

**Footing/Foundation Certification Program
Effective December 20, 2004**

The Footing and Foundation Certification Program was enacted to allow drilling for footings, or excavation for foundations, for permitted Ground Sign work, to be inspected and certified by a licensed engineer. This option is also known as self-certification. Advantages include installation of permitted Ground Signs outside of normal business hours without having to pay for overtime Inspections. The program isn't for signs and drawings that are engineered, or required to be engineered, unless the engineer of record performs the required inspection and accepts the work. The engineer of record would have to provide to the City of Houston, Building Code Enforcement, Sign Administration, complete As-Built Engineering, including sealed, signed & dated drawings, with a certification letter (see Exhibit A, Informational Letter 0016-2009-A - Clarifications on Engineering Requirements), and copies of anything referenced therein (e.g., photos). The engineer must seal, sign, & date the letter.

Guidelines:

1. When applying for the permit, the application packet must declare the intent to self-certify, so that the intent can be entered into record, and the drawings can be properly annotated. It's the contractor's responsibility to ensure that the drawings are properly annotated regarding intent to self-certify.
2. If the sign design is engineered, and the intent is to have the engineer of record certify the footing(s)/foundation, the application packet must also declare that.
3. If the decision to self-certify is made after plans pass review, the assigned Reviewer, or their supervisor, must be notified in-writing (e.g., email) so that arrangements can be made for a Plan Reexam (fee required).
4. Work must be completed, and As-Built Engineering received, before lapse of the Construction Permit (180 days from the Site Inspection date), to accommodate the Construction Final Inspection.
5. When submitting the As-Built Engineering, also present a copy of the concrete receipt, with the sign permit address, delivery date, yards delivered, and concrete company name on the concrete receipt. If bagged concrete is used, provide a copy of the receipt, with the number of bags, & purchase date.
6. If the As-Built Engineering & concrete receipt aren't received before lapse of the Construction Permit, a warning notice for removal of the sign can be issued to the business and the sign contractor. In effect, the permit is expired. Section 4605 (h) states in part that construction of a sign shall become null and void unless construction is completed within 180 days. The As-Built Engineering has in effect become part of the construction process. It is strongly recommended that the As-Built Engineering be submitted immediately after the footing/foundation is done, so the matter is fresh and current on everyone's mind.
7. Failure to comply will result in both the sign owner, and the sign contractor, receiving a warning notice to remove the sign. If compliance isn't achieved within the designated timeframe, then citations can be issued each day until resolved. A hearing to revoke the sign contractor's license can also result.
8. If a sign contractor receives 3 warning notices for not complying with this procedure, that contractor can't enjoy continued participation in this program (3 strikes and you're out).

This program supersedes all other certification programs and there is no fee associated with this program (except for any Reexam Fee or Reinspection). We want to encourage proper participation in the self-certification program, as it allows efficient scheduling for contractors, and allows Sign Administration Inspectors additional time for enforcement. Together, we can achieve positive results. We believe this is a win, win policy and procedure for all.