



Construction Inspections Frequently Asked Questions

Q. *When do I call for an inspection?*

A. **All Inspections:** Work must be complete, pre-tested and ready. If a plan review letter was generated, all items listed on the letter must be resolved before calling for an inspection. A copy of the approved plans and a copy of the plan review letter must be at the job site at the time of inspection.

Fire Alarm: Before calling for an inspection the electrical permit must be signed off by the Tacoma Power Electrical Inspector and the system must be pre-tested. This includes all auxiliary equipment and the fire alarm controls. All carpeting, ceiling tile, drywall and doors must be in place to conduct alarm audibility tests.

Underground Cover: Underground pipe inspection must occur prior to covering. All tie rodding, etc. must be complete and coated with bituminous or other acceptable corrosion retarding material. Inspection of thrust blocks may occur during or after pouring. Depth and width of the block must be exposed for measurement. See the Tacoma Fire Department Web Site Informational Section titled [Installing Underground Fire Mains](#) for more information.

Underground Hydro: Underground may be covered if cover inspection has occurred, however, pressure drops must be within allowable limits. Hydro must occur prior to connection with the building or the City. If testing against City check valves, a "frying pan" must be installed.

Underground Flush: Inspection must occur prior to connecting with the building system.

Sprinkler Cover: You must call for cover inspections prior to installation of drywall or tiles that would interfere with visual access.

Q. *Whom do I call to request an inspection?*

A. Inspection requests are made by calling 253.594.7009 or 253.591.5503. All systems which require a functional test must be pre-tested prior to the inspection appointment.

Q. *What information do I give when I call to request an inspection?*

A. Your name, your company, your phone number, the inspection address, the type of inspection and the permit number.

Q. *What does a Construction Inspection cost?*

A. Please review the Inspection Fee Rates for more details.

Q. *How soon after I call can I expect my inspection?*

A. Short time delays of two or more days may occur, due to the availability of inspectors. Overtime inspections, available for a fee, may be requested and will be filled as inspectors are available. Careful adherence to the procedures outlined in this bulletin will reduce the likelihood of a delay.

- Q.** *Must I be present when the Inspector comes and do I need approved plans on site?*
A. A representative capable of performing the required tests, capable of providing access to inspection areas, must be present. This person must have a copy of the approved plans and the permit.
- Q.** *If I need to speak to my Inspector when can he/she be reached?*
A. If you know which inspector conducted your inspection you may call them directly. If you are rescheduling an inspection please call the Inspection Request number @ 253.594.7009 or 591.5503.
- Q.** *What do I do if I have a code related question during the day when an Inspector is not available?*
A. The Deputy Fire Marshal of Inspection, or a Fire Protection Engineer, is available during the day to answer specific questions related to the Fire Code. They may be contacted at 253.594.7009 or 253.591.5503. Note: It is acceptable to call Plan Review Engineers with Fire Code-related questions, but please do not call them regarding field inspection problems.
- Q.** *What will happen if my system fails to pass Inspection?*
A. All systems must be pre-tested to prove they work correctly before Permit Inspectors perform their inspection. If a system fails to pass the original inspection, a fee will be invoiced for all subsequent re-inspections. Invoiced fees are \$170.00 and reflect travel time for Inspectors (two hours minimum).
- Q.** *What do I do if don't understand the required corrections?*
A. You may contact your assigned inspector directly or the Deputy Fire Marshal of Inspection 253.594.7009, for any explanation or clarification which may be necessary.
- Q.** *When can I occupy or use my structure?*
A. Occupancy and use of the structure is permitted only after approval of the Building and Land Use Inspector approves occupancy. You are in violation if you occupy the premises prior to obtaining this approval. The Fire Department considers occupancy to occur when non-construction employees or people begin working in or using the structure and it also occurs when nonpermanent mounted stock or furnishings are moved into the building. The final approval for occupancy for the building will be given when the fire protection systems are approved and inspected and the exit ways are completed.
- Q.** *If I contract with a builder for the construction who is responsible to call for Inspections and final Occupancy Approval?*
A. The legal owner is responsible to call for inspections and approvals. If you want your builder to assume this responsibility, this should be specified within your contract, but you should check your permit and make sure final approval to occupy has been given prior to moving into the building. Normally, the installing company schedules the inspection appointment for their installation.
- Q.** *When can I request approval to occupy my building?*
A. When the fire protection systems are approved and inspected and the exit ways are completed.