

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY



Building Department
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Northampton County Policy - Third Party Inspections

This policy shall govern the use of third party inspection services within Northampton County. This policy shall become effective on 1/1/2000.

The USBC provides the Building Official with discretionary authority in the use of third party inspectors. (USBC 113.7). Third party inspectors wishing to perform inspections within the Northampton County shall be approved by the Building Official prior to performing inspections. Inspections performed by non-approved inspectors will not be accepted by the Building Official. The Building Official will approve only individual inspectors, will not approve inspection firms.

Third Party inspectors seeking approval to perform third party inspections shall:

- ? Complete an application provided by Northampton County.
- ? Submit evidence that they are qualified to perform the inspections for which they are seeking approval.
- ? Demonstrate a working knowledge of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, by passing an examination on the contents of the USBC, given by the Northampton County.
- ? Provide proof of financial responsibility in the form of an errors and omissions insurance policy showing a minimum coverage of at least \$300,000 per occurrence.

The Building Official shall provide written notice to all inspectors approved to make third party inspections within Northampton County. This notice shall include the type of work that they are approved to inspect, and any limitations imposed by the Building Official. The Building Official shall maintain a list of approved inspectors, and will make this list available to the public upon request.

Third party inspection services will **only** be permitted if:

- ? The County's inspectors cannot inspect the work within 48 hour (2 working days) of when the inspection was requested, due to scheduling difficulties.
- ? The nature and scope of the work to be inspected exceeds the technical expertise of the County's inspectors, or requires special on-site design.
- ? The Building Code, or conditions listed on the Building Permit, require the use of special inspections for a particular type of work.

The permit holder shall be responsible to:

- ? Ensure that the third party inspector is approved to inspect the work that they are inspecting.
- ? File all third party inspection reports with the Building Official within 24 hours of the inspection, including any and all rejections of work. Reports may be faxed to the Building Official, provided a true copy is mailed within 1 week of the inspection. Failure to submit reports in a timely manner is cause to revoke the approved use of third party inspection service in place of County's inspectors.

Third party inspectors may not be used to inspect work that has been rejected by the Building Official or County Building Inspectors.

With the exception of elevator inspectors, third party inspectors may not perform "final" inspections.

Appeals concerning this policy, the approval of third party inspectors, or the revocation of "approved" status shall be directed to the Northampton County's Building Code Board of Appeals.

Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code , section 113.7 Approved inspection agencies / Third Party Inspectors

113.7 Approved inspection agencies. The building official may accept reports of inspections and tests from approved individuals or approved inspection agencies, which satisfy qualifications and reliability requirements. Under circumstances where the building official is unable to make the inspection or test within two working days of a request or an agreed upon date, the building official shall accept reports for review from such approved individuals or agencies. Such reports shall be in writing and shall be certified by the individual inspector or by the responsible officer when the report is from an agency.

Note: Photographs, videotapes or other sources of pertinent data or information may be considered as constituting such reports and tests.

113.7.1 Third-party inspectors. Each building official charged with the enforcement of the USBC shall have a written policy establishing the minimum acceptable qualifications for third-party inspectors. The policy shall include the format and time frame required for submission of reports, any prequalification or pre-approval requirements before conducting a third-party inspection and any other requirements and procedures established by the building official.

113.7.2 Qualifications. In determining third-party inspector qualifications, the building official may consider such items as DHCD certification, other state and national certifications, state professional registrations, related experience, education and any other factors that would demonstrate competency and reliability to conduct inspections.