



CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND SAFETY
INTRA-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

DATE: July 28, 2002

TO: All Structural Plan Check Engineers and Building Inspectors

FROM: Ray Chan, Chief of Engineering Bureau 
Robert Martin, Chief of Inspection Bureau 

SUBJECT: **INTERIM POLICY ON ACCEPTING ALTERNATE MATERIALS WITHOUT AN LADBS RESEARCH REPORT (SUPERSEDES INTERIM POLICY ISSUED ON NOVEMBER 1, 1999)**

In its ongoing effort to improve customer service and minimize redundancy, the Department will continue accepting certain types of evaluation reports, certifications and listings issued by other approved agencies. This memo defines these types of approvals.

BACKGROUND

Section 104.2.6 of the 1999 Los Angeles Building Code authorized the Department to approve new or alternate materials and methods of construction per the provisions of Article 8, Chapter IX, of the Los Angeles Municipal Code.

Initially, because of a lack of testing agencies, the Department prepared and issued research reports for all new or alternate materials for use in the City. This practice continued well on after numerous agencies came into existence and began certifying products. After carefully revisiting this dual practice, LADBS has concluded that several alternate materials, where reviewed and certified by other recognized agencies, are deemed adequate and no further review (by the Department) is needed. However, there are some alternate materials or manufactured product, specifically those that are structurally related, that will continue to warrant more scrutiny by our engineering technical staff. For these an LADBS Research Report must be obtained before they may be used.

Until proposed code revisions are adopted reflecting this new practice, this interim policy is established to outline the acceptance criteria of certain evaluation reports, certifications and listings.

INTERIM POLICY

The Department will accept the following evaluation reports, certifications and listings without requiring an LADBS Research Report or a Request for Modification of Building Ordinances:

- A. List of Types of Products having a recommendation by ICBO Evaluation Service, Inc. (ICBO ES) or the National Evaluation Service, Inc. (NES); which include the following: (These evaluation reports did not have to consider structural and seismic safety related issues.)

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- Coatings, exterior wall
 - Coolers, walk-in coolers less than 400 square feet

 - Finishes, interior
 - Finish systems, direct-applied exterior
 - Fire assemblies
 - Fireproofing, spray-on
 - Firestops

 - Insulation, exterior and finish system
 - Insulation, foam plastic
 - Insulation, sound and thermal

 - Partitions, interior non-bearing

 - Roofing, single-ply

 - Siding, fiber cement panels for use as exterior wall sidings
 - Siding, hardboard
 - Siding, plastic

 - Wood preservative treatment
- B. Listings for fire stops and interior finishes issued by any testing facilities approved by the City of Los Angeles to perform the required testing for these products.
- C. Listings for all proprietary assemblies in the latest edition of the Gypsum Manual issued by any testing facilities approved by the City of Los Angeles to perform the required testing for these products.
- C. Walk-in coolers located within a building, less than 400 square feet and with insulation material that carries the label of any testing facilities approved by the City of Los Angeles to perform the required testing for these products.
- D. State of California approved water heater straps.
- F. United States Geographical Survey (USGS) or State of California approved Accelerographs.

PROCEDURES

When a product is specified on the plans and for which L.A. City Research Report is not required as described above, the plan check engineer and inspector shall follow the procedures listed below:

- **PLAN CHECK ENGINEER**
 - Review the applicable evaluation report to verify that the product is appropriate for the intended use and that all the conditions and limitations of the report are applied.

Each plan check office shall maintain a set of ICBO ES and NES evaluation reports for reference. The ICBO ES and NES Evaluation Report information is also available on Internet. The web site is "www.icbo.org."
 - Verify that the evaluation report is still valid. ICBO ES maintains the status of all the evaluation reports. The phone number for ICBO ES is (562) 699-0543, extension 3254 or 3252.
 - Ensure that the product's name and its respective evaluation report number or listing is clearly noted on the approved set of plans. LADBS Material Control Section maintains the list of all the approved testing agencies for building material. The phone number for Material Control Section is (213) 977-6940.
- **INSPECTOR**
 - Verify that the approved set of plans has a note stating that, "A copy of the evaluation report and/or conditions of listing shall be made available at the job site."
 - Verify that the product is identified and installed according to the plans and all the conditions as listed on the Evaluation Reports and/or conditions of listings.
 - Contact the plan check engineer of record or his/her immediate supervisor, if there are questions relating to the conditions of the Evaluation Reports and/or listings.

For further questions regarding this interim policy, please call Mr. Yeuan Chou, Research Engineer, at (213) 485-2376, for clarification.