



Wisconsin - Special Inspections and Project Documentation

Special inspections are field activities, but planning begins well before work reaches the inspection point. Before concrete is placed, steel is connected, firestopping is installed, or exterior wall systems are enclosed, the inspection path should already be defined, including which inspections are required, who will perform them, what documentation is needed, and how discrepancies will be tracked and resolved.

Planning early helps keep work moving, supports communication with the building official or authority having jurisdiction (AHJ), and creates a stronger project record for the owner.

Defining the Role of Quality Assurance

Construction teams benefit from distinguishing between contractor-led procedures and independent verification. Quality control focuses on the contractor's internal monitoring, training, and procedures to help ensure the work meets project requirements from the start. Special inspections fall under quality assurance. These inspections and tests are conducted by an approved agency, such as Intertek, working on behalf of the owner or supervising professional to verify compliance with the code and approved construction documents.

"Defining inspection requirements early helps teams avoid missed inspection windows, incomplete reports, and closeout delays."

Planning the Inspection Scope

The special inspection scope is best mapped before work reaches a required inspection stage. The statement of special inspections and local jurisdiction requirements help determine when the inspector needs to be present and how reports should be submitted.

Special inspections are generally governed by the adopted building code for the project location, often based on Chapter 17 of the International Building Code (IBC), along with state amendments, local jurisdiction requirements, and the approved construction documents. In Wisconsin, projects must account for the Wisconsin Commercial Building Code, including Wisconsin



Administrative Code SPS 361-366 and 2021 IBC Chapter 17, as applicable to the project.

Required inspections may include soils and foundations, reinforced concrete, structural steel, masonry, fire-resistant penetrations, and other items identified in the approved construction documents. The scope can also include specialty testing or inspections for systems identified in the project documents and required by the authority having jurisdiction.

The same planning principle applies beyond Wisconsin. Code editions, state amendments, local AHJ procedures, and documentation requirements can vary by project location. Confirming those requirements early helps the team avoid missed inspection windows, incomplete reports, and closeout delays.

Coordinating Periodic and Continuous Inspections

The difference between periodic and continuous inspection can affect construction scheduling. Continuous special inspection requires the inspector to be present during the work, so the schedule should account for the inspector's availability. Periodic special inspection allows the inspector to be present at intervals and at completion. Even with periodic reviews, checkpoints help prevent work from being covered or advanced before the required review occurs.

Early coordination helps clarify how field reports will be distributed and confirms that the necessary drawings or shop documents are available to the inspector on site.

Addressing Fabricated Items

Special inspection requirements often extend beyond the project site to the fabricator's shop. When structural members are fabricated off-site, inspection may be required during fabrication unless the building official has approved the shop to operate without special inspections. At completion, the approved fabricator provides a certificate of compliance confirming that the

work was performed in accordance with the approved documents. That documentation helps connect shop work and field work to the permanent project record.

Reporting and Resolving Nonconforming Work

The reporting process creates the documentation needed for closeout. The special inspector records required inspections and tests and reports discrepancies to the contractor for correction. If a discrepancy is not corrected, it is brought to the attention of the building official and the design professional before that phase of work is complete.

The final report documents the required special inspections and tests for review by the building official and the project team. It also gives the owner a clearer record of construction-phase compliance, including what was reviewed, what correction is required, and what was resolved.

How Intertek Supports Construction Teams

Intertek supports projects from site selection through property management, providing services including geotechnical engineering, construction materials testing, environmental consulting, special inspections, and related construction-phase support. Inspection and testing services may include reinforced concrete, structural steel, firestopping, waterproofing, and other construction elements identified in the project documents.

Click [here](#) to learn more.

LinkedIn Insights (Issue 020)



1.800.WORLDLAB



icenter@intertek.com



intertek.com/building

*Click here to
subscribe
to our LinkedIn
Newsletter*