

Inspection Services and Guidelines

FAQ's

What services does the Building Inspector provide?

The Building Inspector is available 9:00am-4:00pm Monday through Friday (excluding holiday's) for consultations by phone or in person. Consultations can occur before, during, or after construction projects, or in regards to any building code or permitting questions. Appointments can be made with as little as 24-hour notice.

During Construction the inspector will be called out for regular inspections throughout the course of the project, and for a "Final" inspection after the project is complete. During construction anybody involved in the project (homeowner, tenants, contractors, sub-contractors, or employees) may call the inspector to ask questions regarding codes and best-practices, or to request regular and/or special inspections.

The Building Inspector will also respond to complaints regarding code violations and/or substandard living conditions. Inspections may be requested by either the home-owner or tenants.

How do inspections work?

For regular/routine inspections the owner/builder/contractor will call the Building Department's main line (707) 822-5956 at least 24 hours ahead of the requested time of inspection. The inspector will arrive on-site at or very near the scheduled time and provide the inspection services requested. All inspections are recorded on both the "Job Copy" and "Office Copy" of the "Inspection Record Card" which is issued with the building permit. The "Job Copy" serves as the owner/builder/contractor's record of what inspections have been approved (a date and signature from the inspector denotes approval). At the "Final Inspection" both cards will be signed at the bottom and will conclude the project. The "Job Copy" remains with the property owner as their record and proof that work was permitted and approved. The "Office Copy" will stay on record with the City of Arcata.

What kind of work requires permits and inspections?

Any work that changes, modifies, replaces, or adds to: the structural integrity of the building, plumbing, electrical, foundation, exterior doors, windows, and/or roofs. There are many types of work that can be done without permits (cabinets, painting, minor repairs, etc.) but we recommend that you contact the City of Arcata's Building Department prior to doing any work on or in your house.

How do I contact the Building Department?

You can reach the Building Department's main line at (707) 822-5956, the Building Official at (707) 825-2138, and the Building inspector at (707) 825-2144. You can also come into the Arcata City Hall and locate the Building Department counter (shared with Community Development and Environmental Services) at the East end of the second floor (above the Police Department.)

24-Hour Notice Inspections

Regular and Standard inspections

- Setbacks & Foundation forms (slab or perimeter) including steel reinforcement (rebar), anchor-bolts and hold-downs, UFER ground connection, and plumbing and/or electric connections that will be in or under concrete.
- Rough Framing, Plumbing, and Electrical prior to installation of any insulation and/or wall-boards.
- Shear Wall Nail patterns on any interior or exterior shear panels (plywood or OSB nailed to framing).
- Roof Deck Nail patterns on all roof decking (plywood or OSB nailed to trusses/rafters).
- Stucco Lath prior to application of Stucco, including weep-screeds.
- Insulation prior to gypsum-board (drywall/sheetrock). This includes any type of insulation used under-floor, walls, and ceiling/roof.
- Gypsum-Board (aka: Drywall/Sheetrock) nail (or screw) inspection before mud and tape.
- Electric and/or Gas Tags are required by PG&E prior to connection of services.
- Final Inspection at the conclusion of the project.

“On-Call” Inspections

At the discretion of the Inspector

Response time varies based on work-load

- Roof Deck Tear-off any time a roof is stripped down the bare decking an inspection is required.
- Gas-line Pressure Test on any new gas lines.
- Plumbing “Top-Out” when all glued joint-connections are complete and drain/waste/vents are filled for a pressure test. (Separate from “Rough” inspections.)
- Minor or “Witness” Inspections when a small section of work has been completed outside of regular inspections, or simply for the Inspector to see that something was done before it’s covered. (ie: steel reinforcement in drive-ways or side-walks, septic tank abandonment, or minor plumbing/electrical connections.)
- On-site consultations may be requested “on-call” if unexpected problems arise, or design questions come up that stop work until solved.

“When in doubt, call and find out!”