

Broward County Board of Rules and Appeals Policy # 05-05

Subject: Broward County Board of Rules and Appeals – Building Safety Inspection Program

I. GENERAL:

- A. Section 110.15 of the Broward County Administrative Provisions of the Florida Building Code has established a Building Safety Inspection Program.
- B. The procedures established herein are the basic guidelines for the Building Safety Inspection program.
- C. The requirements contained in the Florida Building Code, covering the maintenance of buildings, shall apply to all buildings and/or structures now existing or hereafter erected. All buildings and/or structures and all parts thereof shall be maintained in a safe condition, and all devices or safeguards that are required by the Florida Building Code shall be maintained in good working order. Electrical wiring, apparatus and equipment, and installations for light heat or power and low voltage systems as are required and/or regulated by the Building Code, now existing, or hereinafter installed, shall be maintained in a safe condition and all devices and safeguards shall be maintained in good working order.
- D. These guidelines shall not be construed as permitting the removal or non-maintenance of any existing devices or safeguards unless authorized by the Building Official.

II. DEFINITIONS:

- A. **“Threshold Building”** shall be defined as any building which is greater than three stories or 50 feet in height, or which has an assembly occupancy classification as defined in the Florida Building Code which exceeds 5,000 square feet in area and an occupant content of greater than 500 persons, or as otherwise defined by section 553.71, Florida Statutes, which may be amended from time to time.
- B. **“Minor Buildings or Structures”** for the purpose of this program, shall be defined as buildings or structures in any occupancy group having a gross area of less than 3,500 sq. ft.

Any building or structure which houses, covers, stores, or maintains any support features, materials, or equipment necessary for the operation of all or part of the primary structure, or operation of any feature located upon the real property, shall not be considered a minor building or structure and shall be subject to inspection as otherwise set forth herein.

To be included in the Safety Inspection Program are elevated decks, docks, parking garages and guardrails, and as such are not exempt.
- C. **“Building Age”** shall be defined as the difference between (a) the present year and (b) the year-built information recorded with the County Property Appraiser notwithstanding any renovations or modifications that have been made to the building or structure since the year built.

III. BUILDING SAFETY INSPECTION OF BUILDINGS / STRUCTURES AND COMPONENTS:

- A. For the purpose of these guidelines, Building Safety Inspection shall be construed to mean the requirement for specific inspection of existing buildings and structures and furnishing the Building Official and Owner with a written report of such inspection as prescribed herein.
- B. Inspection procedures shall conform, to the minimum inspection procedural guidelines as issued by the Board of Rules and Appeals titled as “General Considerations & Guidelines for Building Safety Inspections” and included as part of this policy.
 - 1. This inspection is for the sole purpose of identifying structural and electrical deficiencies of the building or structure that pose an immediate threat to life safety. This inspection is not to determine if the condition

of an existing building complies with the current edition of the Florida Building Code or the National Electrical Code.

2. Such inspection shall be for the purpose of determining the structural & electrical condition of the building or structure to the extent reasonably possible, of any part, material or assembly of a building or structure which affects the safety of such building or structure, and/or which supports any dead load, live load, or wind load, and the general condition of its electrical systems pursuant to the applicable Codes.
 3. The inspecting Professional shall have a right of entry into all areas he/she deems necessary to comply with the program.
 4. The Building Official shall ensure that the owner(s) (or their duly authorized representative(s)) of all buildings requiring inspection under these guidelines file the necessary documentation to confirm compliance with the guidelines set forth herein.
- C. All buildings shall be inspected in the manner described herein, where such buildings or structures have been in existence for thirty (30) years or longer, as determined by the Building Official in accordance with Florida Statutes Section 553.899, who shall at such time issue a Notice of Required Inspection to the building owner.
1. Exempt from this program are the following:

U.S. Government buildings, State of Florida buildings, buildings built on Indian Reservations, School Buildings under the jurisdiction of the Broward County School Board, One and Two-Family Dwellings, Fee Simple Townhouses as defined in the Florida Building Code, and minor structures defined as buildings or structures in any occupancy group having a gross floor area less than three thousand five hundred (3,500) square feet.
- D. All buildings that are a Condominium or Cooperative, and are three (3) stories or more in height, and are located within three (3) miles of the coastline, shall be inspected in the manner described herein, where such buildings have been in existence for twenty-five (25) years or longer, as determined by the Building Official in accordance with Florida Statutes Section 553.899, who shall at such time issue a Notice of Required Inspection to the building owner.
- E. Subsequent Building Safety Inspections shall be required at ten (10) year intervals from the date of the 30th or 25th anniversary (as applicable) of the existence of buildings or structures regardless of when the inspection report for same is finalized or filed.
- F. For any building or structure that has to perform a “milestone inspection,” as provided under section 553.899, Florida Statutes, such building or structure is required to undergo inspection in the manner described herein when it has reached a Building Age where it is required to undergo a “milestone inspection” and such inspection shall serve as compliance with any “milestone inspection” requirements under section 553.899, Florida Statutes.
- G. The Building Official shall provide the owner of the building or structure with a Notice of Required Inspection relating to the required Building Safety Inspection once the Building Official has determined that a building or structure has attained a Building Age of 30 years (or 25 years, as applicable) and every 10-year interval thereafter (i.e. Building Ages of 40, 50, etc.). In addition, the Building Official shall provide the owner with advance courtesy notices relating to their forthcoming building inspection at two years prior and one year prior to their Building Inspection anniversary year. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the failure by a Building Official to provide courtesy advance notices shall not affect a building owner’s requirement to timely inspect and certify a building or structure.
- H. Reporting Procedures and Qualifications of Inspectors:
1. The owner of a building or structure subject to Building Safety Inspection shall furnish, or cause to be furnished, within ninety (90) days of the Notice of Required Building Safety Inspection, a written report the Broward County Board of Rules and Appeals Building Safety Inspection Certification Form to the Building Official, prepared by a Florida Licensed Professional Engineer or Florida Registered Architect,

certifying that each such building or structure is structurally and electrically safe, or has been made structurally and electrically safe for the specified use for continued occupancy, in conformity with the minimum inspection procedural guidelines as issued by the Board of Rules and Appeals.

- a. If the building or structure is not a Threshold Building as defined by the Florida Building Code, such report must be prepared by a Florida Licensed Professional Engineer or Florida Registered Architect.
- b. If the building or structure is a “Threshold Building”, as defined herein, then (a) the structural portion of such report must be prepared by a Professional Engineer licensed in the State of Florida specializing in structural design and licensed as a “Special Inspector” under the Threshold Law F.S. 471, and (b) the electrical portion of such written report must be prepared by a Professional Engineer licensed in the State of Florida specializing in electrical design. A self-qualification letter shall be submitted as part of the structural report for threshold buildings, stating that the engineer is a practicing structural engineer and has worked with buildings equivalent to the building being certified and shall be accompanied by proof of the engineer’s State of Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DPBR) structural specialization.
- c. Such Engineer or Architect shall undertake such assignments only where qualified by training and experience in the specific technical field involved in the inspection and report.
- d. Such written report shall bear the impressed seal and signature of the responsible Engineer or Architect who has performed the inspection, unless submitted electronically with a verifiable digital signature as described in section 668.001, Florida Statutes.
 - a. The inspection report shall at a minimum meet all of the following criteria.
 - i. Indicate the manner and type of inspection forming the basis for the inspection report.
 - ii. Identify any substantial structural deterioration, within a reasonable professional probability based on the scope of the inspection, describe the extent of such deterioration, and identify any recommended repairs for such deterioration.
 - iii. State whether unsafe or dangerous conditions, as those terms are defined in the Florida Building Code, were observed.
 - iv. Recommend any remedial or preventive repair for any items that are damaged but are not substantial structural deterioration.
 - v. Identify and describe any items requiring further inspection.
- b. If the building inspected is a condominium or cooperative, the association must distribute a copy of the inspector-prepared summary of the inspection report to each condominium unit owner or cooperative unit owner, regardless of the findings or recommendations in the report, by the United states mail or personal delivery and by electronic transmission to unit owners who previously consented to receive notice by electronic transmission; must post a copy of the inspector-prepared summary in a conspicuous place on the condominium or cooperative property; and must publish the full report and inspector-prepared summary on the association's website, if the association is required to have a website.
- c. Such report shall be deemed timely if submitted any time between (a) two years prior to the building or structure’s applicable Building Safety Inspection anniversary, and (b) 90 days after the Notice of Required Inspection, including any applicable extension periods provided by the Building Official.
- d. **Duty to Report:** Any Licensed Professional Engineer or Registered Architect who performs an inspection of an existing building or structure has a duty to report to the Building Official any findings that, if left unaddressed, would

endanger life or property, no later than ten (10) days after informing the building owner of such findings unless the Engineer or Architect is made aware that action has been taken to address such findings in accordance with the applicable code. However, if such Engineer or Architect finds that there are conditions in the building or structure causing an actual or immediate danger of the failure or collapse of the building or structure, or there is a health hazard, windstorm hazard, fire hazard, or any other life safety hazard, such Engineer or Architect shall report such conditions immediately to the Building Owner and to the Building Official within twenty-four (24) hours of the time of discovery. In addition to assessing any fines or penalties provided by Broward County or the Municipality, the Building Official shall also report any violations of this provision to the appropriate licensing agency, regulatory board, and professional organization of such Engineer or Architect.

2. In the event that repairs or modifications are found to be necessary resulting from the Building Safety Inspection Report, the owner shall have a total of 180 days from the date of the Building Safety Inspection Report, unless otherwise specified by the Building Official in accordance with Florida Building Code Section 110.15 (Broward County Administrative Code), in which to complete required repairs and correct the structural and electrical deficiencies. All applicable Building Code requirements permits shall be followed with all applicable permits obtained. The Florida Existing Building Code will specify whether the repairs or modification can be made under the code in effect when the building was originally permitted, or the code currently in effect.
 - a. When any electrical or structural repairs or modifications are required, the responsible Engineer or Architect who has performed the building safety inspection and issued the report shall provide the Building Owner and the Building Official with a signed and sealed letter indicating whether the building or structure may continue to be safely occupied while the building or structure is undergoing repairs. Such letter shall be valid for no more than 180 days, and a new letter shall be issued if repairs or modifications remain ongoing.
 - b. For deficiencies that cannot be corrected within 180 days, the time frame may be extended when a time frame is specified by the Licensed Professional Engineer or Registered Architect and approved by the Building Official. Such extension shall be contingent on maintaining an active building permit as specified in Florida Building Code Section [105.3.2](#) (Broward County Administrative Code).
 - c. Once all required repairs, whether structural or electrical or both, have been completed, the responsible Licensed Professional Engineer or Registered Architect who has performed the safety inspection and issued the report shall re-inspect the areas noted on the original report and shall provide the Building Owner and Building Official an amended report with a signed and sealed letter stating that all of the required repairs and corrections have been completed and that the building or structure has been certified for continued use under the present occupancy. The Building Owner or responsible Professional shall submit that letter to the Building Official.
 - d. The Building Official may issue an extension of not more than 60 days to submit a Building Safety Inspection report or to obtain any necessary permits upon a written extension request from a Licensed Professional Engineer or Registered Architect qualified as stated herein for the type of building or structure in question. Such request must contain a signed and sealed statement from the Engineer or Architect that the building may continue to be occupied while undergoing the Building Safety Inspection and Certification.
3. If an owner of a building or structure fails to timely submit the Building Safety Inspection Program report to the Building Official or seek an extension request in accordance with the above, the Building Official shall elect the choice of either a Special Magistrate or Code Enforcement Board as set forth under Florida Statutes Sec. 162, et. al., to conduct a hearing to address such failure. In the event an owner fails to comply with the repair and/or modification requirements as determined from the Building Safety Inspection Report as set forth herein, the structure may be deemed to be unsafe and unfit for occupation. Such findings shall be reviewed by the Building Official and shall be sent to the Special Magistrate, Code Enforcement Board, or Unsafe Structures Board, as appropriate.
4. If a building or structure is found to be unsafe, the requirements of Section 116 of Chapter One of the Broward County Amendments to the Florida Building Code entitled "Unsafe Structures" shall be followed.
5. The Building Official may revoke any Building Safety Inspection and Certification if the Building Official determines that the written inspection report contains any misrepresentation of the actual conditions of the building or structure.

General Considerations & Guidelines for Building Safety Inspections

Part of Broward County BORA Policy #05-05

I. SCOPE OF STRUCTURAL INSPECTION

The **fundamental purpose** of the required Building Safety Inspection and report is to confirm in reasonable fashion that the building or structure under consideration is safe for continued use under its present occupancy. As implied by the title of this document, this is a recommended procedure, and under no circumstances are these minimum recommendations intended to supplant proper professional judgment.

Such inspection shall be for the purpose of determining the general structural condition of the building or structure to the extent reasonably possible of any part, material or assembly of a building or structure which affects the safety of such building or structure and/or which supports any dead load, live load, or wind load, and the general condition of its electrical systems pursuant to the applicable Codes.

In general, unless there is obvious overloading, or significant deterioration of important structural elements, there is little need to verify the original design. It is obvious that this has been time tested if still offering satisfactory performance. Rather, it is of importance that the effects of time with respect to degradation of the original construction materials be evaluated. It will rarely be possible to visually examine all concealed construction, nor should such be generally necessary. However, a sufficient number of typical structural members should be examined to permit reasonable conclusions to be drawn.

Visual Examination will, in most cases, be considered adequate when executed systematically. The visual examination must be conducted throughout all habitable and non-habitable areas of the building, as deemed necessary, by the inspecting professional to establish compliance. Surface imperfections such as cracks, distortion, sagging, excessive deflections, significant misalignment, signs of leakage, and peeling of finishes should be viewed critically as indications of possible difficulty.

Testing Procedures and quantitative analysis will not generally be required for structural members or systems except for such cases where visual examination has revealed such need, or where apparent loading conditions may be critical.

Manual Procedures such as chipping small areas of concrete and surface finishes for closer examinations are encouraged in preference to sampling and/or testing where visual examination alone is deemed insufficient. Generally, unfinished areas of buildings such as utility spaces, maintenance areas, stairwells and elevator shafts should be utilized for such purposes. In some cases, to be held to a minimum, ceilings or other construction finishes may have to be opened for selective examination of critical structural elements. In that event, such locations should be carefully located to be least disruptive, most easily repaired and held to a minimum. In any event, a sufficient number of structural members must be examined to afford reasonable assurances that such are representative of the total structure.

Evaluating an existing structure for the effects of time, must take into account two basic considerations; movement of structural components with respect to each other, and deterioration of materials.

With respect to the former, volume change considerations, principally from ambient temperature changes, and possibly long-time deflections, are likely to be most significant. Foundation movements will frequently be of importance, usually settlement, although upward movement due to expansive soils may occur, although infrequently in this area. Older buildings on spread footings may exhibit continual, even recent settlements if founded on deep unconsolidated fine grained or cohesive soils, or from subterranean losses or movements from several possible causes.

With very little qualifications, such as rather rare chemically reactive conditions deterioration of building materials can

only occur in the presence of moisture, largely related to metals and their natural tendency to return to the oxide state in the corrosive process.

In this marine climate, highly aggressive conditions exist year-round. For most of the year, outside relative humidity may frequently be about 90 or 95%, while within air-conditioned building, relative humidity will normally be about 55% to 60%. Under these conditions moisture vapor pressures ranging from about 1/3 to 1/2 pounds per square inch will exist much of the time. Moisture vapor will migrate to lower pressure areas. Common building materials such as stucco, masonry and even concrete, are permeable even to these slight pressures. Since most of our local construction does not use vapor barriers, condensation will take place within the enclosed walls of the building. As a result, deterioration is most likely adjacent to exterior walls, or wherever else moisture or direct leakage has been permitted to penetrate the building shell.

Structural Deterioration will always require repair. The type of repair, however, will depend upon the importance of the member in the structural system, and degree of deterioration. Cosmetic type repairs may suffice in certain non-sensitive members such as tie beams and columns, provided that the remaining sound material is sufficient for the required function. For members carrying assigned gravity or other loads, cosmetic type repairs will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated by rational analysis that the remaining material, if protected from further deterioration can still perform its assigned function at acceptable stress levels. Failing that, adequate repairs or reinforcement will be considered mandatory.

Written Reports shall be required attesting to each required inspection. Each such report shall note the location of the structure, description of the type of construction, and general magnitude of the structure, the existence of drawings and location thereof, history of the structure to the extent reasonably known, and a description of the type and manner of the inspection, noting problem areas and recommended repairs, if required to maintain structural integrity. See additional reporting requirements outlined in the foregoing of the Policy.

Each report shall include a statement to the effect that the building or structure is structurally safe, unsafe, safe with qualifications, or has been made safe. It is suggested that each report also include the following information indicating the actual scope of the report and limits of liability. This paragraph may be used:

"As a routine matter, in order to avoid possible misunderstanding, nothing in this report should be considered to be a guarantee for any portion of the structure. To the best of my knowledge and ability, this report represents an accurate appraisal of the present condition of the building based upon careful evaluation of observed conditions, to the extent reasonably possible."

Foundations

If all of the supporting subterranean materials were completely uniform beneath a structure, with no significant variations in grain size, density, moisture content or other mechanical properties; and if dead load pressures were completely uniform, settlements would probably be uniform and of little practical consequence. In the real world, however, neither is likely. Significant deviations from either of these two idealisms are likely to result in unequal vertical movements.

Monolithic masonry structures are generally incapable of accepting such movements, and large openings. Since, in most cases, differential shears are involved, cracks will typically be diagonal.

Small movements, in themselves, are most likely to be structurally important only if long term leakage through fine cracks may have resulted in deterioration. In the event of large movements, contiguous structural elements such as floor and roof systems must be evaluated for possible fracture or loss of bearing.

Pile foundations are, in general, less likely to exhibit such difficulties. Where such does occur, special investigation will be required.

Roofs

Sloping roofs, usually having clay or cement tiles, are of concern in the event that the covered membrane may have deflections, if merely resulting from deteriorated rafters or joists will be of greater import. Valley flashing and base flashing at roof penetration will also be matters of concern.

Flat roofs with built up membrane roofs will be similarly critical with respect to deflection considerations. Additionally, since they will generally be approaching expected life limits at the age when The Building Safety Inspection is required, careful examination is important. Blisters, wrinkling, alligating, and loss of gravel are usual signs of difficulty. Punctures or loss of adhesion of base flashings, coupled with loose counterflashing will also signify possibility of other debris, may result in ponding, which if permitted, may become critical.

Masonry Bearing Walls

Random cracking, or if discernible, definitive patterns of cracking, will of course, be of interest. Bulging, sagging, or other signs of misalignment may also indicate related problems in other structural elements. Masonry walls where commonly constructed of either concrete masonry units, or scored clay tile, may have been constructed with either reinforced concrete columns and tie beams, or lintels.

Of most probable importance will be the vertical and horizontal cracks where masonry units abut tie columns, or other frame elements such as floor slabs. Of interest here is the observation that although the raw materials of which these masonry materials are made may have much the same mechanical properties as the reinforced concrete framing, their actual behavior in the structure, however, is likely to differ with respect to volume change resulting from moisture content, and variations in ambient thermal conditions.

Moisture vapor penetration, sometimes abetted by salt laden aggregate and corroding rebars, will usually be the most common cause of deterioration. Tie columns are rarely structurally sensitive, and a fair amount of deterioration may be tolerated before structural impairment becomes important. Cosmetic type repair involving cleaning, and parching to effectively seal the member, may often suffice. A similar approach may not be unreasonable for tie beams, provided they are not also serving as lintels. In that event, a rudimentary analysis of load capability using the remaining actual rebar area, may be required.

Floor and Roof Systems

Cast in place reinforced concrete slabs and/or beams and joists may often show problems due to corroding rebars resulting from cracks or merely inadequate protecting cover of concrete. Patching procedures will usually suffice where such damage has not been extensive. Where corrosion and spalling has been extensive in structurally critical areas, competent analysis with respect to remaining structural capacity, relative to actual supported loads, will be necessary. Type and extent of repair will be dependent upon the results of such investigation.

Pre-cast members may present similar deterioration conditions. End support conditions may also be important. Adequacy of bearing, indications of end shear problems, and restraint conditions are important, and should be evaluated in at least a few typical locations.

Steel bar joists are, of course, sensitive to corrosion. Most critical locations will be web member welds, especially near supports, where shear stresses are high and possible failure may be sudden, and without warning.

Cold formed steel joists, usually of relatively light gage steel, are likely to be critically sensitive to corrosion, and are highly dependent upon at least nominal lateral support to carry designed loads. Bridging and the floor or roof system itself, if in good condition, will serve the purpose.

Wood joists and rafters are most often in difficulty from "dry rot", or the presence of termites. The former (a misnomer) is most often prevalent in the presence of sustained moisture or lack of adequate ventilation. A member may usually be deemed in acceptable condition if a sharp pointed tool will penetrate no more than about one eighth of an inch under moderate hand pressure. Sagging floors will most often indicate problem areas.

Gypsum roof decks will usually perform satisfactorily except in the presence of moisture. Disintegration of the material and the form-board may result from sustained leakage. Anchorage of the supporting bulb tees against uplift may also be of importance.

Floor and roof systems of cast in place concrete with self-centering reinforcing, such as paper backed mesh and rib-lath, may be critical with respect to corrosion of the unprotected reinforcing. Loss of uplift anchorage on roof decks will also be important if significant deterioration has taken place, in the event that dead loads are otherwise inadequate for that purpose. Expansion joints exposed to the weather must also be checked.

Steel Framing System

Corrosion, obviously enough, will be the determining factor in the deterioration of structural steel. Most likely suspect areas will be fasteners, welds, and the interface area where bearings are embedded in masonry. Column bases may often be suspect in areas where flooding has been experienced, especially if salt water has been involved. Concrete fireproofing will, if it exists, be the best clue indicating the condition of the steel.

Concrete Framing Systems

Concrete deterioration will, in most cases, similarly be related to rebar corrosion possibly abetted by the presence of saltwater aggregate or excessively permeable concrete. In this respect, honeycomb areas may contribute adversely to the rate of deterioration. Columns are frequently most suspect. Extensive honeycomb is most prevalent at the base of columns, where fresh concrete was permitted to segregate, dropping into form boxes. This type of problem has been known to be compounded in areas where flooding has occurred, especially involving salt water.

Thin cracks usually indicate only minor corrosion, requiring minor patching only. Extensive spalling may indicate a much more serious condition requiring further investigation.

In spall areas, chipping away a few small loose samples of concrete may be very revealing. Especially, since loose material will have to be removed even for cosmetic type repairs, anyway. Fairly reliable quantitative conclusions may be drawn with respect to the quality of the concrete. Even though our cement and local aggregate are essentially derived from the same sources, cement will have a characteristically dark grayish brown color in contrast to the almost white aggregate. A typically white, almost alabaster like coloration will usually indicate reasonably good overall strength.

Windows and Doors

Window and door condition is of considerable importance with respect to two considerations. Continued leakage may have resulted in other adjacent damage and deteriorating anchorage may result in loss of the entire unit in the event of severe windstorms even short of hurricane velocity. Perimeter sealants, glazing, seals, and latches should be examined with a view toward deterioration of materials and anchorage of units for inward as well as outward (suction) pressure, most importantly in high buildings.

Structural Glazing

When installed on threshold buildings, structural glazing curtain wall systems, shall be inspected by the owner at 6-month intervals for the first year after completion of the installation. The purpose of the inspection shall be to determine the structural condition and adhesive capacity of the silicone sealant. Subsequent inspections shall be performed at least once every 5 years at regular intervals for structurally glazed curtain wall systems installed on threshold buildings.

Wood Framing

Older wood framed structures, especially of the industrial type, are of concern in that long term deflections may have opened important joints, even in the absence of deterioration. Corrosion of ferrous fasteners will in most cases be obvious enough. Dry rot must be considered suspect in all sealed areas where ventilation has been inhibited, and at bearings and at fasteners. Here too, penetration with a pointed tool greater than about one eighth inch with moderate hand pressure will indicate the possibility of further difficulty.

Building Facade

Appurtenances on an exterior wall of a threshold building are elements including, but not limited to, any cladding material, precast appliques, exterior fixtures, ladders to rooftops, flagpoles, signs, railings, copings, guardrails, curtain walls, balcony and terrace enclosures, including greenhouses or solariums, window guards, window air conditioners, flower boxes, satellite dishes, antennae, cell phone towers, and any equipment attached to or protruding from the façade that is mechanically and/or adhesive attached.

Loading

It is of importance to note that even in the absence of any observable deterioration, loading conditions must be viewed with caution. Recognizing that there will generally be no need to verify the original design, since it will have already been "time tested", this premise has validity only if loading patterns and conditions **remain unchanged**. Any material change in type and/or magnitude or loading in older buildings should be viewed as sufficient justification to examine load carrying capability of the affected structural system.

II. SCOPE OF ELECTRICAL INSPECTION

The purpose of the required inspection and report is to confirm with reasonable fashion that the building or structure and all habitable and non-habitable areas, as deemed necessary by the inspecting professional, to establish compliance are safe for continued use under present occupancy. As mentioned before, this is a recommended procedure, and under no circumstances are these minimum recommendations intended to supplant proper professional judgment.

Electric Service

A description of the type of service supplying the building or structure must be provided, stating the size of amperage, if three (3) phase or single (1) phase, and if the system is protected by fuses or breakers. Proper grounding of the service should also be in good standing. The meter and electric rooms should have sufficient clearance for equipment and for the serviceman to perform both work and inspections. Gutters and electrical panels should all be in good condition throughout the entire building or structure.

Branch Circuits

Branch circuits in the building must all be identified, and an evaluation of the conductors must be performed. There should also exist proper grounding for equipment used in the building, such as an emergency generator, or elevator motor.

Conduit Raceways

All types of wiring methods present in the building must be detailed and individually inspected. The evaluation of each type of conduit and cable, if applicable, must be done individually. The conduits in the building should be free from erosion and checked for considerable dents in the conduits that may be prone to cause a short. The conductors and cables in these conduits should be chafe free and their currents not over the rated amount.

Emergency Lighting

Exit sign lights and emergency lighting, along with a functional fire alarm system, if applicable, must all be in good working condition.

Infrared Thermography Inspection

For electrical services operating at 400 amperes or greater, an infrared thermography inspection with a written report of the following electrical equipment must be provided as applicable or as otherwise indicated below: busways, switchgear, panelboards (except in dwelling unit load centers), disconnects, VFDS, starters, control panels, timers, meter centers, gutters, junction boxes, automatic/manual transfer switches, exhaust fans and transformers. The infrared inspection of electrical equipment shall be performed by a Level-II or higher certified infrared thermographer who is qualified and trained to recognize and document thermal anomalies in electrical systems and possesses over 7 5 years of experience inspecting electrical systems associated with commercial buildings.

III. HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS, PERMITTING, REPAIRS AND REPORTS

An attempt shall be made to investigate the existence of documents with the local jurisdiction to assist with the overall inspection of the building.

Understanding the structural system, building components, and intended design may guide the design professional to investigate certain critical areas of the structure.

Violations through the local jurisdiction's code compliance division should be investigated. Cases on file may lead to issues pre-existing with the building, especially any unsafe structure determinations. Depending on the nature of the violation, Building Safety Inspections may be affected.

Unpermitted activities may also affect the outcome of a Building Safety Inspection, especially with unpermitted additions to the building. The Building Safety Inspection of a building is conducted on the entire structure including the original construction and any subsequent permitted addition. Unpermitted additions found by the Building Safety Inspection process present an unsafe situation and must be identified in the report, even if found to be properly built. Like a repair process identified by the report, legalizing an unpermitted addition would be a prerequisite to the completion of a successful Building Safety Inspection report. Examples of unpermitted work that may affect Building Safety Inspections include, but are not limited to additions, alterations, balcony enclosures, etc.

Repairs identified in the Building Safety Inspection report will most likely require permits. Once the initial report is completed it should be immediately submitted to the local jurisdiction for processing. Do not proceed to conduct repairs without permits. Some repairs, like changing a bulb in an exit sign, may not require a permit but most other work will require permits. Proceeding without obtaining repair permits may lead to a violation of the code. Additionally, repairs being conducted under a permit will afford additional time to comply with a complete Building Safety Inspection report.

Completing the Reports concisely is vital to the overall understanding of the conditions of the building and successful completion of the Building Safety Inspection process. The approved report forms provided must be used, proprietary forms will not be accepted. Such forms are to be considered supplemental to and in addition to a detailed written report. Sufficient photos shall be included to adequately convey typical conditions observed, particularly where defects are found. Where provided, photos must be in color and with sufficient resolution to detail the conditions being shown. Building Safety Inspection reports may be audited, and the subject building may be inspected at the discretion of the Building Official. The Building Official reserves the right to rescind or revoke an approved Building Safety Inspection report.

The **Code in Effect** at the time of the original construction is the baseline for the Building Safety Inspections. Subsequent improvements to the original building should be inspected based on the Code at the time of permitting. It is not the intent of the Building Safety Inspection that buildings must be brought into compliance with current codes.