



AUGUST 2015

**PRIVATE PROFESSIONAL INSPECTION PROGRAM
PROCEDURES**

I. GENERAL REQUIREMENT INFORMATION

- A. All construction in unincorporated Fulton County is required to conform to the provisions of the current codes adopted by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners, including but not limited to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Construction Codes, Fulton County Zoning Resolution, the Metropolitan River Protection Act, Tree Protection Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations and the Erosion and Sedimentation Regulations. All approved Private Professional Inspectors will be required to have copies of the above mentioned documents and perform all inspections with the intent to ensure conformity with these documents. Periodically, the Board makes amendments and/or adopts additional regulations.
- B. Private Professional Inspectors may provide inspections only in their field of expertise in accordance with the qualifications chart at the end of this document.
- C. **FULTON COUNTY WILL AUTHORIZE AND ACCEPT PRIVATE PROFESSIONAL INSPECTIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING:**
 - 1. Commercial (non-one and two family dwellings): All inspections, if certified in accordance with the qualification chart. Note, however, that ALL building finals shall be performed by the Fulton County Fire Marshall. Further note that IBC Chapter 17 Special Inspections are required and are initiated and paid for by the Permit Holder and will be monitored by Fulton County Staff. All Final Site inspections (530) are to be conducted by Fulton County staff.
 - 2. Residential: All inspections, if certified in accordance with the qualifications chart, with the exception of the Final Site Inspections. All Final Site inspections (530) are to be conducted by Fulton County staff.
- D. Definitions:
 - 1. **Principal Professional** – an officer of a firm or organization for which an

application has been tendered to perform services within the scope of this program.

2. **Professional** – one who holds a license from the State of Georgia to practice engineering or architecture within a certain discipline or area of expertise.
3. **GASWCC** – Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

II. PROCEDURES FOR APPROVAL AS PRIVATE PROFESSIONAL INSPECTOR FIRMS

- A. Applicants must complete and submit a Private Professional Inspector Program Application Form, along with all other required documentation listed on the Application Checklist to:

Fulton County Department of Planning and Community Services
Attn: Michelle Macauley, Assistant Director
5440 Fulton Industrial Boulevard
Atlanta, Georgia 30336

- B. Terms of approval for a firm will not be limited provided all required qualifications are maintained. Copies of certification(s) will be requested periodically.
- C. Requirements for firms to be approved for the Private Professional Inspector Program for Fulton County are as follows:
 1. The Principal Professional must be an officer of the company making application and should be registered with the Secretary of State-Corporations Division.
 2. All Engineers and Architects shall be registered in the State of Georgia.
 3. Professionals shall be certified by the International Code Conference **(Please note qualifications chart)**.
 4. Professionals shall have completed “Advanced Fundamentals of Erosion and Sediment Control” course from the University System of Georgia or an equivalent course approved in advance by Fulton County, which shall be renewed bi-annually. Professionals shall be a Level IB Inspector certified by the GASWCC (Red Card).
 5. All participants of the program must be familiar with all Fulton County Codes and Regulations.
- D. If a firm is removed from the approved list for any reason, employees working for the Firm will also be removed from the list.
- E. Only the approved firm will submit inspection documents. Only a Principal in the

firm will respond to Fulton County when procedural or inspection problems occur.

F. Insurance Requirements:

1. Comprehensive General Liability Insurance:
\$1,000,000 limit of liability per occurrence for bodily injury and property damage.
2. Professional Liability Insurance:
\$500,000 limit per occurrence (insurer must be authorized to do business in the State of Georgia).
3. The cancellation provision shall provide for 30 days notice to Fulton County.
4. Certificate Holder shall read:
Fulton County Board of Commissioners
141 Pryor Street, S.W.
Atlanta, GA 30303
5. Fulton County Board of Commissioners (and any applicable authority) shall be shown as an additional insured on general liability policy.
6. Insurance company shall have an A.M. Best rating as of A-6 or higher or Lloyd's of London rating.
7. Insurance Company shall be licensed to do business by the Georgia Department of Insurance.
8. Insured shall submit certificate renewals annually.

G. All participants must comply with the participation and training requirements as set forth herein. The disqualification for any reason of a principal engineer or licensed professional identified by the application of the firm for participation in the program will disqualify the firm.

H. Fulton County will provide periodic training. Attendance at these sessions is mandatory.

III. PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING PRIVATE ENGINEER INSPECTIONS

A. Builders may request inspections at their own discretion from approved Program firms. The builder/developer will contact the approved firm directly to request an inspection.

B. Prior to conducting a footing, foundation or slab inspection, the firm must:

1. Confirm all required permits have been issued for that site;
2. Determine if there are any "holds" or "stop work orders" on the construction project.

To verify send email to Permit.Status@fultoncountyga.gov. In the subject line type "send all for _____". (In the blank provide the permit number.) For example, for Building Permit B15-001, in the subject line you should type, "send all for B15-001". You will shortly receive an email back from Fulton County with a complete status report on that permit.

Please note: Fulton County is currently amending the Fulton County Subdivision Regulations to require additional requirements prior to a footing/foundation/slab inspection. Once these changes have been approved by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners, all future footing/foundation/slab inspections will be required to meet the new standards:

- C. The firm shall not make any inspection of a project:
 - 1. Where all required permits have not been issued.
 - 2. If erosion control measures (including construction entrance, silt fence and tree save fence) are not satisfactory.
 - 3. If mud or silt is leaving the site.
 - 4. If a "stop work order" or "stop inspection order" is issued.
 - 5. If previous required inspections have not been approved.

- D. Once it has been verified that none of the conditions listed in paragraph C exist, the site may be visited and the inspection performed. The following must be verified at the job site before conducting the inspection:
 - 1. The building permit card is posted in accordance with Fulton County permit posting standards.
 - 2. Erosion Control measures are in place per the Fulton County Soil Erosion, Sedimentation and Pollution Control Ordinance of 2010, as amended. (Including construction entrance, silt fence and tree save fence).
 - 3. There are no state waters or Fulton County stream buffer encroachments; and all land disturbance is within the limits shown on the approved site plan.

IF THESE ITEMS ARE NOT IN PLACE THE BUILDER AND FULTON COUNTY INSPECTIONS DIVISION MUST BE NOTIFIED.

E. FLOOD PLAIN CERTIFICATION:

All foundation type inspections will include, where applicable, the Flood Plain Elevation Certificate.

- 1. Upon arriving at the site the inspector will view the approved site plan to determine if an Elevation Certificate is required. When an Elevation Certificate is required it will be noted on the approved site plan. The

notation method will be; a sticker stating "C.O.-Hold for: () Certificate of Elevation" "DH-C", "MFFE", or "LFFE" printed or written on the plan. The hold will also be noted on Permits Plus.

2. The inspector may perform the foundation inspection. If the foundation meets all other applicable requirements the inspector may grant a "partial approval" until the Elevation Certificate is provided.
3. An Elevation Certificate can only be accepted if it contains a valid seal (P.E., Registered Land Surveyor, or Registered Architect), signature and statement that the lowest floor level is a minimum of three (3) feet above the flood plan.
4. When a partial approval is granted the inspector will enter the partial approval on the Fulton County Issued Permit Card and Inspection Result Form. The Inspection Result Form should note that an Elevation Certificate is required and identify any other issues found.
5. Once the inspector receives the Certificate of Elevation and there are no other outstanding issues, the status is to be changed from partial approval to "Approved".
6. All Elevation Certificates are to be sent to the attention of Michelle Macauley (michelle.macauley@fultoncountyga.gov) for placement in Permits Plus.
7. Failure to comply with this policy once during one annual period will result in a notice of non-compliance asking for an explanation and plan for recompense.
8. As this is a Federal policy, the County has no flexibility in allowance of non-compliance.

E. After an inspection has been completed, the following shall occur:

1. Sign the Fulton County issued Building Permit card in indelible BLUE INK in the appropriate block to indicate approval or denial.
2. Inspection results are to be sent in the form of a completed Fulton County Inspection Result Form. This form is to be emailed to PPIP@fultoncountyga.gov within two (2) days of date of inspection. The email subject line should include the words "Inspection Results" and list the Permit Number and Site Address. The Inspection Result Form is not considered complete without the engineers/architects seal.

F. Any inspection performed by a Private Professional Inspector that has been previously rejected by a Fulton County Inspector shall meet the following criteria:

1. Private Professional Inspector must document that items rejected by Fulton County inspectors were corrected. These items must be addressed individually (item by item) in a sealed letter.

2. Fulton County inspectors will review said notarized letter and will approve and post the report or perform a re-inspection within two (2) days.
 3. If the Fulton County inspector is unable to accept the inspection, the Private Professional Inspector will be contacted to devise a plan for resolution. This plan is to be communicated to the builder by the Private Professional Inspector. The Private Professional Inspector must require the builder to meet the standards assessed by the Fulton County Inspector. The Private Professional Inspector must re-inspect and document compliance in a follow-up letter to the Fulton County inspector. The Fulton County inspector will review said follow-up letter and will either approve and post the report or perform a re-inspection within two (2) days.
 4. The Private Professional Inspector shall not post the inspection to Fulton County. To do so may be grounds for immediate dismissal from the program without the opportunity to be reinstated.
- G. Private Professional Inspectors must possess and carry a valid Georgia Drivers License, valid Level IB Red Card, and a copy of their ICC Certification or Engineer/Architect license from the State of Georgia during any inspection. Said identification must be provided upon request.
- H. There will be zero tolerance for inspections not performed by an approved Professional. Such inspections will not be approved and elements that have been covered will be required to be uncovered. This will include, but is not limited to, drywall and/or concrete removal.
- I. After-The-Fact Inspections:
1. When called upon to conduct an inspection for any element that has been covered up prior to inspection or which falls in succession to an inspection that is not posted for approval pursuant to a previous inspection, the Private Professional Inspector is to contact the Fulton County Building Official and ask in writing, (preferably by email), for permission to perform the inspection. In this request, the Private Professional Inspector is to specify in what way they will ensure that the elements that have been covered will be assessed to be in compliance with applicable codes. Not until that inspector receives written permission from the Fulton County Building Official are they to proceed with the inspection.
 2. If the Private Professional Inspector is found to be responsible for the fact that a previous inspection they performed was not properly posted and are now required to assess the compliance to code for an element that has been subsequently covered up; that inspector shall provide a written report, sealed with the Professional's seal to the Fulton County Building

Official stating the steps that will be taken to ensure that the previous standards were in place prior to any additional work being done in that area or discipline. Not until Fulton County has accepted the report can the inspection be posted or any subsequent inspection be posted to the permit by the Private Professional Inspector. This is not considered an "After-The-Fact" inspection as described above.

IV. PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION OF PROCEDURES

The following are the penalty procedures for violation of the guidelines as set forth in these Private Professional Inspector procedures for Approved Firms.

Citizen Complaint:

Firm will be notified by the County, with a set time for resolution.

Firm will provide response, i.e., if there is a violation, state the code(s) that were violated and in what way, and what the builder has done or is not willing to do to correct the problem.

If the builder complies, the issue is closed.

If the builder does not comply, a County Inspector will follow up, through court action, if necessary, and a warning letter will be sent to the individual who originally performed the inspections with copies to the Firm.

Two warning letters within a twelve-month period in a given discipline, for any individual, will result in a letter of reprimand.

A second letter of reprimand will result in suspension for one 24-month period.

If a third reprimand is issued, the individual will be dismissed from the program without the opportunity for reinstatement in that discipline.

The following is a non-exclusive list of problem areas:

- Inspection Report(s) Not Submitted on Time
- Inspection Report(s) Not Dated/Signed
- Professional's Seal Not on Inspection Report(s)
- Building Permit Card(s) Not Signed
- Erosion Control Measures Not Installed
- Performing Unauthorized Inspection(s)
- Inspection(s) Passed With Hold on Project
- Failure to Notify Department of Violation of Setback Requirements
- Failure to Attend the Required Training Sessions
- Any inspections are performed when a "stop work order" or "stop inspection order" is posted

Automatic dismissal from the program will occur if:

- Any inspections are performed on work in which the inspector and/or firm has a fiduciary interest
- Unauthorized Employees Performing Inspection(s)
- Falsification of records, i.e., certification of an inspection without actually going to the site and performing a personal on-site inspection personally
- Errors and omissions which are clearly and obviously negligence of the inspector

**QUALIFICATIONS CHART
FOR PROFESSIONAL INSPECTION PROGRAM**

Type of Inspection to be Performed	Professional Qualifications
Commercial Footing Inspections	- State of Georgia Registered Civil/Structural Engineer -Level IB Certification by GASWCC
One and Two Family Residential Footing inspections	-State of Georgia Registered Civil/Structural Engineer and ICC certified Residential Building Inspector -Level IB Certification by GASWCC
One and Two Family Residential Framing and Final Building Inspections	-State of Georgia Registered Architect or Engineer and ICC Residential Building Inspector -Level IB Certification by GASWCC
Commercial Building Inspections not disallowed elsewhere herein	- State of Georgia Registered Architect or Engineer and ICC Commercial Building Inspector -Level IB Certification by GASWCC
One and Two Family Residential Electrical Inspection	- State of Georgia Registered Architect or Engineer and ICC Residential Electrical Inspector -Level IB Certification by GASWCC
Commercial Electrical Inspections	- State of Georgia Registered Architect or Engineer and ICC Commercial Electrical Inspector -Level IB Certification by GASWCC
One and Two Family Residential Mechanical Inspection	- State of Georgia Registered Architect or Engineer and ICC Residential Mechanical Inspector -Level IB Certification by GASWCC
Commercial Mechanical Inspections	-State of Georgia Registered Architect or Engineer and ICC Commercial Mechanical Inspector -Level IB Certification by GASWCC
One and Two Family Residential Plumbing Inspection	- State of Georgia Registered Architect or Engineer and ICC Residential Plumbing Inspector -Level IB Certification by GASWCC
Commercial Plumbing Inspections	- State of Georgia Registered Architect or Engineer and ICC Commercial Plumbing Inspector -Level IB Certification by GASWCC