



NEW HANOVER COUNTY

BUILDING SAFETY

230 Government Center Drive, Suite 170, Wilmington, NC 28403

P: (910) 798-7308 | F: (910) 798-7811 | NHCgov.com

Nicholas Gadzekpo, Director

TO HOMEOWNERS ACTING AS THEIR OWN CONTRACTOR: May 26th, 2020, Updated Guidance Protocols for the Inspections of Occupied Residences, when using Live-Remote-Inspections (LRI) to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

This notice will serve as updated guidance on the protocols that need to be adhered to when using Live-Remote-Inspections (LRI) in New Hanover County. There are two types of LRI that an inspector may approve. **On-site LRI**, with an inspector present at the job site, or **off-site LRI**, with an inspector viewing from a remote location. The inspector will determine the use of an **on-site LRI** or **off-site LRI**.

Key-Guidance Points – Homeowner acting as Contractor (or persons requesting the inspections) and Inspectors:

1. Please note that to schedule an LRI, the Homeowner (or person requesting the inspection) should follow the current rules for permitting and making inspection requests. After the person makes the request, and after the inspector has researched details, the inspector will initiate phone contact with the Homeowner to determine if the request qualifies for an LRI. If it does, the inspector will schedule and inform the Homeowner of the appointed time for the LRI.
2. The Homeowner (or Homeowner's representative) must be on the job site at the time agreed to by the Homeowner and the inspector. Failure to adhere to the appointed time will default to a failed inspection.
3. For **on-site** Live Remote Inspections (LRI), the Homeowner (or Homeowner's representative) and the inspector must be at the job site at the same time.
4. For **off-site** Live Remote Inspections (LRI), the inspector will not be present on the job site. The Homeowner (or Homeowner's representative) must be ready on the job site, at the agreed-to time, to show the inspector the work via a device capable of live-audio/visual transmissions. A cell phone could be adequate.
5. Section 107.2 of the Administrative Code requires the person requesting the inspection (Contractor) to provide "**access to and means for inspection of the work.**" Therefore, the Homeowner as Contractor should provide the access needed to the work area via live-video/audio equipment, and be available to answer any questions related to the work.
6. **On-site meetings** must conform to safety requirements, including adherence to the minimum six-foot social distancing, facial mask protection, keeping a clean job site, and other methods to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

This updated protocol is for Homeowners responsible for work requiring the following inspections:

1. Interior trade rough-ins; framing, insulation, final trade, and final building;
2. Inspections for sunrooms or similar uses/additions: trade rough-ins and finals, track, and building finals.
3. HVAC change-outs.
4. Swimming pools (residential only);
5. This list is not all-inclusive. Per the North Carolina Department of Insurance (NCDOI), the Building Safety Department reserves the right to add, delete, or modify the inspections as conditions may warrant.

STEP 1 – Verification of Work: The inspector will verify and document the work performed for the **on-site or off-site LRI**. For **on-site LRI**, the inspector will physically inspect and document any exterior work or installation.

- a. The inspector will use live-remote technology (via Microsoft TEAMS, as the preferred app) that provides visual and audio communication with the Homeowner to achieve the "access to and means for inspection of the interior work."
- b. The Homeowner will be responsible for entering the building and using the live-video/audio device to show the inspector the work requiring inspection.
- c. If the work can be verified and approved by LRI and the Homeowner submits a signed Statement of Compliance with all Applicable Codes (see below in **STEP 2**), and then the inspector will approve of the inspection.

STEP 2 – Statement of Compliance with all Applicable Codes: The Homeowner responsible for the inspected work must sign the form/letter called **Statement of Compliance with all Applicable Codes**, for the work to be approved. A sample copy is attached.

Note: There are separate forms for **Homeowners acting as their own Contractor**, Trades Contractor (Subcontractor), **Installer** for a stand-alone job, and for a General Contractor who is responsible for the work. The person responsible for equipment installation (**Installer**) must check the appropriate box on the Statement of Compliance form. The form/letter reads as follows:

Statement of Compliance with all Applicable Codes

I, hereby, affirm that the work listed below complies with the applicable NC Code(s) for the Scope of work, be it for Residential, Building, Plumbing, Mechanical, Electrical, hand/or Fire Codes.

- For the equipment installed, I affirm that the equipment's installation, subject to this inspection, was according to the Manufacturer's listed specifications.

With the above Affirmation and the provisions in the NC State Building Code that hold contractors responsible for compliance with all applicable codes, as Homeowner acting as Contractor, I agree to release and forever hold harmless New Hanover County, its officials, and employees, both present and future, including the Building Safety Department, from any and all liabilities in respect to this Affirmation of Compliance with Codes.

The form/letter containing the Statement of Compliance should also include the following:

a. The address of the work/installations; b. Permit number(s); c. Date of the Inspection(s); d. Description or Scope of work performed or installation(s) made. And, the signature of the person responsible for the work.

1. **The Homeowner:** Must provide the signed form/letter containing the Statement of Compliance with all Applicable Codes to the inspector on the job site at the time of the **on-site LRI**. Or, upload the form/letter via COAST for the scheduled **off-site or on-site LRI**; the inspector must receive the form/letter to enable the documenting of the approved inspection.
2. **The Inspector:** The inspector will note on the Inspections Report, "LRI Inspection due to COVID-19." The inspector also will note that video/audio verification of the inspected work occurred, with receipt of a signed Statement of Compliance with all Applicable Codes. The above shall also serve as valid documentations to include in the property's permitting records.