



ICC ORANGE EMPIRE CHAPTER CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

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DATE: NOVEMBER 20, 2008

QUESTION:

Is special inspection required in R3 and U occupancy that is accessory to R3 occupancy?

CODE SECTION:

2007 California Building Code (CBC) Section 1704 Exception 3 exempts the requirements for special inspections unless required otherwise by the building official for R3 occupancies and U occupancies that are accessory to the residential occupancy.

DISCUSSION:

CBC defines R3 and U occupancies in part:

Section 310.1 stipulates R3 occupancy to include townhouses up to three stories in height from grade with a separate means of egress, buildings not more than two dwelling units, adult care facilities, childcare facilities and congregate living facilities with 16 or fewer persons.

Section 312 stipulates Utility and Miscellaneous group U occupancy to include, but not be limited to, Aircraft Hangars which are associated with one and two-family residences and shall be limited to 2000 sq. ft. in area and 20 feet in height per Section 412.3, Grain Silos which are associated with residential occupancy, carports, private garages, retaining walls, etc.

Section 202 defines Townhouses to be a group of three or more attached units in which each unit extends from the foundation to roof and with open space on at least two sides.

Section 310.2 defines congregate living facilities as a building or part thereof that contains sleeping units where residents share the bathroom and/or kitchen facility.

In view of the above occupancy description and depending on the geographic location of the structures such as hillside area, buildings of R3 and/or U occupancies with modern architectural design features could be very complex and large in size with various building

height. Code prescribed special inspections may be necessary to assure material used and quality of the construction.

Section 1704.1 Exception 1 and 2 basically exempt special inspection requirement for minor works and building components that do not require practice of any professional engineer or architect as stipulated in the Business and Professional Code. CBC 1704.1, Exception #3 exempts R3 occupancies from special inspection unless required by the building official.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. The responsible Building Official adopts a policy depicting specifically the types of R3 buildings or structures and conditions of construction that require special inspection under this particular exemption. A sample policy is attached.
2. Special Inspections are not required in the non-hillside area for one story single family dwelling, two family dwelling and its accessory structures that are designed prescriptively using light frame conventional construction.
3. As part of the policy the committee recommends that Special Inspection not be required for wood shear walls, shear panels and diaphragms, including nailing, bolting, anchoring and other fastening to other components of the seismic-force-resisting system.

Sample City, Building and Safety
Sample Information Bulletin: SIB-B001-2008

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**Special Inspection for R3 and U Occupancies Accessory to
a Residential Occupancy**

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This information bulletin is to clarify the requirement of Special Inspection under California Building Code (CBC) 2007, Section 1704.1, Exception 3 for R3 and U Occupancies accessory to a residential occupancy, and under associated Section 1707 for Special Inspection for seismic resistance.

Special inspection is not required for one story single family and two family dwellings and its accessory structures such as garage, carport or similar structures, in a non-hillside area that are constructed prescriptively under CBC Section 2308.

To portion of the building that exceeds the limitation as outlined under Section 2308.2 for conventional light-frame construction, applicable Special Inspection depicted under Section 1704 shall apply.

Special Inspection in general is not required for all R3 and U Occupancies in wood construction for diaphragm nailing, bolting, anchoring within seismic-force-resisting system which includes but not be limited to shear walls, drag struts, hold-downs, etc.

For Architectural Components under Section 1707.7 and Mechanical and Electrical Components under Section 1707.8, item 1 through 4, Special Inspection is not required.

Unless otherwise required by the engineer of record, engineered concrete or masonry fences, retaining walls not over 6' high with level backfill and no surcharge, deep footings with cantilever columns designed to resist lateral forces, are exempt from Special Inspection.

For all non-required Special Inspections depicted in this bulletin, inspection shall be performed by the Department inspectors in lieu of Code required special inspectors.