

ADMINISTRATIVE BULLETIN

NO. AB-110

DATE 6/21/2017

SUBJECT Permit Review and Operations

TITLE Building Façade Inspection and Maintenance

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Bulletin is to establish policies for implementing San Francisco Existing Building Code Chapter 4E regarding building façade inspection and maintenance.

REFERENCE

2016 San Francisco Existing Building Code,
Chapter 4E, Building Façade Inspection and Maintenance – Retroactive Provisions

2016 California Historical Building Code

San Francisco Planning Code, Articles 10 and 11

ASTM E2270-14, *Standard Practice for Periodic Inspection of Building Facades for Unsafe Conditions*

ASTM E 2841–11, *Standard Guide for Conducting Inspections of Building Façades for Unsafe Conditions*

Code of Federal Regulations, Part 61, *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*

DISCUSSION

San Francisco Existing Building Code Chapter 4E requires that building façades undergo initial and subsequent inspections according to a schedule based on the original construction date of a building. These inspections, as well as reporting and maintenance, are to be done as detailed in this Administrative Bulletin and in accordance with the San Francisco Existing Building Code (SFEBC). SFEBC Section 404E.1 directs that the basis for inspection and reporting is *ASTM E2270-14, Standard Practice for Periodic Inspection of Building Facades for Unsafe Conditions*, as modified and interpreted by this Administrative Bulletin. Façade inspections are primarily to be undertaken to identify unsafe conditions that could jeopardize public safety and to identify other conditions that could deteriorate into unsafe conditions before the next scheduled inspection. The intent of Chapter 4E is to verify that façade elements and systems are maintained such that they will perform in accordance with the code under which they were installed or improved.

APPLICABILITY

Certain buildings that are five or more stories and that are of construction Type I, II, III, or IV are required to have façade inspection and maintenance undertaken in accordance with Chapters 4E, Chapter 4, and this Administrative Bulletin.

Buildings of other construction types and number of stories may voluntarily apply the provisions of this Administrative Bulletin.

INSPECTORS

Required façade inspection and maintenance shall be performed under the direct supervision of a qualified professional who shall be a California licensed architect or engineer retained by the property owner, and who shall oversee all work of qualified inspectors and all reporting.

For inspection of buildings considered to be historic resources, the qualified professional shall have expertise in structural inspection and maintenance of historic resources, subject to the approval of the Director. Such expertise shall consist of documented history of successful projects and/or detailed investigations of historic structures and preparation of recommendations or repair documents for the treatment of such properties in order to preserve them in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

INSPECTION PROCEDURES

- A. For the purpose of meeting the requirements of Chapter 4E, the provisions of *ASTM E2270, Standard Practice for Periodic Inspection of Building Facades for Unsafe Conditions* to be applied shall be those in the ASTM E2270-14 revision of that Standard, as modified in this Administrative Bulletin. Subsequent revisions of ASTM Standard E2270 may apply when specifically referenced in an update of this Administrative Bulletin or by other Department of Building Inspection directive.
- B. Prior to inspection, the owner should determine from the Planning Department if the building qualifies as a “historic resource.” Such information is available on the Planning Department website at <http://www.sf-planning.org/index.aspx?page=1825> or by contacting Planning Department Preservation Program staff at the Planning Information Center (PIC) at 1660 Mission Street, 1st Floor, San Francisco, 415-558-6377, or pic@sfgov.org. If a building is qualified as a “historic resource,” special requirements as noted herein shall be applied.
- C. Special considerations regarding the application of ASTM E2270-14 include:
 1. Detailed floor plans, construction details, and other detailed documentation per ASTM E2270-14, Item 7 are required only as necessary to undertake inspection or communicate inspection findings to property owner or Department of Building Inspection staff. Sufficient building plan information should be assembled to identify areas of inspection, locations or elements requiring maintenance work, locations of unsafe conditions, and other inspection findings.
 2. As part of a general inspection, probes, per ASTM E2270-14, Item 10.4.8, are not mandatory and need not be undertaken unless considered necessary by the qualified professional. Inspection should include careful visual inspection of external indicators of façade deterioration before probing or opening to observe concealed façade components.
- D. The qualified professional shall consult with the property owner and/or building manager regarding any locations of known water leakage or infiltration. This information may be useful in selecting locations for detailed inspection and probes.
- E. Remote sensing techniques, including 3-D survey, remote aerial vehicles, and other non-traditional inspection methods that may be proposed by the qualified professional may be approved by the Director on a case-by-case basis. All applicable regulations regarding the operation of remote vehicles and equipment must be followed.

- F. Note: Persons conducting building façade inspections are encouraged to review ASTM E 2841–11, *Standard Guide for Conducting Inspections of Building Façades for Unsafe Conditions*. That document provides recommended procedures and methodologies for conducting inspections of building façades.

SPECIAL FACADE INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS

A. Inspection of Historic Resources

1. Assessment and recommendations related to facades of historic resources shall be performed in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
2. Inspection methods for historic resources shall use the least intrusive or invasive means *feasible* to effectively assess hidden conditions.
3. When practical, building materials removed to allow for detailed inspection shall be salvaged and reinstalled, or stored by the property owner for future reinstallation.
4. Qualified historic resources may be evaluated using the provisions in the California Historical Building Code regarding strength, performance, utilization, and other properties of archaic materials, provided that such provisions result in acceptable performance as detailed in the San Francisco Existing Building Code and in this Administrative Bulletin.

B. Significant Damage

Either during the normal passage of time or following an earthquake, wind storm or other cause, building facades that appear to exhibit significant damage require an inspection of the apparently damaged façade area or elements to be undertaken within 60 days of discovery of such damage, per 403E.3, in addition to immediate actions required to address Unsafe conditions. Significant damage includes items that have fallen from a building or items that have cracked or dislodged to become potential falling hazards. Determination of such significant damage shall be by an authorized inspector or other design professional.

C. Waiver of Initial Inspection based on previous inspection and maintenance work

A request for a waiver of the Initial Inspection due to a previously completed comprehensive façade inspection and/or maintenance project, per Chapter 4E, Section 403E.1, Exception 2, shall include all materials required to be provided to the Department of Building Inspection in an inspection report as detailed in this Administrative Bulletin and shall include documentation of the scope of completed repairs, such as reports, plans and specifications, and building permits. Special approval of Waivers of Initial Inspection may be approved by the Director on a case-by-case basis for other reasons, such as for previously submitted reports or studies, or for work undertaken in previous phases.

NOTIFICATION AND ACTION REGARDING UNSAFE CONDITIONS

If an Unsafe Condition is identified at any time during the façade inspection and reporting process, the qualified professional shall immediately notify both the property owner and the Director of such condition.

If what appears to be an Unsafe Condition is observed by an authorized inspector or other design professional during the course of a post-earthquake evaluation or under any other circumstance, such person shall immediately notify the Director of such apparent condition. The Director shall immediately arrange to have a qualified professional or other appropriate investigator evaluate the conditions. If such condition is determined to be Unsafe, the owner shall be immediately contacted.

Immediate contact with the Director shall be by telephone to the Director at 415-558-6131 or to the Department of Building Inspection Emergency Response 24-hour Contact at 558-6666. Notice shall also be sent by email to dbicustomerservice@sfdbi.org or by delivery of written notice. In case of emergencies such as earthquakes, other notification contact methods may be established.

Upon receipt of notification from the inspector of an Unsafe Condition, the property owner shall, as soon as reasonably possible, take action to protect the public and property. Such actions may require the owner to coordinate with various City agencies in the installation of barriers or closure of sidewalks or streets. For such coordination in emergency mitigation of Unsafe Conditions, contact:

- San Francisco Police Department - 911
- Department of Public Works – Emergency Contact 415-695-2020
- Department of Building Inspection – 24-Hour Emergency Contact 415-558-6666 or
- Department of Building Inspection – Director – 415-558-6131

The owner shall, within 72 hours of notification of an Unsafe Condition, provide to the Director a mitigation plan and schedule of implementation, prepared by a qualified professional engineer or architect, for the installation of protective barriers, stabilization, repair or other actions to provide temporary or long-term mitigation of all imminent hazard condition. Work shall be completed within a time frame acceptable to the Director.

Issuance of Emergency Orders, permits, or other City approval and actions to mitigate Unsafe Conditions shall be done in accordance with San Francisco Building Code, Section 102A – Unsafe Buildings, Structures or Property, and other applicable regulations.

If the subject property is a historic resource, the Planning Department Preservation staff shall be contacted for review and advice before the issuance of an Emergency Order or approval of any other emergency action that might impact the historic fabric.

The qualified professional shall notify the Director when Unsafe Conditions have been mitigated.

Notwithstanding timely reporting and mitigation of Unsafe Condition, a completed inspection report is required to be subsequently submitted within the time frame required by Table 403E.

INSPECTION REPORTS AND REPORT CONCLUSIONS

Inspection Reports

Inspection Reports shall be submitted using Reporting Cover Sheet as provided by the Department of Building Inspection (see Attachment A), with attachments as necessary.

In a report, at a minimum, the following information shall be provided:

- A. Property information
 - a. Block/lot
 - b. Address
 - c. Date of original building construction
 - d. Owner and agent information
 - e. Historic status of building, if any
- B. Detailed description of building
 - a. Building construction type
 - b. Type of exterior construction (e.g., masonry, stone, terra cotta, metal and glass, etc.)
 - c. Number of stories
 - d. Plot plan with a North arrow and names of adjoining street frontages

- e. Plan showing approximate building exterior shape and dimensions
- f. Other relevant information
- C. Photographs of each elevation, if possible, showing general existing conditions
- D. Name and contact information of the qualified professional
- E. Previous report information
 - a. Confirmation that the qualified professional has reviewed previous reports, or indication that no previous reports are available
 - b. Building permits and other documents indicating the extent to which conditions previously determined to require repair or remediation, as noted in previous reports and other documents, have been addressed, including permit application numbers if available
- F. Concise statement of the scope of the inspection
- G. Detailed documentation of the qualified professional's findings, observations, conclusions and recommendations, including
 - a. Dates of façade inspection
 - b. Description of deterioration noted, including likely cause(s)
 - c. Photographic documentation of deteriorated areas for which repairs are recommended. This is not required if the report conclusion is Ordinary Maintenance
 - d. A statement from the qualified professional stating that, to the best of their knowledge based on visual observation, façade elements are in the condition as noted in this report.

Report Conclusions

Each inspection report shall assign a building to one of the following three report conclusion categories noted below. Note that an Unsafe Condition is *not* a façade inspection report conclusion, but rather a condition that requires immediate notification and mitigation action as described above.

Inspection reports shall include recommendations for stabilization and repair necessary to maintain the façade in a condition equivalent to its original as-built condition with subsequent approved upgrades, and will provide recommendations for appropriate waterproofing of the building envelope. Reports may also include recommendations for additional investigation that may be necessary to prepare detailed repair and maintenance plans.

1. Repair/Stabilization following Temporary Mitigation of Unsafe Conditions

A building in the category Repair/Stabilization following Temporary Mitigation of Unsafe Conditions has exhibited deterioration that constituted one or more Unsafe Conditions and has undergone actions to mitigate or repair the Unsafe Conditions. The report shall identify all unsafe conditions addressed in previous mitigation as well as all other conditions that require repair, stabilization or maintenance to prevent existing deterioration from progressing to an unsafe condition before the next required inspection. The report shall recommend Repair/Stabilization actions to restore the building to its approved condition and a timeline for implementation of such repairs. The report shall also contain general repair and maintenance recommendations.

2. Requires Repair, Stabilization and Maintenance

A building in the category Requires Repair, Stabilization and Maintenance exhibits deterioration that, if not repaired, stabilized or maintained, could progress to an Unsafe Condition before the next required inspection.

The report shall identify building elements that require repair, stabilization and maintenance before the next required inspection and contain repair recommendations and a timeline for implementation so that the building performance meets approved condition. The report should also contain general repair and maintenance recommendations.

The owner shall follow the recommendations in the report for stabilization and repair necessary to maintain the façade.

3. Ordinary Maintenance

A building in the category Ordinary Maintenance requires on-going general repair and maintenance. The report should make general maintenance and repair recommendations.

ACTIONS BY CITY FOLLOWING SUBMITTAL OF REPORTS

Within 60 days of receipt of a façade inspection report, Department of Building Inspection staff shall review reports and shall notify both the owner and the qualified professional of the following:

- Confirmation of the receipt of report
- Indication that report is acceptable as submitted, or provision of comments that indicate what revisions or additional information may be required
- Confirmation of receipt of affidavit (see Attachment B) affirming timelines and other requirements for submittal of additional report information, facade repair and maintenance, and other actions
- Confirmation of dates for subsequent required inspections

Revisions to submitted reports may be submitted to the Director by the qualified professional as needed. Changes from previously submitted reports shall be clearly noted.

All reports shall become part of the permanent records of the Department of Building Inspection.

The Department of Building Inspection shall maintain a database that allows the public to have access to façade inspection reporting data and related information.

PROCEDURE FOR PROCESSING BUILDING FACADE INSPECTION REPORTS

1. The owner/owner's representative will submit the Building Façade Inspection Report to the Department of Building Inspection for review; either:
 - By e-mail: dbi.facade@sfgov.org
 - By mail or in person: Department of Building Inspection, Ground Floor Façade Unit , 1660 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103
2. If submitted by e-mail, a reply confirming receipt of submittal will be given. If submitted in person, a received time stamp on the copy will be given.
3. The Façade Inspection Report will be logged in a database and routed to the designated plan checker for review.
4. During the review process, if more information is needed or comments need to be addressed, the plan checker will contact the owner/owner's representative directly by e-mail. The owner/owner's representative shall review these comments and correct the report if necessary and re-submit the report to the designated plan checker.
5. After the report is accepted, an acceptance letter signed by the plan checker and the Façade Inspection Report will be forwarded to Façade Unit for further processing. Plan checker shall indicate number of plan review hours in the acceptance letter.

6. Façade Unit will contact the owner/owner's representative by e-mail to come to Façade Unit to pick up the acceptance letter and the Façade Inspection Report and pay associated fees.

UNDERTAKING STABILIZATION, REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE WORK

General

Building permits and other City permits are required to undertake work as required under the San Francisco Building Code and other applicable codes and regulations. A standard building permit review and issuance processes shall be followed except when expedited permit processing is requested and authorized under Administrative Bulletin AB-004, Priority Permit Processing Guidelines. Repair work shall be performed in accordance with the applicable provisions of the San Francisco Building Code.

Stabilization and Repair of Buildings that are Historic Resources

Planning Department Historic Resources staff shall review and approve any permit applications for repair for historic resources. For buildings that are listed as historic properties in Planning Code Articles 10 and 11, facade repair, stabilization and maintenance shall be performed in conformance with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Buildings*. Methods of repair, stabilization and maintenance for historic resources shall use the least intrusive or invasive means feasible-and shall preserve existing materials and features to the maximum extent feasible.

Qualified historic buildings may be maintained and/or repaired using the provisions in the California Historical Building Code regarding strength, performance, utilization, and other properties of archaic materials, provided that such provisions result in acceptable performance.

Contractor Training and Qualifications


Contractors and workers engaged in façade maintenance shall be experienced and skilled in façade maintenance operations. Workers shall have training and/or on-the-job experience at least equivalent to requirements for graduation from an apprenticeship program for this occupation as approved by the Chief of the Division of Apprenticeship Standards of the Department of Industrial Relations of the State of California. Alternatively, workers may be registered apprentices working under the supervision of such trained and/or experienced workers. Compliance with this training and experience standard shall be verified by the owner, owner's agent, or qualified professional representing the owner.

ENFORCEMENT AND ABATEMENT

The Director shall implement the procedures detailed in San Francisco Building Code Section 102A, Unsafe Buildings, Structures or Property, and related abatement actions when any of the requirements for façade inspection, reporting, mitigation, repair or maintenance are not met in a timely manner.

Signed by:

Tom Hui, S.E., C.B.O.  Date
Director
Department of Building Inspection

Approved by the Building Inspection Commission on 6/21/2017

Attachment A: Façade Inspection Report Cover Sheet

Attachment B: Compliance Affidavit

Attachment A

Facade Inspection Report Cover Sheet

1. Building Address _____

2. Building Block and Lot _____

3. Report Submittal Date _____

4. Check one of the following summarizing the condition of the facade.

- Requires Repair/ Stabilization following Temporary Mitigation of Unsafe Conditions**
- Requires Repair/Stabilization**
- Ordinary Maintenance**

5. Owner Name _____

6. Owner Address _____

7. Contact person or other agent of owner _____

8. Contact phone and email _____

9. Description of Building and Exterior Walls

a. Construction Type _____

b. Number of stories _____

c. Year originally constructed _____

10. Have you reviewed previous façade inspection reports or other reports on file for this building?

Yes Dates of prior reports _____

None Available

11. Reinspection recommended to be done no later than _____

Attach to this report documents describing the nature and extent of inspections, repairs, maintenance or corrective actions taken during this reporting period, and actions recommended to be performed before the next reporting period deadline. Provide details or reference to permits or Emergency Orders issued for repair, maintenance or mitigation of Unsafe Conditions during this reporting period. Refer to AB-110 for additional reporting requirements.

Licensed Professional:

Name: _____

Firm: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Date: _____

Signature and Seal of Professional: _____

License expires _____

Attachment B

**COMPLIANCE AFFIDAVIT
CHAPTER 4E OF THE SAN FRANCISCO EXISTING BUILDING CODE
BUILDING FACADE INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE – RETROACTIVE PROVISIONS**

Building Address: _____

Assessors Block/Lot: _____

Property Owner Information:

Name of Property Owner or Owner’s Authorized Representative: _____

Mailing Address for building contact: _____

Contact phone # and/or email: _____

Building Tier: (select one)

- Tier 1: Building was constructed prior to 1910
- Tier 2: Building was constructed from 1910 to 1925
- Tier 3: Building was constructed from 1926 to 1970
- Tier 4: Building was constructed after 1970

Date of the façade inspection: _____

Recommended re-inspected by the date of: _____

Licensed Professional Information: (select type of professional & complete)

Name of Licensed Professional that inspected the building facade: _____

Mailing Address of Licensed Professional: _____

Phone # and/or email of Licensed Professional: _____

License #: _____

Type of professional:

- Architect
- Civil Engineer
- Structural Engineer

Condition of the facade: (select one)

- Requires Repair / Stabilization following Temporary Mitigation of Unsafe Conditions
- Requires Repair / Stabilization
- Ordinary Maintenance

As owner or owner’s authorized representative of the above-referenced building, I hereby certify that I have submitted the Facade Inspection Report to DBI. I acknowledge the condition of the facade and will follow the recommendations in the report for stabilization and repair necessary to maintain the façade in a condition equivalent to its original as-built condition.

Print Name:

Signature

Date Signed

Please make a copy of this Affidavit for your records prior to submittal to the Department of Building Inspection. **Please submit a completed & signed affidavit and the Facade Inspection Report by mail or in-person to DBI’s Facade Counter, Facade Unit, First Floor, 1660 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 or by email: dbi.facade@sfgov.org.**