

2021 Virginia Construction Code

CHAPTER 17 SPECIAL INSPECTIONS AND TESTS

SECTION 1703 APPROVALS

1703.1 Approved agency.

An approved agency responsible for laboratory testing or special inspections, or both, must comply with the qualification, certification and experience requirements of [ASTM E329](#) or the alternatives listed herein.

1703.1.1 Independence.

An approved agency shall be objective and competent. The agency shall also disclose possible conflicts of interest so that objectivity can be confirmed. The special inspector and their agents shall be independent from the person, persons or contractor responsible for the physical *construction* of the project requiring special inspections.

1703.1.2 Equipment.

An *approved agency* shall have adequate equipment to perform required tests. The equipment shall be periodically calibrated.

1703.1.3 Personnel.

An approved agency shall employ experienced personnel educated in conducting, supervising and evaluating tests or inspections, or both. Upon request by the building official, documentation shall be provided demonstrating the applicable agency's accreditation as noted in [ASTM E329](#) and individuals' resumes indicating pertinent training, certifications and other qualifications for special inspection personnel associated with the proposed *construction* requiring special inspections. The building official may prescribe the manner of qualification documentation and frequency of updating information regarding agency or individual inspector approval.

Firms providing special inspection services or individual inspectors seeking approval of alternative certifications or qualifications, or both, listed in [ASTM E329](#) may submit documentation demonstrating equivalency. This documentation may include evidence of meeting other recognized standards or alternative certifications to demonstrate that the minimum qualifications, certification and experience intended by [ASTM E329](#) have been met. The building official may, if satisfied that equivalency has been demonstrated, approve the credentials of the firm or individual.

1703.2 Written approval.

Any material, appliance, equipment, system or method of construction meeting the requirements of this code shall be *approved* in writing after satisfactory completion of the required tests and submission of required test reports.

1703.3 Record of approval.

For any material, appliance, equipment, system or method of construction that has been *approved*, a record of such approval, including the conditions and limitations of the approval, shall be kept on file in the *building official's* office and shall be available for public review at appropriate times.

1703.4 Performance.

Specific information consisting of test reports conducted by an *approved agency* in accordance with the appropriate referenced standards, or other such information as necessary, shall be provided for the *building official* to determine that the product, material or assembly meets the applicable code requirements.

1703.4.1 Research and investigation.

Sufficient technical data shall be submitted to the *building official* to substantiate the proposed use of any product, material or assembly. If it is determined that the evidence submitted is satisfactory proof of performance for the use intended, the *building official* shall approve the use of the product, material or assembly subject to the requirements of this code. The costs, reports and investigations required under these provisions shall be paid by the *owner* or the *owner's* authorized agent.

1703.4.2 Research reports.

Supporting data, where necessary to assist in the approval of products, materials or assemblies not specifically provided for in this code, shall consist of valid research reports from *approved* sources.

1703.5 Labeling.

Products, materials or assemblies required to be *labeled* shall be *labeled* in accordance with the procedures set forth in [Sections 1703.5.1](#) through [1703.5.4](#).

1703.5.1 Testing.

An *approved agency* shall test a representative sample of the product, material or assembly being *labeled* to the relevant standard or standards. The *approved agency* shall maintain a record of the tests performed. The record shall provide sufficient detail to verify compliance with the test standard.

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1703.5.2 Inspection and identification.

The *approved agency* shall periodically perform an inspection, which shall be in-plant if necessary, of the product or material that is to be *labeled*. The inspection shall verify that the labeled product, material or assembly is representative of the product, material or assembly tested.

1703.5.3 Label information.

The *label* shall contain the manufacturer's identification, model number, serial number or definitive information describing the performance characteristics of the product, material or assembly and the *approved agency's* identification.

1703.5.4 Method of labeling.

Information required to be permanently identified on the product, material or assembly shall be acid etched, sand blasted, ceramic fired, laser etched, embossed or of a type that, once applied, cannot be removed without being destroyed.

1703.6 Evaluation and follow-up inspection services.

Where structural components or other items regulated by this code are not visible for inspection after completion of a prefabricated assembly, the *owner* or the *owner's* authorized agent shall submit a report of each prefabricated assembly. The report shall indicate the complete details of the assembly, including a description of the assembly and its components, the basis upon which the assembly is being evaluated, test results and similar information and other data as necessary for the *building official* to determine conformance to this code. Such a report shall be *approved* by the *building official*.

1703.6.1 Follow-up inspection.

The *owner* or the *owner's* authorized agent shall provide for *special inspections* of *fabricated items* in accordance with [Section 1704.2.5](#).

1703.6.2 Test and inspection records.

Copies of necessary test and *special inspection* records shall be filed with the *building official*.