

# City of Tuscaloosa

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## **RE: New Procedures & Inspections for Residential Permits**

Since the April tornado, the city's building department has responded in many ways to help rebuild our city and make it better for the future. As the Chief Building Official, I have deemed it necessary to make a few changes in some of our inspection practices and code compliance procedures. Listed below are the changes:

### **Inspection Changes:**

*Framing Inspection* – framing without insulation will be required. We are separating our framing and insulation inspections.

*Insulation Inspection* - after framing inspection has passed along with all rough-ins; electrical, plumbing and mechanical.

### **New Inspection added:**

*Exterior Framing and/or Sheathing Inspection* – this will be done before the vapor barrier or rap is put on. We will look at the nail patterns on the sheathing and possible roof ties.

*Mechanical Underground Inspections* – for Dryer venting pipe. Vent piping must meet approved materials and end minimum 6" (starting at the bottom of vent pipe) above outside final grade.

### **Code Compliance Changes:**

*Anchor Bolts for walls and foundations* - Residential structures will be inspected in according to Section R403.1.6 of the IRC. Alternative Materials and methods will be accepted along with a structural engineers design.

*Exterior Framing* – nail patterns of sheathing - Table 602.3 (1) of the IRC.

*Approved Connectors* – on trusses or rafters – roof assemblies subject to uplift pressure of 20 pounds per square foot or greater. See section R802.10.5 & R802.11.1 of the IRC. The builder

may elect to voluntarily to add the connectors or provide evidences from design professional that uplift is less than 20 pounds per square foot.

Other Code correction to be made this year:

***Handrail End Returns*** – see Section 311.5.6.2 handrails ends shall return to the wall or newel.

In some cases, the builder may consider these changes as more of nuisance than an added value for the home owner. I have concluded these changes and procedures are reasonable and deserve immediate attention of the city's building department. Hopefully, the changes will not affect the construction timetable of residential structures or will only be a minimum.

I would like to setup a time to meet with you and your members about the changes in the very near future. A discussion would be very beneficial to us both in reaching our goal for a better built and a safer structure.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call me at (205) 248-5110.

Thank you,

Alan Boswell  
Chief Building Official