

Special Plans Examiner/Inspector Enforcement Option for Washington State's Non Residential Energy Code



STAN PRICE
NORTHWEST ENERGY EFFICIENCY
COUNCIL

History of Washington NREC



- **Non Residential Energy Code (NREC) adopted in 1994**
- **Utilities and stakeholders develop NREC Implementation Plan**
 - **Non-profit – Utility Code Group (UCG) formed with utility collaborative funding**
 - **UCG provides technical assistance, training, circuit rider support**

UCG Supports SPE/I Development

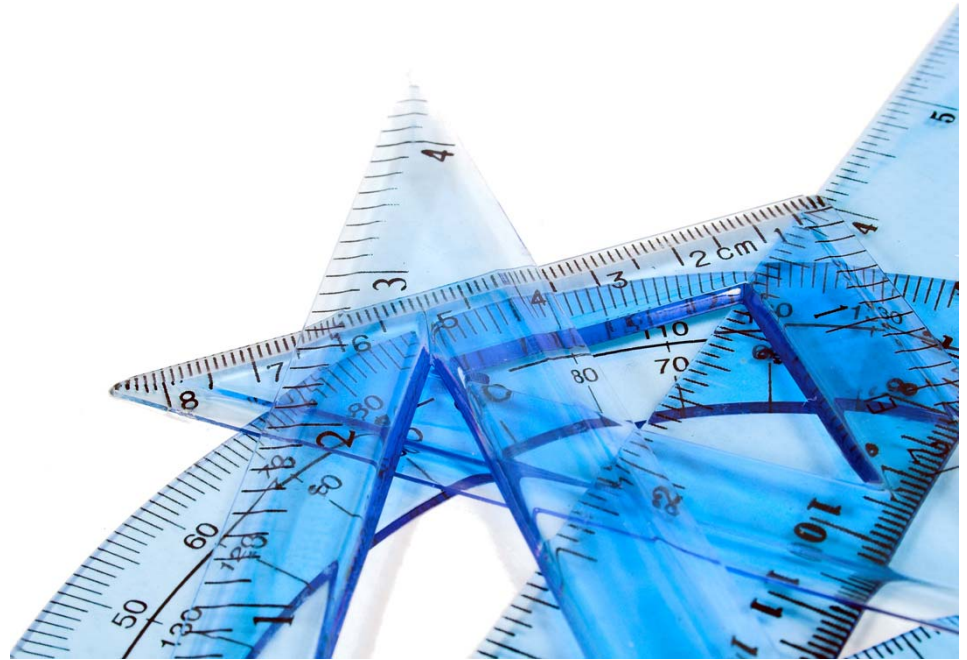


- **NREC Implementation Plan offers 3 enforcement options**
 - **Traditional (jurisdictions use internal personnel for plan review and inspection)**
 - **Special arrangement between jurisdiction and local utility for service**
 - **Use of Special Plans Examiner/Special Inspector (SPE/I)**

SPE/I System



- SPE/I is a “third party pool” of individuals, qualified to the satisfaction of the building official
- Building official can mandate that a permit holder utilize a SPE and/or choose to use a SI
- UCG developed training and testing program to support SPE/I system



SPE/I Qualifications*



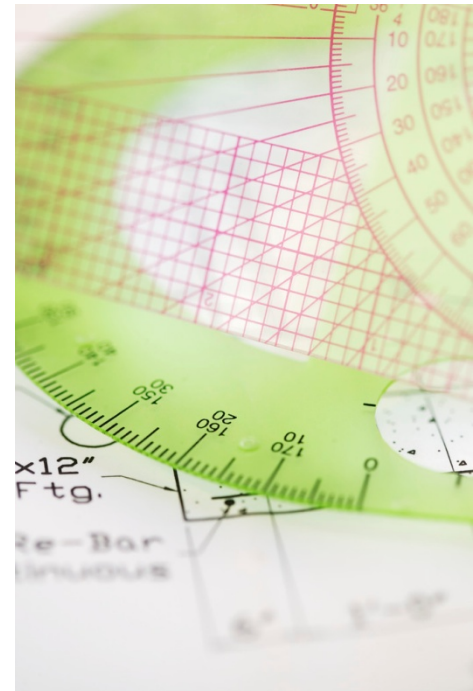
SPE/I	Project	Qualification
Basic/Category I	Simple	Written exam
Category II (Level 1)	<3 stories, not involving a P.E. or licensed arch.	Exam; rec letters; relevant 2 yr. degree; job exp.
Category II (Level 2)	>3 stories, involving P.E./architect	Exam; P.E. or licensed arch.

*qualifications vetted by Special Inspection Registration Board

Cost of Service



- Cost of service borne by the permit holder
- UCG provided reimbursement to permit holder - \$300 to \$375 per project



Who Got Qualified



- More than 200 individuals qualified across all categories
- Architects, engineers, utility personnel, and code officials
- Small firms, sole proprietors, and some large firms
 - Note: firms could not self-certify projects
- List maintained by the Washington Association of Building Officials (WABO)



Results



- **Approximately 50% of jurisdictions use SPE/I system exclusively or on selected Projects**
- **Large jurisdictions utilize traditional enforcement path (though some personnel get certified for professional development reasons)**
- **Third party evaluation determines that SPE/I increases compliance**

“Our research indicated that the most significant factor in achieving more efficient Buildings was the SPE/I program. Most buildings (83%) reviewed by a SPE/I Complied with all aspects of the energy code...”

Compliance with the 1994 Washington State Nonresidential Energy Code (NREC), Baylon, Housenecht, Heller, Tumidaj, June 1997.

Demise of the SPE/I



- UCG disbanded by utilities in 1997 (NEEC named successor organization)
- SPE/I training and technical support dwindles
- NEEC maintains some code technical assistance and material support
- International Code Council develops IECC, but it is not adopted in WA State
- WABO disinterested in supporting a certification not tied to IECC
- System falls into disuse
- All SPE/I certifications expire on 12/31/2008

