



**TO:** Development Services Customers

**SUBJECT:** **INFORMATION BULLETIN 212**  
Frequently Asked Questions and Definitions Related to Special Inspections

**DATE:** August 14, 2013/*August 1, 2014/March 19, 2020*

**CREATED BY:** Field Services Division

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**Purpose:**

As a customer service initiative, the Development Services Department (DSD) created this **revised** bulletin to update Information Bulletin (IB) 212 on frequently asked questions and definitions related to special inspections. This bulletin has been updated to incorporate the department's new format for Information Bulletins.

DSD has developed the following list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) pertaining to special inspections and has listed them below. We have also listed the following definitions in order to assist you in preparing for the submittal of the Determination of Special Inspections when required by code. Please refer to Information Bulletin 132 for requirements and a complete explanation of the City of San Antonio's Special Inspection Program.

**Scope:**

**DSD QUESTION #1:** Can a Registered Design Professional in Responsible Charge (RDPiRC) who is identified for the project, be employed by the Design-Build entity?

**DSD ANSWER #1:** Yes. An RDPiRC must first be identified for the project as a requirement of Chapter 17 of the *International Building Code*. The RDPiRC may be employed as the RDPiRC of a project hired by the Design-Build team; however, the special inspectors/agency must be hired separately by the owner.

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**DSD QUESTION #2:** Is the RDPiRC responsible for the documentation of Special Inspections and final determination of the required inspections, including paperwork to the Development Services department?

**DSD ANSWER #2:** Yes. The RDPiRC is responsible for reviewing the qualifications of the special inspectors/agency and the submittal of the Determination of Required Special Inspections

for the project at the time of permit application. At the completion of the project, the RDPiRC is also responsible for reviewing each of the special inspection reports and tests performed by the special inspectors/agency and then submitting a Final Report of Special Inspections.

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**DSD QUESTION #3:** Can the Special Inspectors be hired by either the RDPiRC or the Owner?

**DSD ANSWER #3:** Yes. However, if the contractor is hiring the RDPiRC, the special inspectors must be hired separately by the owner. If the owner chooses to hire a 3rd party individual for the role of RDPiRC, they may employ the special inspectors.

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**DSD QUESTION #4:** Can the general contractor, subcontractors, or material suppliers employ the special inspectors and testing technicians?

**DSD ANSWER #4:** No... The general contractor of a project shall not employ the special inspector or special inspection agency. In the case of an owner/contractor, the Building Official shall specify who employs the special inspectors/agency. In most cases, the Building Official will require a document to be submitted that will explain the roles and tasks of the responsible parties involved in the project.

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**DSD QUESTION # 5:** Are projects that do not require a registered design professional from the State of Texas or City of San Antonio required to have an RDPiRC?

**DSD ANSWER # 5:** No. An RDPiRC signature is not required for plans that do not require a design professional from the State of Texas or the City of San Antonio.

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**DSD QUESTION # 6:** If it is determined that a remodel or renovation project will have work that requires special inspections, can the general contractor hire the special inspector or approved agency?

**DSD ANSWER # 6:** No. Per *International Building Code* section 1703.1.1, an approved agency shall be independent from the contractor responsible for the work being inspected.

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The definitions coincide with the most common terms used relating to Special Inspections. All definitions are from the 2018 edition of the *International Building Code* and Chapter 10 local amendments.

**APPROVED:** Acceptable to the Building Official or authority having jurisdiction.

**APPROVED AGENCY:** An established and recognized agency regularly engaged in conducting tests or furnishing inspection services, when such agency has been *approved*.

**BUILDING OFFICIAL:** The Building Official shall be known as the Director of Development Services, and such term shall include his authorized representatives. The Building Official is charged with the administration and enforcement of the local adopted building and maintenance codes.

**DETERMINATION OF REQUIRED SPECIAL INSPECTIONS:** A document that is submitted by the RDPiRC to the Building Official at the time of permit application. The document will identify which special inspections are applicable to the project, the verification and inspection task of each, and identification as to whether it will be continuous special inspection or periodic special inspections.

**FINAL REPORT OF SPECIAL INSPECTIONS:** A document that is submitted by the RDPiRC to the owner and Building Official stating that all work requiring special inspections was in conformance with the city reviewed plans, project specifications, and related building code standards. The document will include any corrective action taken for any discrepancies noted in the inspection reports. This statement is required to be submitted prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy or temporary certificate of occupancy. (C of O, TCO)

**RDPiRC:** A registered design professional in responsible charge engaged by the owner to review and coordinate certain aspects of the project, as determined by the building official, for compatibility with the design of the building or structure, including submittal of documents prepared by others, deferred submittal documents and phased submittal documents. (See IB 132 for additional responsibilities as they pertain to work involving special inspections).

**SPECIAL INSPECTOR:** A qualified person employed or retained by an approved agency and approved by the building official as having the competence necessary to inspect a particular type of construction requiring special inspection.

**SPECIAL INSPECTION:** Inspection of construction requiring the expertise of an approved special inspector in order to ensure compliance with the *International Building Code* and the approved construction documents.

*Note: The special inspector shall not be employed by the contractor. Special inspections are in addition to the inspections identified in Section 10-11 of City Code Chapter 10.*

Should you have any questions regarding this information bulletin, please contact the Development Services Manager at (210) 207-8314 or the Building Inspections Supervisor at (210) 207-2750.

**Summary:**

This Information Bulletin is for informational purposes only.

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