

## **City of Portsmouth Third Party Inspections Policy**

This policy shall govern the use of third party inspection services within the City of Portsmouth. This policy shall become effective on 7/1/2009.

The USBC provides the Building Official with discretionary authority in the use of third party inspectors (2012 USBC 113.7 .1). Prior to performing inspections, the Building Official shall approve third party inspectors wishing to perform inspections within the City of Portsmouth. The Building Official will not accept inspections performed by non-approved inspectors. The Building Official will approve only individual inspectors and will not approve inspection firms.

Third Party inspectors seeking approval to perform third party inspections shall:

- Submit evidence that they are qualified to perform the inspections for which they are seeking approval. Such evidence may include state or national certification, state professional registrations or other credentials or evidence deemed equivalent by the Building Official.
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of the Code by passing examinations and being certified by the state Department of Housing and Community Development in the discipline for which they are inspecting.

The Building Official shall provide written notice to all inspectors approved to make third party inspections within the City of Portsmouth. This notice shall include the type of work that they are approved to inspect, and any limitations imposed by the Building Official.

Third party inspection services will **only** be permitted if:

- The City's inspectors cannot inspect the work within 48 hours (2 working days) of when the inspection was requested, due to scheduling difficulties.
- The nature and scope of the work to be inspected exceeds the technical expertise of the City's inspectors, or requires special on-site design.
- The Building Code, or condition listed on the Building Permit, requires the use of special inspections for a particular type of work.

The permit holder shall be responsible to:

- Ensure that the third party inspector is approved to inspect the work that they are inspecting.
- File all third party inspection reports with the Building Official within 24 hours of the inspection, including any and all rejections of work. Reports may be faxed or

emailed to the Building Official, provided a true copy is mailed within 1 week of the inspection.

Failure to submit reports in a timely manner is cause to revoke the approved use of third party inspection service in place of the City's inspectors.

Third party inspectors may not be used to inspect work that has been rejected by the Building Official or City Building Inspectors, unless otherwise approved by the Building Official.

With the exception of elevator inspectors, third party inspectors may not perform "final" inspections.

Appeals concerning this policy, the approval of third party inspectors, or the revocation of "approved" status shall be directed to the City of Portsmouth Building Code Board of Appeals.

**2012 Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, section 113.7  
Approved inspection agencies.**

The building official may accept reports of inspections and tests from approved individuals or approved inspection agencies, which satisfy qualifications and reliability requirements. Under circumstances where the building official is unable to make the inspection or test within two working days of a request or an agreed upon date, the building official shall accept reports for review from such approved individuals or agencies. Such reports shall be in writing and shall be certified by the individual inspector or by the responsible officer when the report is from an agency.

**Note:** Photographs, videotapes or other sources of pertinent data or information may be considered as constituting such reports and tests.