



# Announces

## Important Changes to the Project Inspector Exam Process for 2013

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- The exam is based on the 2010 California Building Code.
- Special Accommodation allowances are good for one year. The medical doctor's request must be submitted with each exam registration.
- Location of exams have changed as follows:

March 28, 2013 – Hilton Garden Inn, Carlsbad

June 6, 2013 – Sunrise Event Center, Rancho Cordova

**\*September and December exams (and all future exams) will be affected by regulation changes and different qualification criteria. A new exam package will be posted in June to reflect changes.**

- All dates are subject to change and availability, please read your site form carefully.
- Applicants who pass one part of the examination must pass the remaining part within two years from the valid pass date.
- All applicants must submit a [DSA-650](#) form with application. Please see [DSA's AB 1424 Notification](#) page for additional information.

***Please read the entire application package as information has changed.***

# DSA Project Inspector Examination Information & Application Package

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## **2013 Examination Dates:**

**March 28, 2013 – Carlsbad**

**June 6, 2013 – Sacramento**

## **Latest Postmark Date for Filing**

March 7, 2013

May 9, 2013

## **Exam Application Fee:**

The exam application fee is \$350.00 (non-refundable, fee subject to change).

***Limited seating.***

Additional application forms are available on our website: <http://www.dgs.ca.gov/dsa>  
For Project Inspector Application and instructions click on "Inspector Program."

# DSA Project Inspector Examination General Information

The Project Inspector examination is designed to determine knowledge in the areas of acceptable construction practice, plan reading, techniques of construction and inspection, as well as an understanding of applicable codes and regulations.

## Exam Description

Each examination consists of two Parts; a 'Plan Reading Part' in the morning and a 'Code Part' in the afternoon. The 'Plan Reading Part' of the examination includes questions grouped into three subject areas: Structural, Architectural (which includes Access and Fire & Life Safety), and Mechanical/Electrical/Plumbing (MEP). The 'Code Part' of the examination has the same three sections, as well as an Administrative section (which includes inspector duties and responsibilities). To pass either part of the examination applicants must obtain a minimum score in each section. To become certified, applicants must pass both parts of the examination. The minimum scores to pass the exam are given in the grid below:

	Sections			
	Admin	Structural	Architectural	MEP
<b>PLAN PART</b>		60%	60%	60%
<b>CODE PART</b>	60%	60%	60%	60%

DSA may change the minimum scores required to pass at any time without advance notice.

## Exam Duration, Locations, and Notification Dates

Each Part of the exam lasts three hours. There will be 30 minutes allowed prior to the Plan Reading Part to review the drawings provided. Approximately one hour is allowed for lunch. Lunch is **not** provided. Examinations will be held in northern and southern California (subject to change; please read your site form carefully). Qualified applicants will be notified by mail of acceptance to take the examination, and specific times and locations. Candidates will be notified of results approximately 4 to 6 weeks after the examination date.

**PLEASE DO NOT CALL FOR TEST RESULTS. RESULTS WILL NOT BE GIVEN OVER THE PHONE.**

## Fees and Transfers

There is a **non-refundable** fee of \$350.00 for each examination date, regardless of the number of exam Parts taken on that date. Applicants who do not qualify to take the exam will **not** receive a refund, but may submit additional information and/or re-apply for a future examination **one time** (within six months) without submitting an additional fee. Applicants who are accepted and are not able to attend the exam for any reason may transfer to a future examination date **one-time** (with a 72 hour notice), and not pay an additional fee. Within one week of the exam, only medical emergencies will warrant an exam date transfer without an additional fee. Personal checks returned for any reason, are subject to a \$30.00 fee.

## Exam Qualification and Re-Application

- Applicants who pass one Part of the examination must pass the remaining Part within two years of the valid pass date.
- Applicants who fail one Section in either Part of the exam must re-take that entire Part.
- Applicants who fail one, or both, parts of an examination may re-apply for any subsequent exam date.

**IMPORTANT: Certification does not guarantee that an individual will be approved for any school project. Experience, workload, capability and past performance will be evaluated and considered on each specific project by the DSA field engineer.**

## Project Classification

There are four classifications of construction projects as defined below. All projects are "classified" by DSA during plan review. An individual must hold a certificate of the appropriate class to apply for the position of "Project Inspector" for a specific project. Individuals must be evaluated and approved by the owner, project architect, structural engineer, and DSA for each specific project prior to start of construction. The following classification definitions are also used to categorize the experience stated by applicants in their Experience Record Forms.

### Class 1:

- Buildings or additions of 2,000 square feet or greater that utilize materials other than wood-frame shear walls (for example: masonry/concrete shear walls, steel brace frames, concrete, or steel moment-resisting frames) as the primary lateral load-resisting system.
- Substantial structural alterations to the gravity and/or lateral load-resisting system of the building types described above.

### Class 2:

- Buildings or additions over 2,000 square feet that utilize wood-frame shear walls as the primary lateral load-resisting system. Projects may be single or multi-level. The project may contain incidental masonry, concrete and/or structural steel construction (e.g. gravity load carrying columns and beams). Buildings may have isolated exceptions to the lateral load-resisting system, such as a steel brace frame at one location in the structure.
- Buildings or additions of less than 2,000 square feet in floor area that have primary lateral load-resisting systems utilizing concrete, masonry or steel construction. A single-story masonry building with a regular configuration (see C.B.C. Sec. 1629A.5.2), a floor area of less than 7,000 square feet, and a wood-frame roof structure *may* be considered to be a Class 2 structure.
- Two-story relocatable buildings (on-site construction) utilizing shop-fabricated building frames.
- Alteration, modernization, and reconstruction projects that exceed the limitations of the Class 3 scope of work, but do not include substantial alterations to structural systems of concrete, steel or masonry.
- Non-building structures that exceed the limitations of the Class 3 scope of work (signs, poles, bleachers, walls, fences, retaining walls, etc.).

### Class 3:

- Buildings or additions of wood-frame, single-story construction, with conventional (spread footing) concrete foundations and a total floor area less than 2,000 square feet. Structures must utilize wood-frame shear walls as the primary lateral load-resisting system. The project may include isolated steel or concrete elements (e.g. steel or concrete columns).
- Structural alteration projects limited to wood-frame, single-story construction. When deemed appropriate by DSA, alterations to (or addition of) isolated steel, masonry or concrete elements may be included in Class 3 projects. Alteration projects involving significant changes to the lateral load-resisting system may be classified as Class 2 projects.
- Alteration and modernization projects that are primarily non-structural, such as electrical, mechanical, plumbing, disabled access features, and site improvement work.
- Most non-building structures such as signs, poles, bleachers, walls, fences, retaining walls, etc.

### Class 4:

- Site installation of pre-manufactured, single-story, single-story relocatable buildings.

### See IR A-7 for a complete definition of Project Classifications

Inspectors who pass the Class 1 examination are qualified to apply for any project. Class 2 inspectors may apply for Class 2, 3 or 4 projects. Class 3 inspectors may apply for Class 3 or 4 projects. Class 4 inspectors may only inspect Class 4 projects.



## PROJECT INSPECTOR EXAMINATION APPLICATION

**PREFERRED EXAMINATION DATE (List 1<sup>st</sup> choice and 2<sup>nd</sup> choice):**

<b>Examination Date</b>		<b>Latest Postmark</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>Date for Filing</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>March 7, 2013</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>May 9, 2013</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Office Use Only
ID# _____
CK# _____
\$ _____

Which exam are you applying for?  Class 1  Class 2  Class 3  Class 4  
Which part are you applying for?  Both  Plan Reading  Code Knowledge

**FEES: \$350.00 (non-refundable, fee subject to change). Limited seating**

Please make checks or money orders (no credit cards) payable to:

Division of the State Architect

Mail application and fee to: DSA, 1102 Q Street, Suite 5100, Sacramento, CA 95811

**APPLICANT'S NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name First Name MI

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Public Contact Phone #: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone #: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

**CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES OR SPECIAL REQUESTS:** If you have a disability or special need that restricts your ability to take a test under standard conditions you may request special testing arrangements. Clarification of both the disability and the need for special accommodations by a licensed medical doctor is required.

**PREREQUISITES:** A copy of one prerequisite certificate, license or diploma (see list on reverse) and/or inspector certifications already held, must be included with this application.

Description: \_\_\_\_\_ Certificate/License #: \_\_\_\_\_

**EDUCATION:**

School/College/University	Degree/Certificate	Date Graduated

**See the reverse side of this application form for additional important information**

**CERTIFICATION:** I hereby certify under penalty of perjury that I am the person indicated above, that I meet all the requirements to take this examination, that I have read and understood both sides of this application form and that all information given is true and complete. I understand that any false statement will be cause for voiding this application and any subsequent certification. I further certify that I will not reveal the contents of the examination to anyone and affirm that I will abide by the rules of the examination. I understand that upon certification, my name and phone number will be available to the public.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Use Only
A _____
P _____
E _____

# PROJECT INSPECTOR EXAMINATION APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

➤ The following four items must be submitted to apply for the examination:

1. **Application:** Fill out the application (do not use old applications for previous exams). Note that applicants must be, per Title 24, at least 25 years old to qualify for the examination.
2. **Fee:** \$350.00 non-refundable (checks or money orders only, credit cards are not accepted). Apply early, limited seating.
3. **Prerequisite:** One of the following prerequisites is required in addition to the experience requirements. Send a copy of any one of the following prerequisites. Please do not send any certificates that are not listed below.
  - a) **Certification of the International Code Council (ICC)** as an IBC Building Inspector.
  - b) **Certification of the American Construction Inspectors Association** as a Registered Construction Inspector, Division II (Building).
  - c) **Certification of the Division of the State Architect** as a Relocatable Building Inspector In-plant (or prior approval as a Project Inspector on a California hospital or public school project).
  - d) **A degree in architecture or engineering** from an accredited college or university (submit copies of transcripts and a description of technical classes for foreign colleges or universities only).
  - e) **California licensed architect or California registered professional engineer** (structural or civil).
  - f) **California State licensed General Building Contractor**. License must be current and active. Applicant must be the "Qualifying Partner" if the license pertains to a partnership.
  - g) **Letters of recommendation from two California licensed architects and/or registered structural engineers**. A sample form letter is available on the DSA website: at [www.dgs.ca.gov/dsa](http://www.dgs.ca.gov/dsa), click on "Inspector Program." Letters of recommendation are only valid for four years.
  - h) **Proof of employment by the State of California as a building construction inspector**.
  - i) **Certification as an Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) Class A or Class B Inspector**.

**4. Experience Record Forms:** (Read all instructions carefully before filling out Experience Record Forms.) The experience requirements are the most important part of your application. Thirty-six (36) months of qualifying experience is required. DSA Certified Project Inspectors should refer to FAQ #8 on Page 12 for special experience requirement options. Experience must be gained in the classification of construction appropriate to the examination class for which you are applying (except for prior school Project Inspector experience, see page 12). Descriptions of project classifications are on page 4. The maximum amount of experience that qualifies towards the exam is limited for various experience categories (see **Qualifying Experience Limitations** on page 9). The intent is to require each applicant to have a wide variety of construction experience to qualify. For example, 3 years of special inspection experience will only count for up to 12 months towards Class 1 or 2 exam qualification. Therefore, it is not necessary to document more than 12 months of special inspection experience on your Experience Record Forms unless you are applying for the Class 3 or 4 exam. **See instructions for completing experience record forms on page 8.**

## Other Useful Information:

**Keep a copy of your complete application package.** You may need to refer to your package to answer questions that DSA might have during the review of your application. DSA will not provide copies of your application package or experience records to you after they are submitted.

**Exam Schedule:** The examination day is divided **approximately** as follows.

Check-in	Approx. 1 Hour
Review plans prior to Plan Reading	30 Minutes
Plan Reading	3 Hours
Lunch (not provided)	Approx. 1 Hour
Check-in for Code	Approx. 30 Minutes
Code Knowledge	3 Hours

# Project Inspector Experience Record Form

*Qualifying experience must be submitted on a separate Experience Record Form for each project.  
Resumes are not accepted. See next page for directions on filling out this form.*

1) Experience Record Form # \_\_\_\_\_ (Number each form for easy reference, e.g. 1, 2, 3):

2) Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Location (City/State): \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

3) DSA File Number and Application Number (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

4) My duties on this project commenced on \_\_\_\_\_ and ended on \_\_\_\_\_.  
date (mm/yy) date (mm/yy)

5) During this time period \_\_\_\_\_% of my total work time was spent on this project.

**Project Description (Check all that apply and provide area and % of time spent, on each aspect)**

	<input type="checkbox"/> New Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Addition	<input type="checkbox"/> Relocatable	<input type="checkbox"/> Alterations	
Sq. Ft.				/	(Including seismic upgrades, fire repairs, and rebuilds. Describe below.)
% of time					<b>Project Cost: \$</b> _____

**Type of building (for new construction or additions only):**

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single Family (or Duplex) Residential | <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-Family Residential | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Bldgs. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School (Under DSA Jurisdiction)       | <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital Bldgs.          | <input type="checkbox"/> Military Bldgs.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Structures: _____               |   |  |

**Primary lateral load-resisting system (for new construction and additions only):**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plywood shear wall                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete or masonry shear wall |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete or steel moment or braced frame | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                   |

**6) Duties and Responsibilities: (Please check one. See page 12 of instructions.)**

**Construction**

- General Superintendent in charge of all aspects of construction
- Tradesman – CHECK ONE:  Foreman  Journeyman  Apprentice
- INDICATE TRADE:  Carpenter  Concrete  Steel  Mechanical or Plumbing
- Electrical  Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

**Inspection**

- Special Inspector (describe scope of work inspected below)
- Assistant School Inspector (describe scope of work below)
- Non-DSA Building Inspector (e.g. local building department inspections etc. – describe below)
- DSA Project Inspector (personally inspecting all aspects of the work on a continuous basis)
- OSHPD IOR (personally inspecting all aspects of the work on a continuous basis)

**Other**

- Architectural or Engineering Design (Calif. licensed architect, or structural or civil engineer - describe below)
- Construction Manager/Administrator (describe duties and responsibilities in detail below)
- Other (describe in detail below): \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe your duties and/or provide additional information:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Use back or attach additional sheet if more space is needed)

I certify under penalty of perjury that the information I have entered on this Experience Record Form is true and complete. I further understand that any false, incomplete, or incorrect statements may be cause for voiding this application and any subsequent certification. I authorize the employers identified on this application to release to DSA any requested information.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE	DATE SIGNED
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# Instructions for Completing Experience Record Forms

- **See Qualifying Experience Limitations and Experience Guidelines (pages 10, 11 & 13) for additional important information.**
- **Only experience submitted on Experience Record Forms will be evaluated. Resumes are not acceptable in lieu of Experience Record Forms.**

- 1. Experience Record Form #:** Use a separate Experience Record Form for each project. Do not group different projects with the same employer on the same form. Number each form sequentially. The first form should be your most recent project. For large projects that involve buildings of different types, you may elect to split the projects up into "subprojects" in order to describe experience clearly. To record different types of duties and/or different types of construction that occurred on the same project, use separate Experience Record Forms labeled 1a, 1b, etc.
- 2. Project Name, Location, Employer, etc.:** If you were self-employed, use the name of the entity you contracted with as the "Employer." Every effort must be made to obtain all information; DSA reserves the right to disallow experience which is not verifiable or is incompletely documented.
- 3. DSA File and Application Number:** To receive credit for school projects the DSA file and application numbers are required. **Credit will only be given for your official capacity on the project, as approved by the DSA Field Engineer.** Informal assignments or duties do not receive credit. To receive credit for hospital projects, OSHPD numbers must be reported in this space. Again, you will only be given credit for your official capacity on the project.
- 4. Start/end dates:** Report start/end dates for your involvement in the actual construction time for the project to the nearest month.
- 5. Percentage of Time Spent on Project:** Generally, experience will be obtained at the rate of 40 hours per week. Extra time will not be credited for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week. In many cases some of the time spent on a particular project will not result in productive qualifying experience; this is understood and acceptable. However, if a project is shut down for more than two weeks, is part time, or involves significant (more than 10%) of the time spent on 'non-qualifying' duties, you must enter the percentage of your time spent on 'qualifying' duties only. If you divide a project into "subprojects" this space is used to report the percentage of your time spent on each part of the total project. **The percentage of time indicated on all Experience Record Forms must not exceed 100% during any time period.**
- 6. Duties and Responsibilities:** Check only one box. If you served in more than one capacity on a project, submit separate Experience Record Forms for each type of experience. Attachments may be required to describe your responsibilities clearly for certain categories. See page 11 for descriptions of the duties and responsibilities for each category. Check "Other" if your duties and responsibilities do not match any of the categories described.

## **Choosing Projects for Your Experience Record:**

**Choose projects that are relevant to the class of exam for which you are applying.** Experience on alterations, or seismic upgrade projects, is generally relevant to the Class 3 exam, not the Class 1 or 2, even if done on Class 1 type buildings.

**Choose projects that reflect a variety of experience.** You must have a broad range of construction experience to qualify for the exam. Most types of experience are limited as explained in the **Qualifying Experience Limitations** (see page 10). If you were an electrician for ten years you need not document all ten years of electrician experience if you are applying for the Class 1 or 2 exam because only 12 months will count (there is no limit on the amount of electrician experience if you are applying for the Class 3 exam). Choose projects that reflect your experience in other categories for the remainder of your experience.

**Choose projects where your responsibilities included actual "hands-on" construction experience.** Estimating, obtaining permits, and drafting do not qualify as experience towards the exam.



## Qualifying Experience Limitations

A total of three years (36 months) of qualifying experience is required. The maximum number of months for common types of construction experience is limited, as shown in the table below. (For example: A carpenter who has worked for 3 years *on new (ground-up) commercial building projects* may only count 12 months of carpentry experience towards the Class 2 exam; the other 24 months of experience must be gained in other categories.)

Most qualifying experience will fit into one of the categories shown below. If you have experience of a type that is not shown, that you feel may be qualifying, be sure to describe your duties in detail on the Experience Record Form(s).

**Experience must be gained on projects fitting the description of the examination class for which you are applying. See "Experience Guidelines" on the next page for definitions of Experience Categories and other important rules and exceptions.**

**Qualifying Experience Grid – This table indicates the maximum number of months that may apply toward exam eligibility.**

Exam Class	Construction		Inspection			Other	
	General Superintendent <sup>1</sup>	Tradesman <sup>1</sup>	Special Inspector <sup>1</sup>	Assistant School Inspector <sup>2</sup>	Non-DSA <sup>1,3</sup> Building Inspector	Licensed Architect or Engineer	Construction Manager/Administrator <sup>1</sup>
<b>1</b>	36	12	12	12 <sup>2</sup>	12 <sup>3</sup>	36	12
<b>2</b>	36	12	12	24 <sup>2</sup>	12 <sup>3</sup>	36	12
<b>3</b>	36	36	36	36	36	36	24
<b>4<sup>4</sup></b>	36	36	36	36	36	36	24

**Footnotes:**

1. Describe specific day to day duties in detail. Include an average percentage of time spent on each aspect of your duties.
2. Subject to the verification of your DSA field engineer; otherwise counts as Class 3 experience only.
3. OSHPD Class A or B Inspector of Record (IOR) experience is accepted without limit.
4. Two months credit will be given for each class completed through the DSA Academy, up to a maximum of 12 months. Please see <http://www.dsaacademy.dgs.ca.gov/default.asp> (select Training Classes). Submit evidence of class completion with your application.

# Experience Guidelines

## General Information

Experience on residential construction only counts towards the Class 3 exam (not the Class 1 or 2).

Building construction experience gained outside of the United States may, at DSA's discretion, be credited to a maximum of 12 months. This limitation applies to the total of all foreign experience.

These guidelines may not be appropriate to every situation. Experience that is not described below will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Applicants will be evaluated based solely on the written information submitted on their Experience Record Form(s). Verification of duties or employment may be requested at the sole discretion of DSA.

Generally, non-building experience (bridges, dams, mechanical plant installations, roads, railways, etc.) is not acceptable. Certain types of non-building experience may be accepted as a supplement to building experience on a case by case basis. Experience not related to building construction (for example, electrical work on automobiles) would not qualify.

## Description of Duties & Responsibilities

### Construction:

**General Superintendent** - Supervision of all aspects of the construction and coordination of all crews and/or subcontractors. The general superintendent is the on-site "at risk" person in charge of the entire construction project. He or she is intimately familiar with the plans and specifications and provides quality assurance for the entire project. Administrative duties such as processing change order requests are secondary to the primary duties of the general superintendent (see Construction Manager/Administrator below).

**Tradesman** - Physically performing the work of carpentry, concrete, steel, electrical, mechanical, or plumbing on buildings. Painting, paving, carpet-laying, and other 'non-safety related' construction experience do not qualify.

### Inspection:

**Special Inspector** - Welding, masonry, and other types of code required special inspection work.

**Assistant School Inspector** - Prior Assistant Certification may be used as past experience. The experience gained by the assistant may vary widely. Generally, experience gained as an assistant will qualify towards the Class 3 examination. More responsible/extensive experience may qualify towards the Class 2 exam while less responsible/extensive experience may only qualify for the Class 4 exam. Verification of responsibilities by your DSA field engineer may be required.

**Non-DSA Building Inspector** - Residential inspections may qualify towards the Class 3 or 4 examination; commercial, public, and institutional building inspections may qualify towards the Class 1 or Class 2 exam on a case-by-case basis. Plan review or other non-inspection related duties do not qualify. Applicants will need to specify the percentage of time spent inspecting various types of construction and provide detailed information on the types of inspections performed as well as the types of buildings inspected.

**OSHPD IOR** - Approved as the Inspector of Record (IOR) by the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) on hospital projects.

**DSA Project Inspector** - Approved by DSA as the project inspector for an entire project. See FAQ #8 on page 12 for special options for minimum experience required.

### Other:

**Architectural and/or Engineering Design** - Building design experience only counts for California licensed Architects, Registered Structural Engineers, or Registered Civil Engineers.

**Construction Manager/Administrator** - Administrative duties related to organizing, planning and coordinating a construction project. A Construction Manager (CM) generally cannot claim experience in categories that are the responsibility of others.

# DSA Project Inspector Examination

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What should I bring to the exam?

**Answer:** You should bring the reference books that you would bring to the construction site to perform your inspections. The following is a list of things you may need; it is not meant to be an exhaustive list, nor will all reference books be of value during the exam:

#### What you must bring

- Your Site Admittance Form
- Your Picture Identification
- #2 Pencils and erasers

#### What you may bring

- A simple calculator (non-printing, self-contained, silent. Palm top computers are not allowed)
- The 2010 version of Title 24, Parts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 12
- West Coast Lumber Inspection Bureau (WCLIB) Lumber Grading Rules
- American Welding Society (AWS) D1.1, Structural Welding Code
- American Institute of Steel Construction (AISC), Steel Construction Manual
- American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) reports for common construction materials and practices
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 13, 14, 17, 17-A, 24 and 72
- All other reference books that you would bring to the jobsite to perform inspections on a project. All commercially published, bound reference books are permitted. Please be aware that you may not have time to look up every question.
- Post-It Flags only (no larger than 1" X 1.75")
- Magnifying glass

#### What you should **NOT** bring

- Do not bring any electronic device that has the ability to store, communicate or transfer information, such as, but not limited to cell phones, Bluetooth devices, MP-3 players, and I-Pods.
- Do not bring seminar or class handouts of any type (including DSA seminar binders).
- Do not bring the DSA "IR manual" or any other material downloaded from any website.
- Do not bring ring bound notebooks (ring bound codebooks are allowed), spiral bound books, or loose paper of any kind.
- Do not bring photocopies of any reference books.
- Do not insert any additional pages into your codebooks or other reference books. This includes homemade indexes, quick reference guides, or similar assistive references. (ICC Tabs are ok.)
- Do not bring any blank paper, including Post-It ® notes (Post-it Flags ok as indicated above).

### 2. How should I study for the exam?

**Answer:** The exam is meant to test for practical construction experience as well as knowledge of the code and the ability to read and interpret drawings. It is difficult for a person with no practical field construction experience to learn the detailed construction knowledge necessary to pass the exam from studying books or taking classes. The best teacher is actual experience, either performing construction or assisting another inspector on a large job. Of course, studying the codes and other reference books mentioned in question 1 above is also recommended. Some further resources that may be beneficial include:

- Classes which may be available at community colleges.
- Seminars provided by the American Construction Inspector's Association (ACIA), aimed at school inspection as well as more general inspection topics.
- ACIA monthly meetings where inspectors can share their ideas and experiences.

### 3. Does DSA provide training for prospective inspectors?

**Answer:** DSA has developed an Academy of classes to educate project inspectors on the rules, regulations, and standards that apply to the inspection of schools. The DSA Project Inspector Overview Class is mandatory for all DSA project inspectors, as part of the re-certification process and upgrading process.

# DSA Project Inspector Examination

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 4. If I apply for the Class 1 test but do not qualify, can I change my application to the Class 2 or Class 3 test?

**Answer:** Yes. No additional fee is required. Typically after review if you do not qualify for the requested classification, the review panel will re-review your application for a lower classification.

### 5. If I take the Class 1 exam and miss passing by a small margin, will I be certified as a Class 2 (or Class 3) inspector?

**Answer:** No, you must decide which exam you want to apply for and pass it. Even if you miss the passing score by only one point you will have to retest, and submit another application fee.

### 6. What are the cost and cancellation policies?

**Answer:** The cost is \$350.00 payable at the time you submit your application.

- No refunds will be made even if an applicant is not permitted to take the examination due to age, prerequisite, or experience. Read the instructions carefully before sending in your application and fee.
- Applicants who do not qualify to take the exam may submit additional information and re-apply for a future examination without submitting an additional fee. Applicants who still do not qualify will have to submit a new application fee to re-apply again.
- With a 72 hour notice to DSA, applicants who are accepted for an exam, but are not able to attend for any reason will receive a one-time transfer to a future examination. No refunds are available for cancellations.

### 7. How do I gain eligibility to be considered for approval to do in-plant inspections?

**Answer:** As of January 1, 2012 Relocatable Building Inspector In-Plant (RBIP) certifications will no longer be issued. All Class 1 inspectors and inspectors on the approved RBIP list will be eligible for RBIP inspections.

### 8. I am already a DSA certified Project Inspector. How can I upgrade to a higher class of certification?

**Answer:** You may qualify for the exam class **one step higher** than your current certification level if you meet the following:

**CLASS 1:** To upgrade to a Class 1 you must have 24 months of approved DSA Project Inspector experience on Class 2 projects and completion of the Project Inspector Overview. Approved DSA assistant inspector experience may also be used as part of the 24 months; however, a maximum 6 months of experience will be applied to the requirement.

**CLASS 2:** To upgrade to a Class 2 you must have 24 months of approved DSA Project Inspector experience on Class 3 projects and completion of the Project Inspector Overview. Approved DSA assistant inspector experience may also be used as part of the 24 months; however, a maximum 12 months of experience will be applied to the requirement.

**CLASS 3:** To upgrade to a Class 3 you must have 24 months of approved DSA Project Inspector experience on Class 4 projects and completion of the Project Inspector Overview. Approved DSA assistant inspector experience may also be used as part of the 24 months; however, a maximum 12 months of experience will be applied to the requirement.

Experience must be gained **after** passage of your current classification. Attendance through the DSA Academy Project Inspector Overview Class is mandatory prior to an upgrade regardless of the date of last attendance. No applicant may upgrade more than one classification at a time. Letters of Recommendation from DSA Field Engineers will **no longer** be used in lieu of experience or time. Recommendations will only be used as a form of verification of experience.

### 9. What kind of experience do I need to qualify for each class of examination?

**Answer:** Experience requirements are described in detail in this application package.

# DSA Project Inspector Examination

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 10. My construction experience doesn't fit into any of the categories; how do I report it?

**Answer:** Mark "other" and describe your experience in the space provided at the bottom of the Experience Record Form. You may attach additional pages if there isn't enough space.

### 11. I received a letter stating that additional information is required to qualify; what should I do?

**Answer:** The boxes that are marked on your letter explain what additional information is required. Most applications are returned for further detail on the applicant's experience. The following suggestions may help to clarify your experience:

- Fill out the Experience Record Form with detailed information on your experience on a project-by-project basis; attach additional pages as required (resumes are not acceptable).
- Include pertinent information such as start and finish dates for each project and the percentage of time spent on separate tasks such as 'inspection' versus 'construction management'.
- Overlapping projects will only count once (if you did ten different projects over a three-month time frame you will be credited with three months of experience, not thirty).
- Emphasize experience in varying aspects of building construction; additional years of experience (beyond the maximum limits shown in the table on page 10) are not considered qualifying. For example, a carpenter with 20 years of experience will not qualify for the Class 1 exam unless he has experience in other aspects of construction (Steel, electrical, special inspections, etc.). The Project Inspector on even a small school project must have knowledge in many facets of construction.
- Emphasize your construction experience. Practical field construction experience is generally considered to be more important than education in code and plan reading skills.
- DSA realizes that each applicant's experience and background are unique. If you have experience that is not addressed in the guidelines, or other special circumstances, this will be considered.

### 12. I failed the "plan reading" part of the exam and passed the "code" part. Can I re-apply for the "plan reading" part only?

**Answer:** Yes, but the full fee is required with the application and you must pass the part you failed within two years from the pass date of the other part. If you are unable to pass the failed part within the two years of the valid pass date, you must retake both parts.

### 13. I failed the "plan reading" part of the Class 1 exam and passed the "code" part. Can I take only the "plan reading" part of the Class 2 exam or do I have to take both parts of the Class 2 exam?

**Answer:** You must take both parts of an exam class to receive a certificate even if you already passed one part of a more difficult exam.

### 14. I passed all but one Section of the test. Can I just re-take that one Section?

**Answer:** No, you must re-apply and take the entire Part over again. If you only missed one (or more) Section(s) in one Part then you only need to retake that Part.

### 15. Will letters of recommendation from my DSA Field Engineer be accepted for exam qualification?

**Answer:** No. Letters of Recommendations from DSA Field Engineers will no longer be accepted for exam qualification.

# DSA Project Inspector Examination Frequently Asked Questions

**16. What can I do in instances where my experience cannot be verified?**

**Answer:** A letter of recommendation will be requested in instances where an inspector's experience on specific project(s) needs verification. Experience time will not be given for these recommendations.

**17. Do I have to complete the Project Inspector Overview before applying for an exam?**

**Answer:** No. DSA is no longer requiring the Project Inspector Overview for New and Retesting applicants. The Project Inspector Overview is still a required component for Recertification and will still be required for all upgrades.

## **IMPORTANT**

*Certification does not guarantee that an individual will be approved for any school project. Experience, workload and past performance will be evaluated and considered on a case-by-case basis by the DSA field engineer.*

## **REMINDERS**

**Applicants:**

Mail your Exam Application to DSA Headquarters Office at  
1102 Q Street, Suite # 5100, Sacramento, CA., 95811

**Contact Information:**

Division of the State Architect Project Inspector Unit  
[inspector@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:inspector@dgs.ca.gov) or (916) 554-7019