

**BACKGROUND**

The Building Code requires special inspection of load bearing fabricated structural members and assemblies when the fabrication is being performed on the premises of a fabricator's shop. The fabricator program exempts the requirement when the work is done on the premises of a fabricator registered and approved to perform such work without special inspection.

**HOUSTON BUILDING CODE REFERENCES**

**1704.2.5 Special inspection of fabricated items.** *Where fabrication of structural, load-bearing or lateral load resisting members or assemblies is being conducted on the premises of a fabricator's shop, special inspections of the fabricated items shall be performed during fabrication, except where the fabricator has been approved to perform work without special inspections in accordance with Section 1704.2.5.1.*

**1704.2.5.1 Fabricator approval.** *Special inspections during fabrication are not required where the work is done on the premises of a fabricator approved to perform such work without special inspection. Approval shall be based on review of the fabricator's written fabrication procedures and quality control manuals that provide a basis for control of materials and workmanship, with periodic auditing of fabrication and quality control practices by an approved agency or the building official. At completion of fabrication, the approved fabricator shall submit a certificate of compliance to the owner or the owner's authorized agent for submittal to the building official as specified in Section 1704.5 stating that the work was performed in accordance with the approved construction documents.*

**DEFINITIONS**

**Approved Special Inspection Agency:** An established and recognized agency regularly engaged in conducting tests or furnishing inspection services or furnishing product certification where such agency has been approved by the building official.

**Approved Fabricator:** An established and qualified person, firm, or corporation approved by the building official pursuant to Chapter 17 of the building code.

**Quality Control:** A system for verifying and maintaining a desired level of quality in an existing product or service by careful planning, use of proper equipment, continued inspection, and corrective action as required.

**Quality Control Manual:** A booklet that contains detailed fabrication and quality control procedures.

**Quality Control Program:** A plan of action or schedule of activities and procedures to be followed to achieve quality control.

**Special Inspection:** Inspection as required by Chapter 17 of the building code for the materials, installation, fabrication, erection or placement of components and connections requiring special expertise to ensure compliance with approved construction documents and referenced standards.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR APPROVAL**

The fabricator shall maintain detailed fabrication and quality control procedures in a written document, the Quality Control Manual. Approval shall be based upon review of the Quality Control Manual and periodic auditing of fabrication practices by an approved special inspection agency. The special inspector reviews the procedures for completeness and adequacy relative to the code requirements for the fabricator's scope of work.

**CERTIFICATION BY A NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED AGENCY**

Certification of a fabricator's quality program by a nationally recognized agency (AISC, AITC, IAPMO, ICC, PCI, NPCA, SJI, SPIB, TPI, etc.) is acceptable in lieu of the special inspection.

**APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

Follow the procedures below under the applicable option (A or B):

**A. The fabricator's Quality Control Program is certified by a nationally recognized agency.**

1. The fabricator completes the Fabricator Qualification Statement (CE-1269) form and submits it with a copy of the certification.

**B. The fabricator's Quality Control Program is not certified by a nationally recognized agency.**

1. The fabricator chooses a special inspection agency from the list of approved special inspection agencies, as applicable to the product manufactured, to review fabrication procedures and the Quality Control Manual. A list of special inspection agencies approved to perform Quality Control Audits can be downloaded at: <https://www.houstonpermittingcenter.org/media/2151/download>.
2. The fabricator completes the Fabricator Qualification Statement (CE-1269) form.
3. The Special Inspector completes the following forms:
  - a. Review of Quality System Manual (Form CE-1281)
  - b. Audit of Fabrication Practices Form (Complete the form applicable to the type of product fabricated)
4. The special inspector collects the "Fabricator Qualification Statement" and submits all forms for review along with a letter stating recommendations for approval.

**ANNUAL RENEWAL PROCEDURE**

It is the fabricator's responsibility to re-certify within thirty (30) days prior to the annual expiration date. Follow the applicable renewal procedures below:

**A. The fabricator's Quality Control Program is certified by a nationally recognized agency.**

1. The fabricator requests the registration renewal in writing and attaches a copy of the current certification.

**B. The fabricator's Quality Control Program is not certified by a nationally recognized agency.**

1. The fabricator makes arrangements with a registered special inspection agency to perform the annual audit of fabrication practices.
2. The special inspector completes an "Audit of Fabrication Practices" form applicable to the type of product fabricated.
3. The special inspector submits the completed form for review along with a letter clearly stating recommendations for approval. The forms and the letter must be signed by the registered special inspection agency's engineer.

**CERTIFICATION AND RENEWAL FEES**

A fee of \$33.56 is charged for all certification and renewal requests.

**SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTS**

Submit all forms, required documents and certificates in one package via email, mail or in person at 1002 Washington Avenue, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Houston, TX 77002

Mailing Address: Code Development  
P.O. Box 2688  
Houston, TX 77252-2688

E-mail: [code.development@houstontx.gov](mailto:code.development@houstontx.gov)