

The department is receiving an increasing number of building permit applications for structures which have already been constructed. The permits issued for such structures are based upon approved as-built plans. The inspector signing off as-built plans is being asked to verify that the structure has been constructed in accordance with the approved plans. However, the inspector has not been able to observe the structure during the various stages of construction. This situation can be a difficult one for the inspector as well as the applicant. The procedures to be followed when inspections of such structures are performed as described below.

Responsibilities of the Permit Holder

There is a legitimate public expectation that when we issue a permit authorizing construction today, that the work authorized will comply with the codes and ordinances in effect today. Therefore, we review the plans as if you were applying to do the work today. The existing work is the structure as it existed before the work which was done without a permit, not the structure as it exists today.

Plans must be legible, drawn to recognized architectural standards, and contain the information necessary in order to be reviewed by the applicable review agencies. Plans must include all items which are applicable to the project on the Department checklists for residential or commercial structures. Plans not meeting these requirements will not be accepted.

If the new work includes a foundation or other structural element with embedded reinforcing steel, include written verification from a testing agency that the reinforcing steel has been installed according to the plans. This is required prior to approval of the building permit application. The testing agency shall be qualified to perform such analysis. Ultrasonic, non-destructive testing is typically used for this testing.

The following procedures must be followed, if applicable to the permitted work. Items to be exposed should be exposed prior to calling for inspection.

1. Take the necessary measures to verify the location of property lines so that the setbacks shown on the plans can be verified. When the setbacks are in question, a survey by a licensed surveyor will be required if the location of the property lines cannot be definitely verified.
2. If the new work includes a foundation, expose a portion of the foundation so that the size and depth can be determined.
3. Make the means of attachment of the structure to the foundation accessible for inspection. When the means of attachment are visible in a crawl space, an access opening must be within 20 feet of the means of attachment, and an access path a minimum of 18 inches in height and width must be available to the inspector. In slab construction the wall coverings must be removed to show the means of attachment.
4. Anchor bolts must comply with the presently adopted code, and their correct installation must be verified by the Building Inspector. Note: The installation instructions on listed epoxy systems for retrofitting hold downs typically require special inspection, which will be required by the department.



5. Make the components of the electrical system visible by removing cover plates from receptacles, fixtures, sub panels, and services. Pull receptacles and switches out of all boxes.
6. Remove wall coverings from plate to plate in stud bays containing electrical service boxes and subpanels.
7. Remove exterior or interior wall coverings so that all unconventional connections (beam saddles, hold downs, straps, all-thread, etc.) are visible for inspection.
8. If there is a bathroom, remove the wall coverings so that the all supply and waste fittings in one bathroom are visible.
9. If there is a kitchen, remove the wall coverings so that the all supply and waste fittings in the kitchen are visible.
10. If there is a loop vent in the kitchen, remove material so that it is visible.
11. In all cases, at least 25% of the interior wall coverings must be removed, in areas of connections between building elements.
12. **Engineered shear nailing and shear nailing at required braced wall panels must be inspected, as follows:**
 - Trim or other coverings must be removed to accomplish this requirement if necessary.
 - When shear nailing is covered with Portland cement plaster (stucco), a testing agency qualified to perform such analysis or a licensed engineer other than the project engineer must observe the removal of a minimum of a 4 ft. by 8 ft. section of the exterior stucco, and verify that the shear nailing meets the requirements of the building code and the approved plans. The area removed must show a minimum of 4 ft. of edge nailing of two vertical adjacent pieces of shear plywood, and if applicable to the structure, must show a minimum of 4 ft. of the connection between first and second floors. The testing agency or engineer must verify in writing that the shear plywood when first exposed met the requirements of the building code and the approved plans.
 - When shear nailing is covered with wood siding, a testing agency qualified to perform such analysis, or a licensed engineer other than the project engineer must observe the removal of a minimum of a 4 ft. by 8 ft. section of the wood siding, and verify that the shear nailing meets the requirements of the building code and the approved plans. The area removed must show a minimum of 4 ft. of edge nailing of two vertical adjacent pieces of shear plywood, and if applicable to the structure, must show a minimum of 4 ft. of the connection between first and second floors. The testing agency or engineer must verify in writing that the shear plywood when first exposed met the requirements of the building code and the approved plans.
 - When shear nailing is covered by roofing materials, a testing agency qualified to perform such analysis or a licensed engineer other than the project engineer must observe the removal of a minimum of a 4 ft. by 8 ft. section of the wood siding, and verify that the shear nailing meets the requirements of the building code and the approved plans. The area removed must show a minimum of 4 ft. of edge nailing of two adjacent pieces of shear plywood, the testing agency or engineer must verify in writing that the shear plywood when first exposed met the requirements of the building code and the approved plans. NOTE: If the nailing on the shear exposed does not meet the requirements of the building code and the approved plans, corrective measures must be taken to make the shear plywood comply.



- Make the components of the mechanical system visible by removing cover plates, access panels, and as otherwise required by the inspector. Provide a gas pressure test on all new gas lines.
- Make the components of the plumbing system visible by removing cover plates, access panels, and as otherwise required by the inspector.
- Remove any other wall coverings which the inspector deems necessary to inspect the structure.
- Pictures of the work will NOT be accepted in lieu of the inspection procedures described above.

Letters of Conformance, In Lieu of:

Letters from the project architect or engineer may be accepted in lieu of one or more of the above requirements, provided that the letter states unequivocally that the installation of the item in question complies with the approved plans and specifications, and with the applicable codes. The final determination of acceptance of such letters will be made by the Building Official.

In addition, the inspector may require that an engineer licensed by the state of California:

Provide written verification by an electrical engineer licensed by the State of California that the electrical system meets present code.

Provide written verification by a mechanical engineer licensed by the State of California that the mechanical system meets present code.

Provide written verification by a mechanical engineer licensed by the State of California that the plumbing system meets present code.

Provide written verification by an engineer licensed by the State of California that the building is structurally sound. Inspection procedures are found in the administrative provisions of the codes and are not appealable to the Building Board of Appeals. Decisions of the Building Official relative to these procedures can be appealed to the Planning Director, whose decision is final.

Responsibilities of the Inspector

1. Verify the setbacks shown on the plans
2. Verify that the foundation is constructed correctly, including:
 - a. Size of Foundation
 - b. Depth below finished grade
 - c. Amount and placement of reinforcing steel
 - d. Other factors when specified in the approved plan
3. Verify the attachment of the structure to the foundation, including:
 - a. Anchor bolts



b. Hold-downs

4. Verify the structural integrity of the structure, including:

- a. Cripple walls
- b. Shear wall construction and nailing
- c. Connections of structural elements
- d. Other structural elements as specified in the approved plans

Verify that the electrical system is installed according to the approved plans and the presently adopted code.

Verify that the plumbing systems are installed according to the approved plans and the presently adopted code.

Verify that the mechanical systems are installed according to the approved plans and the presently adopted code.

Verify that the California Energy Efficiency Standards have been followed according to the approved plans and currently adopted standards.

Verify that the California Accessibility Standards have been followed according to the approved plans and currently adopted standards.

