



TYPICAL HOME IMPROVEMENTS INSPECTIONS

The intent of this checklist is to provide a general guideline for the customer. This checklist may not include items related to all possible projects.

Requesting an Inspection

- An inspection can be requested at the City of East Palo Alto Building Division Counter or by calling our main line at (650) 853-3189.
- Inspections are available Monday through Friday between 9am-3pm, excluding holidays.
- Request for inspections must be received by 4:00 p.m. the business day prior to the requested inspection.
- When requesting an inspection, state the job address, permit number, the type of inspection you are requesting, contact person (who will be onsite during inspection) phone number and any special instruction.

Inspection Tips

- **A GOOD RULE OF THUMB: GET IT INSPECTED BEFORE IT IS COVERED OR USED.**
- The job copy of the approved plans and inspection card must be available at the time of inspection.
- Time delays and re-inspections can be avoided if you make sure that work is complete before the inspector arrives.
- The inspector will not enter a property if no one over the age of 18 is present unless prior written authorization is given with the specific inspection request.
- Any necessary tests should be done ahead of time to assure acceptance and compliance.
- If there are corrections, be sure to complete all corrections before requesting a reinspection to avoid a re-inspection fee.
- Have any pets removed from the area.
- Provide access for inspection including an OSHA-approved ladder or other means of access, as necessary.

Single Family Dwelling Typical Inspections

- **Under-Slab Inspection (for slab on grade):** All plumbing, electrical or mechanical systems shall be inspected prior to covering with earth or concrete. The drain, waste and vent (DWV) system shall be subject to a water test (10 foot head) or air test (5 psi).
Water piping shall be tested under operating water pressure or with air no less than 50 psi for 15 minutes (air test for other than plastic pipe). Gas piping for island fixtures shall be in place and installed in an approved, vented chase. ***All plumbing systems are required to be exposed for inspection.***

- **Foundation Inspection:** This inspection occurs after the footings are excavated and reinforcement steel is installed and before any concrete is placed. All hold-down anchor bolts must be secured in place prior to this inspection. Any new grounding electrodes in the new footing will be inspected at this time. Setback to property lines are checked at this time, so property lines must be strung or otherwise marked.
- **Slab Inspection:** For monolithic pours, the foundation inspection and slab inspection are done at the same time. For two-pour systems, this inspection occurs after the under-slab plumbing is signed off and the footings are already poured but before the concrete is poured for the slab. All required sub-base material, such as sand and gravel, vapor barriers (plastic sheet), and slab reinforcement must be installed at the time of the inspection.
- **Under-floor Frame, Plumbing and Mechanical Inspection (for raised floors):** This inspection occurs after the under-floor framing, plumbing and mechanical are installed and before the insulation or sub-floor sheathing is installed. All under-floor hardware and nailing must be completed for this inspection.
- **Insulation Inspection:** Required insulation in under-floor area must be installed with support system prior to installation of sub floor underlayment.
- **Sub-floor Nailing Inspection:** This inspection occurs after the floor sheathing is installed. This inspection occurs before walls are stood on the sub-floor and verifies sub floor nailing and connections of the horizontal diaphragm (floor sheathing) to designated structural elements. (shearwalls and draglines) below. This inspection is NOT necessary if there are no shear connection beneath the floor or for a typical single story raised floor structure. For multi-story structures, this inspection occurs at each floor.
- **Exterior Shear and Roof Nailing Inspection:** These inspections, which may be requested together or separately, occur after the roof sheathing and the wall sheathing are installed and nailed off. The exterior shear is ready when all the sheathing, nailing straps, hold-downs and the entire exterior wall bracing system is complete. The roof nail is ready for inspection when the roof sheathing is installed and nailed off. All roof penetration should be in place, including vent piping, exhaust and flashing. The roof trusses and roof framing are inspected as part of the roof nail inspection. There should be no roofing felt, building paper, window flashing, vapor barriers, or any other material covering any portion of the roof and/or wall sheathing. *Note: Windows and door jambs shall not be installed until after this inspection is approved.*
- **Rough Inspections:** All the rough inspections can be inspected concurrently by *Combination Inspectors*. On complex installations, separate inspections by *Special Inspectors* for each trade may be necessary.
- **Rough Electrical Inspections:** This inspection occurs after all the wiring and junction boxes have been installed.
- **Rough Plumbing Inspection:** This inspection occurs after all plumbing pipes have been installed, and:
 - The water piping system is under the street pressure or be under an air test at a minimum pressure of 50 psi for 15 minutes (air test for other than plastic pipe).

- The gas piping is visually inspected for support and sizing.
- The entire waste and vent system shall be tested by either water or by air for 15 minutes minimum. When tested by water, the system is typically filled with water with a minimum 10-foot head of water pressure. If tested by air, the system must hold at least 5 psi.
- **Tub Test/Shower Pan Test:** This inspection occurs after the rough plumbing inspection is signed off and the fixtures are connected to the plumbing drains. Tubs must be filled to the overflow and showers must be filled to the top of the threshold.
- **Rough Mechanical Inspection:** This inspection occurs after all flues and HVAC ducting are installed, including exhaust fan ducts. Ducts shall be strapped and connected to register boxes.
- **Windows:** This inspection may be requested together with rough framing inspections or separately. The windows shall be installed including window flashing. *Leave ALL stickers on windows to verify energy code compliance.*
- **Rough Framing Inspection:** This inspection occurs after all framing and all work described above is complete (except for second-sided shear walls) and before any insulation if installed in the walls and ceilings. Shingle roofs are to be complete. Tile roofs are required to be watertight and the roofing material loaded on the roof. Also, the exterior walls are required to be water tight at this inspection.
- **Lath Inspection:** After all rough inspections have been signed off. The wire and paper must be installed, but the plaster is not yet placed.
- **Insulation Inspection:** This inspection occurs after all the rough inspections have been signed off.

Note: All floor and top plate penetrations must be insulated/foamed or otherwise fire stopped at this inspection.

- **Drywall Nailing/Lath Inspection:** May include gas test inspections.
- **Interior or Double-Sided Shear:** This inspection verifies the installation of the interior sheathing that is part of the house bracing system.
- **Water and Sewer:** This inspection verifies the water service and building sewer connection from the house to the street. It is made with the water pipes under pressure or the sewer full of water and the piping exposed.
- **Gas Test Inspection:** This inspection occurs after the house wall finishes are completely installed. The test consists of filling the gas system with air. The test shall hold 10 lbs. of pressure for 15 minutes using a 30-lb. gauge.
- **Final Inspection:** This inspection occurs after all the above inspections have been signed off and the house is completely finished and ready for occupancy. Landings and steps must be complete and required handrails and guard rails installation. The house may not be occupied, nor will utility meters be released until this inspection is approved.
- **Other Inspections:** May be required depending on job conditions. This handout describes inspections made by the Building Inspector. Other inspections may be required by other agencies.

- **Streets, Curbs and Gutters, and Other Work in the Public Way:** Are inspected by the Public Works Department (650) 853-3189.
- **Site Landscape:** Is inspected by the Planning Division (650) 853-3189.
- **Fire Sprinkler:** Inspections are conducted by the Menlo Park Fire District (650) 688-8400.