

**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES – BUILDING INSPECTION****INSPECTION GUIDELINES:  
GREEN BUILDING SPECIAL INSPECTORS AND PROJECT TRIGGERS****INSPECTION CODE:** N/A**SCOPE:** RESIDENTIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL**APPLICABLE CODES:** 2019 CBC, CRC, CPC, CMC, CEC, CALGreen, CEnC, and PAMC

*The information provided in this document is general and intended as a guide only. Each project is unique and additional requirements may be enforced as deemed appropriate.*

**RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-FAMILY AND MULTI-FAMILY PROJECTS****GREEN BUILDING SPECIAL INSPECTORS**

- In accordance with Palo Alto Municipal Code 16.14, Residential projects triggering Tier 1 or Tier 2 shall be third-party verified by a Green Building Special Inspector (GBSI). For CALGreen Tier 1 and Tier 2 information, consult the Green Building Compliance webpage here:  
<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/Planning-Development-Services/Development-Services/Green-Building/Compliance>
- GBSIs must be selected from the pre-approved list of Residential GBSIs and shall perform inspections in accordance with the project's "GB-1" sheet, the Green Building Compliance Page, and the Green Building Inspection Guidelines Book. Where requirements are unclear, the GBSI may consult city staff for clarification and case-by-case interpretations.

**PROJECT TRIGGERS**

For a complete summary of triggers and submittal requirements, refer to the "*Residential Green Building Verification Form*" document found on the Green Building Compliance Page.

**MANDATORY**

- CALGreen Mandatory requirements are triggered on all Residential and Multi-Family alterations or additions that are less than 1,000 square feet and increase the project's conditioned area, volume, or size. Note that for CALGreen Mandatory only projects, the City of Palo Alto (CPA) Building Inspector shall perform the responsibilities of the GBSI. All references to "Green Building Special Inspector" or "GBSI" shall be replaced with "CPA Building Inspector" or "Building Inspector."

**TIER 1**

- CALGreen Tier 1 requirements are triggered on all residential building additions and/or alterations that exceed 1,000 square feet.

**TIER 2**

- CALGreen Tier 2 requirements are triggered on all new residential construction of any size.
  - Exception: Free standing detached Accessory Dwelling Units of new construction shall meet the following:
    1. California Green Building Standards Code Mandatory plus Tier 2 prerequisite requirements.
    2. No Planning and Design electives.
    3. Two (2) Water Efficiency and Conservation electives.
    4. Two (2) Material Conservation and Resource Efficiency electives.
    5. One (1) Environmental Quality elective.

**NON-RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS****GREEN BUILDING SPECIAL INSPECTORS**

- In accordance with Palo Alto Municipal Code 16.14, Commercial projects triggering Tier 1 or Tier 2 shall be third-party verified by a Green Building Special Inspector (GBSI). For CALGreen Tier 1 and Tier 2 information, consult the Green Building Compliance Page here:  
<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/Planning-Development-Services/Development-Services/Green-Building/Compliance>.
- GBSIs must be selected from the pre-approved list of Commercial GBSIs and shall perform inspections in accordance with the project's "GB-1" sheet, the Green Building Compliance Page, and the Green Building Inspection Guidelines Book. Where requirements are unclear, the GBSI may consult city staff for clarification and case-by-case interpretations.

**PROJECT TRIGGERS**

For a complete summary of triggers and submittal requirements, refer to the "Non-Residential Green Building Verification Form" document found on the Green Building Compliance Page.

**MANDATORY**

- CALGreen Mandatory requirements are triggered on all Tenant Improvements (TIs), renovations, or alterations less than 5,000 square feet, and/or building alterations with a permit valuation of \$200,000 or more.

**TIER 1**

- CALGreen Tier 1 requirements are triggered on all Tenant Improvements (TIs), renovations, or alterations of 5,000 square feet or more that include replacement of at least two of the following: HVAC system, building envelope, hot water system, or lighting system.

**TIER 2**

- CALGreen Tier 2 requirements are triggered on all new construction of any size, and projects with additions of 1,000 square feet or greater.