



INSPECTION OF CONSTRUCTION PROJECT SAMPLING & TESTING

INTRODUCTION

The Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) has established a Quality Assurance Program (IM 205) to assure that the quality of materials and construction workmanship incorporated into all highway construction projects is in reasonable conformity with the requirements of the approved plans and Specifications, including approved changes. It consists of an Acceptance Program and an Independent Assurance Program (IAP), both of which are based on test results obtained by qualified persons and equipment.

The acceptance portion of the program covers quality control (QC) sampling and testing and verification sampling and testing. The IAP portion of the program covers the evaluation of all sampling and testing procedures, personnel, and equipment used as part of an acceptance decision (includes Contractor, Contracting Agency, and consultant).

ACCEPTANCE PROGRAM FOR MATERIALS

To fulfill the materials acceptance requirements, several methods are used by the DOT.

Sampling & Testing (Test Report)
Certification
Approved Sources
Approved Shop Drawings
Approved Catalog Cut
Fabrication Report
Visual Approval by the Engineer

In many cases more than one method may be required for acceptance in the 204 Appendices and tables in the back of this guide. For some new or special materials, the Materials Engineer may need to determine the most appropriate acceptance requirements.

In order to provide the Contractor the opportunity to construct a project with minimal sampling and testing delays, inspection is performed at the source for many materials. Source inspection may consist of inspecting process control, sampling for laboratory testing or a combination of these procedures. All source-inspected or certified materials are subject to inspection at the project site prior to being incorporated into the work. Project site inspections are for identification of materials with test reports and for any unusual alterations of the characteristics of the material due to handling or other causes. Verification samples secured by project Agency personnel of source-inspected, certified, or project processed materials are also required for some materials in order to secure satisfactory validation for acceptance.

When certification procedures are required, the Contractor may, on the Contractor's own responsibility and at the Contractor's risk, incorporate these materials into the work. Acceptance will be based on satisfactory certification and compliance of the test results of any verification samples. When verification samples are not required, acceptance will be based on satisfactory certification.

A. SAMPLING & TESTING (TEST REPORT)

When a material is sampled and tested, the results will be documented on a construction form or a test report. There is quality control sampling and testing done by the Contractor or producer and verification sampling testing done by the Project Engineer, the District Materials Engineer, the Central Materials Laboratory, or an independent laboratory.

In many cases, in addition to sampling and testing, some other type of acceptance method will also be required. Sampling and testing may be done at the project, supplier, or source depending on which is the most appropriate.

B. CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE

For many materials a fabricator, manufacturer, or supplier is required to provide the Project Engineer with a certification document stating that the material meets the requirements of the plans and specifications. In most cases, the fabricator, manufacturer, or supplier must also be on an approved list in the IM. For some of these materials, sampling and testing is also required before final acceptance. The certification comes in a variety of forms:

- Stamped or preprinted on truck tickets as with aggregates,
- Stamped or preprinted on invoices as with Portland Cement and asphalt binder,
- Stamped or printed on the Mill Analysis as with reinforcing steel, structural steel, and other metals,
- Furnished as a separate document with each shipment as with zinc-silicate paint, engineering fabrics, epoxy coatings, and dowel baskets,
- Stamped or printed on a list of materials for each shipment as with CMP, concrete pipe, clay tile, and corrugated plastic subdrain,
- In the form of a guaranteed analysis as with seed labels.

The inspector will verify that the certification has been received by documenting it in the project materials book. Certifications are Type A, Type C, Type D, or other type as required by the Engineer or IM.

Type A Certification

A Type A certification is a laboratory report with test results and a certification statement stating that the materials furnished comply with the specifications. The tests may be conducted in the manufacturer laboratory or another qualified laboratory. The test samples must be from the lots of material shipped.

Type C Certification

A Type C certification is a paper prepared by the manufacturer or producer stating that the materials furnished are in accordance with the specifications. The applicable specification article or Office of Materials IM number is identified in the certification.

Type D Certification

A Type D certification is a letter or paper prepared by an approved manufacturer stating that the materials furnished comply with the applicable specifications of the Iowa Department of Transportation.

C. APPROVED SOURCE

(May also be referred to as "Approved Producer, Approved Supplier, Approved Fabricator, or Approved Brand") The source, producer, and the material must be evaluated and approved by the Office of Materials according to the appropriate Office of Materials IM in order to be used on a project. Once a letter of approval is issued, the source or producer is approved for use on projects (with the exception of steel fabricators). Approved lists are issued biannually for general information only. Approval for a source or producer may be rescinded at any time if it no longer meets the requirements of the IM.

The project inspector will document information about this material such as product name, source, date, producer, and lot number in the project materials book.

Most approved sources also require a certification.

D. APPROVED WAREHOUSE STOCK

For some items made up of miscellaneous materials, inspection and approval will be done by the District Materials Engineer at the supplier's warehouse.

E. APPROVED SHOP DRAWING & APPROVED CATALOG CUT

This information must be submitted to, and reviewed by the Iowa DOT Central Design Offices, before the material can be incorporated in the project.

F. FABRICATION REPORT

The project inspector must have a copy of the final fabrication report prior to incorporating the item into the project. The report will vary depending on the Materials IM requirements for the item fabricated. Final acceptance is by construction personnel at the project site, and is based on the proper documentation and the condition of the component.

G. VISUAL APPROVAL BY PROJECT ENGINEER

(May also be referred to as “As Per Plan, Approved By RCE, or Manufacturer Recommendations”) The project inspector must document information about this material such as product name, source, producer, lot number and date produced in the project materials book. The inspector will make sure the material meets the requirements of the plans, the Engineer, or the manufacturer before the material is used. Visual approval requires construction personnel to visually inspect the material to determine if it complies with the specifications. Visual approval is appropriate for non-critical items such as mulch or sod stakes, where compliance can be readily determined by visual means. If there are questions on specification compliance, samples will be taken for testing.

INDEPENDENT ASSURANCE PROGRAM

The IAP evaluates all sampling and testing procedures, personnel, and equipment used as part of an acceptance decision (Includes Contractor, Contracting Agency, and consultant). Independent assurance includes evaluation based on:

- Calibration checks
- Split samples
- Proficiency samples
- Observation of sampling and testing performance

The test method and the frequency of test are in the Appendices. Calibration checks and proficiency samples testing is covered in [IM 208](#).

SMALL QUANTITIES

The FHWA allows and encourages alternative acceptance methods for small quantities of non-critical materials. Appendix X contains a list of those materials and maximum quantities for which alternative acceptance methods may be appropriate. The Project Engineer or District Materials Engineer may still require the normal acceptance method for a material when it is considered critical in the intended application.

IM 204 Appendixes

Appendix A	Roadway & Borrow Excavation & Embankments
Appendix B	Soil Aggregate Subbase
Appendix C	Modified Subbase
Appendix D	Granular Subbase
Appendix E	Portland Cement Concrete Pavement, Pavement Widening, Base Widening, Curb & Gutter & Paved Shoulders
Appendix F	Hot Mix Asphalt (QMA)
Appendix H	Structural Concrete, Reinforcement, Foundations & Substructures, Concrete Structures, Concrete Floors, & Concrete Box, Arch & Circular Culverts
Appendix I	Concrete Drilled Shaft Foundations
Appendix K	Cold-In-Place Recycled Asphalt Pavement
Appendix L	Granular Surfacing/Driveway Surfacing
Appendix M	Concrete Bridge Floor Repair & Overlay & Surfacing
Appendix P	Surface Treatment (Seal Coat, Slurry, Joint Repair, Crack Filling & Fog Seal)
Appendix T	Base Repair, Pavement Repair
Appendix U	Granular Shoulders
Appendix V	Subdrains
Appendix W	Water Pollution Control, Erosion Control
Appendix X	Acceptance of Small Quantities of Materials
Appendix Z	Supplemental Guide, Basis of Acceptance