

Report Writing for Code Inspectors

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Introduction

Effective writing is vital to your career as an inspector. Your notices of violation, letters, and reports are public documents that may be read by supervisors, attorneys, judges, citizens, design professionals, contractors, and reporters. Quality inspection reports and notices of violation help ensure code compliance, impress superiors, and win respect from colleagues. They facilitate repairs, reinforce requirements for safe operations, and ensure unsafe practices are discontinued.

If you work for a government agency, your notices, letters, and inspection reports may become the basis for appeal hearings and criminal and civil trials—and may even prevent cases from ending up in court. Attorneys, consulting engineers, and code consultants who read your reports hoping to find omissions and errors may decide that the odds of prevailing in an appeal or trial are slim, and compliance is their best option.

Unlike police reports that capture the details of an incident or complaint for further investigation or prosecution, your inspection reports and notices of violation will compel a business or property owner to take action to bring the property or facility into compliance with the code. Clarity is important because repairs and changes to procedures and practices generally involve precious time and money.

Your writing skills can help you advance in your career. You'll be prepared to communicate effectively with business owners, design professionals, the media, community leaders, and other government officials. Well-written documents help you create a reputation for professionalism, accuracy, and fairness that will stand you in good stead as you start to climb the career ladder.

This book offers you a wealth of information about report writing. A pretest will help you assess your strengths and

determine which skills need your attention. Section I shows you how to organize and write professional reports. Sections II and III cover sentence skills, Section IV helps you avoid usage errors, and Section V covers special words you need to know. A post-test helps you decide what areas need further review. Exercises are provided throughout the book, and an Answer Key allows you to check your progress at each step. Let's get started!

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