



## City of Santa Rosa

### Essential Inspection Services

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The City of Santa Rosa has temporarily limited its operations to provide essential inspection services ONLY to prevent the spread of the coronavirus in our community. This means the City of Santa Rosa has reduced staffing during the pandemic and is focused on providing inspection services that support the most restrictive construction activities that are presented under both the State and County health orders. For more information on actions the City has taken to slow the spread of coronavirus in the community, visit [srcity.org/PreventTheSpread](http://srcity.org/PreventTheSpread).

**As of April 7, 2020, the following inspection services are available under Sonoma County Order No. C19-03 (Order):**

### Construction Inspections

Project applicants can currently request inspections on the following construction project types:

- **Fire-recovery rebuilding – Residential**
  - Inspections under all existing building, encroachment and fire permits will be conducted.
  - Industrial Lift Truck enforcement will commence to ensure safe operation on City streets.
  - City will conduct right-of-way compliance inspections to maintain pedestrian and vehicular safety and adequate emergency vehicle access within the fire rebuild areas.
  - Inspection includes enforcement of unauthorized debris and storage containers, pedestrian and traffic controls.
  - All public right-of-way inspections for items such as sidewalk, dry utilities, debris boxes, water meters and sewer connections will only occur on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.
  
- **Immediate health or life safety projects or construction or repair necessary to ensure that existing residences and buildings containing Essential Businesses are safe, sanitary, or habitable to the extent such construction or repair cannot reasonably be delayed.**
  - Examples of health or life-safety projects include, but are not limited to, the following:
    - Failed Electrical Service Replacement
    - Water Heater Replacements
    - Furnace Replacements
    - HVAC Unit Replacements
    - Water Line Repairs and/or Replacements
    - Sewer Line Repairs and/or Replacements
    - Hazardous Structural Damage Repairs
    - Roof repair

- The Fire Chief or Chief Building Official (or their designee) will provide determinations regarding an unsafe situation on private property.
- The Deputy Director (or their designee) will provide determinations regarding unsafe conditions in the public right-of-way.
- **Construction necessary to ensure that existing construction sites shut down due to the Order are left in a safe and secure manner, but only to the extent necessary to do so.**
  - Prior to performing any additional construction activities, the contractor shall submit a closure plan for any active project that is not permitted to continue under the Order. Closure plans must be submitted in a written form referencing the permit number, project description and the specific construction activities needed to safely shut down the project site to [joswald@srcity.org](mailto:joswald@srcity.org). The request will be reviewed across all applicable City Departments in order to determine if any additional inspections on the project will commence.
- **Projects immediately necessary to the maintenance operations and repair of essential infrastructure, as defined in the Order**
  - Inspections on existing encroachment and building permits will be scheduled for any “Essential Infrastructure” identified in the Order.
  - Inspections will not be scheduled for any private utilities intended to serve the sole use of a development project that is not permitted to continue construction under the Order.
- **Specific project types addressed in the Order**
  - Inspections on all existing building, fire, and encroachment permits associated with affordable housing, homeless service, and healthcare operation projects specifically described in the order will commence

**How do I obtain a formal determination regarding my project’s ability to obtain inspection services during the life of the Order?**

Projects requesting inspections from the building department or on larger projects that involve inspection requests across multiple departments within the City may submit a formal written request to [joswald@srcity.org](mailto:joswald@srcity.org) highlighting the following:

- Permit Number(s)
- Project Description
- Description of current construction status
- Description of future inspection needs
- Applicable section of the Order allowing future inspections to commence
- Timeline of when the inspections will be needed

Staff will review the request, in coordination with all affected departments, and produce a written determination. If the project requires inspections services delivered under only a fire or encroachment permit, the inquiry process highlighted above may be directed as follows:

Fire Permits - [SRFD@srcity.org](mailto:SRFD@srcity.org)

Encroachment Permits - [engineering@srcity.org](mailto:engineering@srcity.org)

### **How do I request an inspection?**

- Fire rebuild and other housing inspections may be requested through our automated phone system at 707-543-3006. Fire rebuild inspections may also be requested by calling the office at 707-543-4649.
- Encroachment inspections can be requested in the manor specified on the issued permit.
- Fire permit inspections may be requested through the automated phone system at (707) 543-3006.

## **Water Department Inspections**

### **Water Inspections Including System Shutdowns, Disinfection, Hot Taps, and Sewer Cut-In Requests**

- A minimum of 4 business days' notice will be required prior to the requested date for all water main shutdowns, loads for disinfection, hot taps, and sewer cut-ins.
- Water main shutdowns and hot taps for residential projects allowed under the Order will be limited to Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays only.
- Shutdowns and hot taps for essential commercial projects allowed under the Order will be limited to Tuesdays and Wednesdays only.

### **How do I request an inspection?**

Requests for water shutdown, load for disinfection, hot tap, and sewer cut-ins should be made in the manor specified on the issued encroachment permit. You may submit any inquiries regarding the Water inspection process to [watereng@srcity.org](mailto:watereng@srcity.org).

## **Housing Inspections**

### **Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program**

Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program is performing essential duties to ensure participants in the program remain stably housed. Initial inspections for new tenancies are being performed upon request to the Housing Authority.

### **How do I request an inspection?**

Inspection may be scheduled by submitting a written request to [section8@srcity.org](mailto:section8@srcity.org).

## **Fire Inspections (Non-Construction)**

**Fire inspections associated with new construction projects are addressed in the "Construction Inspections" section above. The Fire Department is currently conducting the following non-construction related inspections and services on a case by case basis:**

- HazMat CUPA – Hazardous Materials, Hazardous Waste, Underground Storage Tanks (Gas stations, including emergency repairs), Aboveground Storage Tanks
- Annual Fire Code Permit Inspections – Care facilities, apartments, various other occupancy types with permits to operate deemed "essential"
- Complaints – Life or environmental hazards

- Follow up – Compromised life safety systems
- Fire and hazardous material release investigations
- Exterior hazard abatement – Weed abatement inspections
- State Fire Marshal mandated inspections – Includes Group I occupancies (Skilled nursing facilities, jails and detention centers), Group R occupancies (Hotel, motel, apartment, condo, boarding and congregate living facilities)
- Licensing clearances – Care facilities, surge capacity approvals
- Limited term permits – Tents

### **How do I request an inspection?**

The specific inspections highlighted above are either coordinated by the Department on a reoccurring basis or triggered by a specific request from a member of the public. Contact the Department at [SRFD@srcity.org](mailto:SRFD@srcity.org) or call (707)543-3500 to obtain specific direction regarding the individual services.

## **Code Enforcement Investigations**

Investigations into complaints that have immediate health/life-safety implications will be executed.

### **How do I file a complaint?**

- Complete a Code Investigation Request Form: [srcity.org/CodeInvestigationRequestForm](http://srcity.org/CodeInvestigationRequestForm) and email to [code@srcity.org](mailto:code@srcity.org)  
OR
- Call the Code Enforcement division at (707) 543—3198 to make a complaint by phone.

## **Storm Water Inspections**

- Stormwater Compliance inspections on active commercial and residential State Construction General Permit projects will commence as specified under the City’s National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System with the North Coast Regional Quality Control Board.
- Stormwater Inspections only on active residential projects that are in violation (discharging or significant housekeeping problems) of City Stormwater Ordinance.

## **COVID-19 Safety Protocols**

- Building and Fire Inspectors will not enter occupied buildings unless necessary and it has been approved by the Chief Building Official (or their designee) or the Fire Chief (or their designee).
- The inspector will work with the contractor whenever possible to determine the feasibility of conducting virtual inspections.
- The inspector shall maintain a single point of contact for the duration of the inspection.
- The contractor must have the inspection area cleared of workers and implement social distancing protocols that maintain a 6-foot distance between all participants.
- All workers other than the specified point of contact must exit the site interior during the inspection.
- The area shall be adequately ventilated.

- The inspection will be rescheduled if anyone at the site is sick or appears to show signs of being sick upon the inspector's arrival.
- Customers who have concerns about any entry into their home may request cancelation of the inspection without penalty.
- At the discretion of the inspector and with the contractor's agreement, inspections may be conducted using photography and videotelephony solutions (e.g. FaceTime).
- Meetings inside construction trailers will be prohibited.
- Inspector's shall avoid contact with any shared items on the job site, such as tools and the construction plan sets.
- Excellent hygiene practices, such as hand washing and no hand shaking, will be implemented.
- Emergencies will supersede all previously scheduled appointments and inspections. Scheduled work may be cancelled at any time by the City.
- City staffing shortages due to illness or other means could suspend all work.
- Safety protocols shall be followed when performing all inspection types. **Inspections will be canceled if the contractor is not performing the safety protocols.**