

# MONTEREY COUNTY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Carl P. Holm, AICP, Director



LAND USE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT | PUBLIC WORKS & FACILITIES | PARKS

1441 Schilling Place, South 2nd Floor  
Salinas, California 93901-4527

(831)755-4800

[www.co.monterey.ca.us/rma](http://www.co.monterey.ca.us/rma)

**Subject: Modification Requests for Foundation and Soils Investigations**  
**Code: 2013 California Building Code**  
**Foundation and Soils Investigations**

## PURPOSE

The latest edition of the California Building Code establishes new requirements for foundation and soils investigations. These investigations are generally required for all structures located in high seismic regions such as Monterey County. This policy gives a general overview of these new requirements and how to submit requests for modification of these requirements for simple structures.

## GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

**Scope of Investigations:** Geotechnical investigations must include an evaluation of the following potential hazards from earthquake motions: slope instability, liquefaction and soil strength loss, differential settlement, reduction in soil-bearing capacity and surface rupture due to faulting or lateral spreading.

**Qualifications for Persons Preparing Reports:** A State of California registered Geotechnical Engineer or registered Civil Engineer with the appropriate experience and training is required to create, seal and sign the report on the results of the investigation and soil classification. When the report contains geological interpretations or subsurface explorations of faulting, or when the site has a slope surface of 3 horizontal to 1 vertical or steeper, the report shall be signed by either a registered Geotechnical Engineer or a California Certified Engineering Geologist.

**Contents of the Report:** Reports shall include the following minimum information:

1. Complete record of the soil samples, soil profile and plot of the location of test borings and/or excavations.
2. Soil classification based on observation and tests of the materials disclosed
3. Evaluation of slope stability, soil strength, position and adequacy of load-bearing soils, the effect of moisture variation on soil-bearing capacity, compressibility, liquefaction and expansiveness and elevation of the water table, if encountered.
4. Design spectral response acceleration coefficients,  $S_{DS}$  and  $S_{D1}$ .
5. Expected total and differential settlement.
6. Compacted fill material properties and testing in accordance with Section 1803.5.
7. Recommendations for foundation type and design criteria and provisions to mitigate the affects of related potential seismic hazards.
8. Effects of adjacent loads on the proposed structure.

## **MODIFICATIONS TO INVESTIGATION AND REPORT REQUIREMENTS**

**Exception to Site Specific Report:** Normally, an investigation and report must be prepared on and for the site of the proposed construction. When the Building Official determines that soils conditions are known based on reports of prior investigations of nearby sites for similar or less complex construction, the Building Official may waive a full investigation and report based on specified conditions for construction.

**Code Modification Request:** Upon written request from the designer of record, the Building Official may consider requests for modification of requirements when special individual reasons exist that make the application of these requirements impractical. These requests may be granted when supporting facts demonstrate that granting of such request will not lessen any degree of structural integrity, durability, strength and seismic safety. The extent of the change in requirements will be based on the strength of the supporting facts.

The person responsible for the foundation design must submit the request for modification in a letter format with the following minimum information:

1. Plot plan showing location of proposed and existing structures and existing natural grade contours.
2. Use, floor area, number of stories and height of existing and proposed structures.
3. Determination of maximum design loads for proposed footing and retaining walls.
4. Visual observation report of performance and condition of any existing structures on site with description of the structure size, foundation structure and loading.
5. Soil classification.
6. Observations from site visit on potential for differential settlement, slope instability, expansive soils, lateral spreading, liquefaction and presence of fill materials.
7. Estimated costs of construction and related foundation and soils investigation report.

### **Examples of Work That May Not Require a Soils Investigation Report:**

1. Residential Additions/Remodels: One-story additions 500 s.f. or less on level, undisturbed grade to an existing single family dwelling or a second-story additions 500 s.f. or less to an existing single family dwelling with engineering design, and non-structural remodels.
2. Detached Residential Accessory Structures: Detached residential accessory structures, such as garages, carports, recreation rooms, storerooms, workshops, stables, barns, playhouses, patio structures, gazebos, trellis, equipment sheds, animal enclosures and similar structures not exceeding 500 square feet in area.
3. Non-Habitable Accessory Structures: Miscellaneous structures such as free standing fences not exceeding 8 feet in height, decks no greater than 4 feet above grade at any point, retaining walls which retain no more than 5 feet level surcharge, photovoltaic systems, barbeques and other similar structures.

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- REQUEST FOR MODIFICATION OF CODE
- REQUEST FOR ALTERNATE MATERIAL, DESIGN OR METHOD OF CONSTRUCTION

To apply for this request, complete sections 1, 2, & 3 (ink or type)

<b>SITE ADDRESS</b>		<b>APN</b>	
CITY	ZIP	CROSS STREET	
Owner.....		PC #: .....	Type: .....
Address.....City/Zip .....		Permit #: .....	Stories: .....
<b>1</b>	Email.....Phone.....	PA #: .....	Occupancy: .....
Applicant.....Title.....		Div./Dept. ....	Occ. Load: .....
Address.....City/Zip .....		Job Status: .....	Use of Bldg:.....
Email.....Phone.....			

<b>2</b>	<b>REQUEST:</b> For code modifications, please state the applicable code requirement and the extent of relief desired. For alternate requests, state the type of system proposed and design methods. Submit plans if necessary to illustrate request. Additional sheets or data may be attached.

<b>3</b>	<b>JUSTIFICATION/FINDINGS OF EQUIVALENCY:</b> For code modifications, applicant shall demonstrate that special, individual reasons exist that make compliance with the strict letter of the ordinance impractical and that equivalency is provided. For alternate requests, applicant shall demonstrate suitability, strength, effectiveness, fire resistance, durability, safety and sanitation that is equivalent to the code for a similar use.	Code Section(s):
Attach additional sheets if necessary.		
Petitioner's Signature: ..... Position:..... Date: .....		Reviewed By:..... Date: .....

**DEPARTMENT ACTION:** After determination, copies to: 1) applicant, 2) permit file

The Request is: <input type="checkbox"/> GRANTED <input type="checkbox"/> DENIED	Dept. Comments:
CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:	
	No. of Items: .....
	Fee Due: \$.....
	Date Paid: .....
	Receipt No.: .....
	Processed by: .....
Building Official:.....Print Name:..... Date: .....	