Building Division Inspection Section Approval:** Approval of work by the special inspector does not relieve the contractor from obtaining Building Division Inspection Section approval for inspections required per Section 110 of the California Building Code.

Owner's Responsibilities

1. **Special Inspector Employment:** The owner or their agents shall employ a sufficient number of qualified special inspectors to ensure inspection without hindering the quality assurance of the work.
2. **Inspection Continuity:** It is recommended that the owner employs the same special inspection agencies throughout the job to ensure continuity. All substitutions of special inspection agencies must have prior approval of the Building Official.
3. **Final Report:** The owner or their agents are responsible for submittal of a final signed report before a final building inspection can be scheduled, per Section 1704 of the California Building Code.
4. **Preconstruction Meeting:** If required by the Building Official, the owner, contractor, architect, or engineer of record agrees to attend a preconstruction meeting with a representative of the Special Inspection Section(s) prior to permit issuance. The meeting is to be arranged and scheduled per mutual agreement by the contractor.

Architect or Engineer of Record Responsibilities

1. Identify all construction elements that require Special Inspection prior to permit issuance.
2. Provide a Statement of Special Inspection (SSI) outlining the required special inspections as required under

section 1704.3 of the 2022 CBC. Provide a Statement of Structural Observation (SSO) if required by the Architect or Engineer of Record.

Special Inspection Tasks

1. **Observing work:** The special Inspector shall observe the work assigned for conformance to the approved design drawings and specifications and the applicable workmanship provisions of the Code. Architect or Engineer reviewed shop drawings may be used only as an aid to inspection. All discrepancies shall be brought to the immediate attention of the contractor for correction, then, if uncorrected, to the proper design authority and to the Building Official. California Building Code Section 202 states that **Continuous Special Inspection** means that the special inspector is on site at all times observing the work requiring special inspection. California Building Code Section 202, **Periodic Special Inspection** means that some inspections may be made on a periodic basis and satisfy the requirements of continuous inspection, provided this periodic inspection schedule is performed as outlined in the project plans and specifications and approved by the Building Official.
2. **Reporting non-conforming items:** The special inspector, shall bring non-conformance items to the immediate attention of the contractor and note all such items in the daily report. If any item is not resolved in a timely manner or is about to be incorporated in the work, the special inspector shall immediately notify the Building Official by telephone or in person, and notify the engineer or architect of record. Any work performed by the contractor or subcontractors following notification by the special inspector is “at risk” and will require subsequent approval by the Building Official.
3. **Furnishing daily reports:** Each special inspector shall complete and sign the daily report form for each day’s inspection. These records are to remain at the job site with the contractor for review by the Building Official. Additionally, the special inspector shall complete a “Special Inspection Record” form each time the special inspector visits the job-site and conducts an inspection. This Special Inspection Record shall include information regarding: Inspection type, name of special inspector, identification number, date, notes, and arrival/departure times.
4. **Furnishing weekly reports (As needed on larger projects) :** The special inspector or inspection agency shall furnish a weekly report of tests and inspections directly to the Building Official, project engineer or architect, and others as designated. These reports include the following:
 - i. A description of daily inspections and tests made with applicable locations;
 - ii. A listing of all non-conforming items;
 - iii. A report of how non-conforming items were resolved or unresolved as applicable.
5. **Furnishing final report:** The special inspector or quality control firm shall submit a signed final report to the Building Official, pursuant to Section 1704. Items in conformance, unresolved items, or any discrepancies in inspection coverage (i.e. missed inspections, periodic inspections when continuous was required, etc.) shall be specifically itemized in this report. Any unresolved items must be approved by the Building Official. The report must be signed and stamped by appropriate professional(s), licensed by the State of California. **Final inspection of the structure will not be scheduled until the final report has been reviewed and approved by the Building Official.**