

Southampton County Department of Community Development
Third-party Inspector Policy

Revision date August 3, 2011

This documents null and voids all previously dated policies and guidelines for Third-party Inspections

Third-party Inspection Guidelines



Policy and Guidelines for the Southampton County Third-party Inspection Agencies / Inspectors Under the 2009 Uniform Statewide Building Code of Virginia

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When Applicable

Under circumstances where the Southampton County Department of Community Development through the Building Official or his delegated Technical Assistant(s) is unable to make the inspection or test required by the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC) Section 113.3 or 113.4 within two working days of a request or an agreed upon date or if approved and authorized for exceptional and extraordinary circumstances demonstrated in a written, signed, and notarized affidavit the need to circumvent the previous stated two working day standard of this written policy, or the building official determines a qualified Registered Design Professional is required to make a specific inspection, the building official will accept reports from approved third-party inspectors or inspection agencies for review.

The affidavit should be submitted to the Building Official for consideration with the application for the Building Permit and Plans Review. The property owner must sign or co-sign the Affidavit. If due to circumstances outside the control of the affiant the affidavit and qualifications must be submitted after the construction permit has been issued the Building Official will consider the qualification and investigate the competency and reliability of the Third-party Inspector within 10 working days and provide written answer to the request.

The property owner shall be responsible for all of the fees and cost related to the activity of the Third-party Inspections services. All Written Inspection Reports (WIR) must be submitted to the owner and the owner is to assure the Written Inspection Reports (WIR) is forwarded to the Building Official. The original copies of the Written Inspection Reports (WIR) must be signed by the owner before they are submitted to the Building Official for filing.

Qualifications

In determining third-party inspector qualifications, the building official may consider such items as DHCD inspector certification, other state or national certifications, state professional registrations, related experience, education and any other factors that would demonstrate competency and reliability to conduct inspections. (Sec 113.7.2) The qualifications, certification(s), registration(s), experience(s), education and other factors demonstrating competency and reliability must be in writing or certified copies and accompany the above mentioned affidavit.

The two prong elements of competency and reliability will be considered separately in determining the third-party inspector's qualifications. The element of competency must be demonstrated through certification(s), registration(s), experience(s), education and other industry related factors. To assure transparency in the reliability element, it must be demonstrated through a clear separation of business, financial, family and personal relationship(s) of all of the parties involved in the construction – inspections process. In example the Third-party Inspector or Agency should be able to demonstrate or affirm that they have no other family, personal, financial or business relationship with the owner, business, contractor or party whose work is being inspected other than the duties of Third-party Inspections, or Registered Design Professional.

Approval and Authorization

Approval and authorization for the Third-party Inspection will be in writing from the Building Official or his delegated Technical Assistant(s). Each authorization will be for a specific inspection or series of inspections for a specific job site and period time indicated in the authorization. The authorization may

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Inspection Reports

Each Written Inspection Report (WIR) must be received by the Building Official within two working days of the inspection. An email may be sent with a copy of the WIR attached to meet this requirement. However all of the original WIR must be delivered to the Building Official to be filed with the Department of Community Development construction file for the job before the final inspection will be approved and or the Certificate of Occupancy issued for the job.

Written Inspection Reports of inspections conducted by approved third-party inspectors or agencies shall be in writing, shall indicate if compliance with the applicable provisions of the USBC (list the Code Section) have been met and shall be certified by the individual inspector or by the responsible officer when the WIR is from an agency. The date and time of the inspection, inspector name, weather and temperature, and all other persons or companies on the job site must be included in the report. All additional information, photographs, videotapes or other sources of pertinent data or information required in the authorization must accompany the inspection report.

Responsibility of Meeting the USBC

Each WIR will be reviewed and approved or rejected (with cause in writing) by the Building Official within two working days of the receipt of the report. The contractor, owner or party employing the Third-party Inspector may continue work on the authorization of the Third-party inspector with the understanding the contractor, owner or party employing the Third-party Inspector will be responsible for bring the work inspected by the Third-party Inspector into compliance with the Uniform Statewide Building Code of Virginia should the WIR be rejected with cause by the Building Official.

Should there be cause for the rejection of a WIR, work shall not continue or be covered until further inspections and / or test are complete and the ensuing WIR has been approved by the Building Official.

Building Official Inspections

The approval and authorization of a Third-party Inspector does not infringe on the rights of entry and inspections of the Building Official or his delegated Technical Assistants as provided under Section 36-105 of the Code of Virginia or Section 113.1 of the USBC.



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Building Official