



**TO:** Development Services Department Staff

**SUBJECT:** **Information Bulletin 226**  
Commercial Letter Submittal Process

**DATE:** March 10, 2017 / *Revised October 1, 2018 / February 9, 2022*

**PREPARED BY:** Field Services Division

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**Purpose:**

As a customer service initiative, The Development Services Department (DSD) created this Standing Operating Procedure to help guide customers on the Commercial letter submittal process. This Information Bulletin has been updated to add submittal of letters through the BuildSA system.

**Scope:**

Currently DSD offers a standard commercial letter review process that may take up to five business days after being submitted by a customer. In an effort to expedite the review and release process, changes have been implemented to the current process for TOPS releases and a new expedited review fee option for C of O's and TCO's:

All commercial letters are electronically uploaded in pdf format onto the permit record. Log into the [BuildSA ACA Customer Portal](#). Search or locate the permit record on-line. Open the permit by clicking on the blue hyperlink. Under the Record Info tab, choose Attachments and upload your documents. Once submitted a review by the City is automatically created.

- Electronic pdf format letters being submitted for TOPS release are submitted into the BuildSA system by customers on the permit record. DSD staff will continue to check for the appropriate partial MEP inspections needed for release and will inform CPS of the release accordingly. The customer will be immediately notified of the release or pending MEP inspection.
- Building Inspection staff will review the foundation and structural framing letters accordingly and will contact the customer only if there are any corrections or changes needed, on the letter.
- Any letters or final reports being submitted by email or walk-in for the release of a C of O or a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO) can now be reviewed within one to two days business days with an afterhours inspection fee of - \$100.00.
- There will continue to be **No Fee** for commercial letters or final reports submitted through the normal review process. This process will continue to be within the five business days.

When an observation letter is requested or required to clear an inspection, the letter will identify what the Design Professional observed when inspecting (structural, floor slabs, footings, piers, rebar, etc.). The items outlined in Chapter 16 & 18 of the currently adopted International Building Code (IBC). An attached sample letter has been provided to assist our customer.

A letter pertaining to floor slabs, footings, piers, rebar, must be labeled as a “Foundation Letter”. A letter pertaining to primary structural frame must be labeled as a “Frame Letter.” A minimum of one frame inspection shall be conducted by the building field inspector before a frame inspection can be cleared by a letter submittal. Any framing enclosed or covered prior to inspection by the building inspector may require an additional letter submittal to be reviewed by the Chief Building Inspector.

Special Inspection Field Reports from special inspectors consisting of Chapter 17 will not be accepted as fulfilling the requirement of an observation letter. This inspection shall be cleared when the Final Report of Special Inspections letter is submitted and it corresponds to the Letter of Determination that was submitted during plan submittal by the RDPiRC (Registered Design Professional in Responsible Charge) as outlined in IB132.

In determining what MEP inspections are required for TOPS release, please refer to IB-104 and IB-126 for TCO requirements.

**Summary:**

This Standing Operating Procedure is for information purposes only. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this Standing Operating Procedure, please feel free to contact the Building Inspections Supervisor at (210) 207-8314.

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Development Services

**Authorized by:** Michael Shannon, PE, CBO, Interim Director, Development  
Services

## (Engineer's or Engineering Company's Letterhead)

(Date)

(Client Name)

(Client Firm Name)

(Client Address)

(Client Address)

Project: (Project Name)  
(Project Address)  
San Antonio, Texas 782\_\_\_\_\_

Property Legal Description: (Legal Description from Bexar Appraisal District Account, Property Survey, Deed, etc.)

City of San Antonio Building Permit A/P Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear (Client):

You constructed your building project referenced above using construction documents prepared by (Structural Engineer). Your building project includes the building structure that consists of [piers, footings, floor slab and primary structural framing] resisting gravity and lateral loads required by the 2015 Edition of the International Building Code – Chapter 16 as detailed on our structural construction documents that were used to acquire a building permit from the City of San Antonio.

Qualified individuals from this office visited the site to check the construction stated above for general conformance with our construction documents. In my opinion, based on our experience, knowledge, information and belief, the stated construction that we observed is in general conformance with our construction documents.

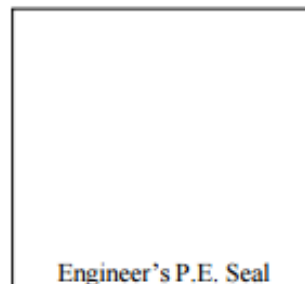
We performed a field observation according to generally accepted contractual guidelines as described in AIA Document C-141. These services do not constitute compliance with Section 1704, "Special Inspections", of the 2015 Edition of the International Building Code.

As denoted by the engineering seal on the construction documents and on this letter, we believe that we have fulfilled our obligations as an engineer under the Texas Engineering Practice Act pursuant to its requirements to protect the public health, safety and welfare in the practice of engineering.

If you have any questions, please call.

Respectfully,

Structural Engineer Signature  
(Structural Engineer Typed Name)



Notes to help correctly prepare this form letter:

- 1) Fill in the specific date, client name & address, project information, permit number (A/P), and legal description where italicized.
- 2) Replace the term Structural Engineer with either the structural engineer's name or the engineering company's name.
- 3) Select the correct structural elements incorporated within the project. Delete the terms that do not apply.
- 4) Sign, seal and date before submitting to City of San Antonio Development Services Department.