



# INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

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**Date:** December 30, 2015

**To:** Code Services Staff

**From:** Brad Claussen, Building Official

**Subject:** Soil Reports

This memo addresses when reports on soil conditions are required for building projects. Soil reports may be of two different types. A simple compaction report when fill is placed, or a full geotechnical report for soils and sites that are suspect in nature. Most commercial projects will reference either compaction or geotechnical reports and those will typically be addressed as the design professional indicates outside of this policy unless the Building Official requires that further investigation is warranted for a specific site.

A compaction report will be required for fill soils below footing level or when re-building on filled excavations from demolition projects. The minimum required compaction accepted will be 95% unless another figure has been specified by a licensed engineer for a specific project.

Full soil tests and/or assistance from a licensed structural and/or geotechnical engineer shall be obtained when unusual conditions are encountered. Unusual conditions include:

- Fill over creeks, ponds, lagoons or existing vegetation
- Foundations that do not meet the minimum clearances from ascending or descending slopes as provided in the IRC or IBC
- High water table or other severe soil-water conditions are known to exist.
- Areas where problems have historically occurred

If it is determined an engineered design or report is required, the design or report shall be approved by Code Services prior to approval of the footing or foundation inspection.

Soil bearing capacities shall comply with IRC Table R401.4.1 and IBC Table 1806.2. A soils report for this purpose is not necessary unless specifically required based on site conditions. In lieu of a geotechnical evaluation, a minimum load bearing value of 1,500 psf will be assumed. A higher value may also be assumed based on known soil composition on a site.