

**NC Department of Insurance  
Office of the State Fire Marshal - Engineering Division  
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**Applicability of Special Inspections**

**Code:** 2012 NC Building Code  
**Section:** 1704.1.2

**Date:** September 1, 2011

**Question:**

This question is related to an existing building that would require special inspections if it were built today. Would special inspections be required for the following scenarios?

- 1) A building addition that in itself is below the threshold for requiring special inspections.
- 2) A structural alteration that in itself is below the threshold for requiring special inspections.

**Answer:**

- 1) Yes.
- 2) Yes.

Special inspections as required by NC Building Code, Section 1704.1.2, Item #1 remain important to the life-safety of the building occupants. If the existing building was under the current code thresholds for requiring special inspections and the new work did not cause the building to go over those thresholds then special inspections are not required.

**Code Reference:**

**1704.1.2 Special inspections requirement.** *Special inspections per Section 1704 are required for building, building components or other structures per the following:*

1. *Buildings or other structures listed in Table 1604.5 in Occupancy Category II if:
  - 1.1. *Building height exceeds 45 feet (13.7 m) or three stories, or*
  - 1.2. *The building is an underground building per Section 405.1:**
2. *Buildings or other structures listed in Table 1604.5 in Occupancy Categories III or IV;*
3. *Piles, piers and special foundations per Sections 1704.8 through 1704.11, 1810.3.5.2.4 and 1810.3.5.2.5;*
4. *Retaining walls exceeding 5 feet (1524 mm) height per Section 1807.2;*
5. *Smoke control and smoke exhaust systems;*
6. *Sprayed fire-resistant materials; or*
7. *Special case described in Section 1704.15.*

**Keywords:**

Tests, structural category, piles, piers, special foundations, smoke control, smoke exhaust, SPM, spray-fire-resistant material, underground buildings