



# Soils Report and Field Soil Memo

# BI-20

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## **PURPOSE**

To provide a uniform policy/procedure in enforcing the requirements of soil reports and/or soil memos for building permit and inspection processes in the Building Division.

## **POLICY**

A Soil report shall be submitted with all permit applications for new construction and qualifying additions. Soil Reports shall be prepared by a professional engineer licensed by the State to prepare such reports. The Building Official may waive this requirement if he/she finds that the scope of work applied for does not necessitate a soil report.

**Soil Report:** According to amended Section 107.2.6 Soils Report, of the Building Code and due to the unusual expansive soil and slope conditions existing in the City, a soil report and soil investigation, as described in Section 1803.5.10, 1803.5.11 & 1803.6 of the Building Code are required for the following applications:

- New building/structures regardless of soil bearing value used.
- Additions to existing structures over 200 sq. feet.
- Additions built on or within 7 feet of slopes regardless of soil bearing value used.
- Any projects designed with a soil bearing value more than 1500 psf. or 1,000 psf. for isolated footings
- Pool and in-ground spa projects.
- Retaining walls

**Field Soil Memo:** Certain small projects if not listed above are exempt from requirements of the soil report as long as a field memo is stamped and signed by a California licensed civil engineer, geotechnical engineer or engineering geologist who approves the competency of the soil conditions for new footings during the time of footing excavation. The memo shall be submitted to a Building Inspector for review and is to be filed with the Inspection Record.

- Second story additions with new footings on the first floor and the design based on soil bearing value of 1500 psf or less.
- Single story additions with new footings based on soil bearing value of 1500 psf or less.
- Retaining walls which retain less than 6 feet of soil with no surcharge.
- Decks built on slopes regardless of soil bearing value.

When a field soil memo is required, the Plan Check Engineer shall require a note to be shown on the foundation plan stating: **"Prior to foundation inspection, a field soil memo stamped and signed by a licensed civil engineer, geotechnical engineer or engineering geologist is required for soil inspection and recommendations of footing construction."**

Whenever a soil report or field soil memo is required, the Plan Check Engineer shall list the requirements of soil inspection to be performed by a California licensed civil, geotechnical engineer or engineering geologist on a *Special Inspection List* and this list shall be placed on the front page or title sheet of plans.

Miscellaneous work such as footings for patio covers and small retaining walls, do not require field soil memo. The Building Official may waive the requirement of field soil memos for very small additions when, in his opinion, the foundation designs are satisfactory for the soil condition in the City.

This policy is good for the Building Division's use related to building and structural construction. Soil reports related to grading operations or that are required by other City Divisions shall not be subjected to this policy.