



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

DEPARTMENT OF LICENSES & INSPECTIONS

Municipal Services Building - Concourse Level
1401 John F. Kennedy Boulevard
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102

Private Bridge Inspection Reporting

Information regarding the inspection reporting requirements of the Philadelphia Property Maintenance Code

Visit our website at www.phila.gov/li

The City of Philadelphia’s Property Maintenance Code requires all building owners to maintain the exterior of a structure in good repair, structurally sound and sanitary so as to not impose a threat to the public. Additionally, the Code establishes specific requirements for periodic inspections of private bridges and the filing of reports of such inspections. This document serves to inform the public of the method of reporting those inspections to the Department.

See Section [PM-316](#) of the Philadelphia Property Maintenance Code for more details.

IMPORTANT:

The owner of any private bridge and any appurtenance thereto shall be responsible for retaining a Professional to conduct periodic inspections of the private bridge, and to prepare and file a report on such inspection with the owner. All private bridges must be inspected and the reports submitted by July 1, 2017.

A summary of that inspection must be submitted to the Department of Licenses and Inspections on a form titled “Summary Inspection Report of Private Bridges”.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

WHO DOES THE PRIVATE BRIDGE PROGRAM COVER?

The owner of a private bridge.

WHAT IS A PRIVATE BRIDGE?

An elevated structure that crosses over any part of a public right-of-way or publicly-owned pedestrian, bicycle or equestrian trail that typically allows for pedestrian passage between buildings or supports building systems and processing equipment or allows for vehicular access to private property, and often is referred to as a skyway, catwalk, skybridge or skywalk. A private bridge does not include a structure inspected as required by a federal authority such as the Federal Highway Administration or the Federal Railroad Administration.

WHAT MUST A PROPERTY OWNER DO TO COMPLY WITH PM-316?

The owner of a private bridge shall be responsible for retaining a Professional to conduct periodic inspections of the private bridge for structural adequacy and safety and to file a report on such inspection as required by Code. The Professional must be a professional engineer licensed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and be experienced in the practice of structural engineering.

WHERE CAN I OBTAIN THE REQUIRED form “Summary Inspection Report of Private Bridges”?

Visit www.phila.gov/li under Permits & Certificates to download a copy of the form. This form is only a summary of the full report which must be given to the owner of the building.

HOW DO I SUBMIT THE FORM TO L+I?

Forms are to be submitted via e-mail to privatebridgereports@phila.gov. The *Summary Inspection Report of Private Bridges* submitted must have the correct address of the structure inspected as designated by the City’s Office of Property assessment. The correct address can be found on the property tax bill. There is currently no fee for submittal of this form to the Department.

WHAT MUST I DO IF AN UNSAFE CONDITION IS FOUND?

The owner must be notified immediately and take action within 24 hours to protect public safety. Within 10 days work must begin to correct the condition. When a private bridge is determined to be unsafe and such condition is considered imminently dangerous by the Professional, the Professional shall notify the code official immediately. A full copy of the inspection report identifying the unsafe condition must be delivered within 24 hours to:

**L+I Emergency Services Unit
11th floor of the Municipal Services Building
1401 JFK Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-686-2480**

This office will also handle inspections to correct conditions, requests for any extensions to repairs and receipt of reports related to the removal of unsafe conditions.

WHAT MUST I DO IF CONDITIONS ARE FOUND THAT ARE SAFE WITH A REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE PROGRAM?

The owner of a building is responsible for ensuring that the conditions described in the report as Safe with a Repair and Maintenance Program are repaired and the actions identified by the Professional are completed within the time frame designated in the report, or by such time necessary to prevent a condition from becoming an unsafe condition, whichever is sooner.

WHAT MUST I DO IF A SAFE CONDITION IS FOUND?

Submit a summary of that inspection to the Department of Licenses and Inspections on a form titled "Summary Inspection Report of Private Bridges".

WHAT IF MY BUILDING IS HISTORICAL AND THE PRIVATE BRIDGE NEEDS REPAIR?

Philadelphia Historical Commission (215-686-7660) approval is needed before a building permit can be issued.

THE PRIVATE BRIDGE WAS RECENTLY RENOVATED. HOW CAN I OBTAIN A WAIVER?

If the private bridge was substantially restored within the past five (5) years you must submit a written request to the Department for a waiver of the inspection requirements for the current inspection cycle. The request must include copies of any building permits related to the restoration work.

I DON'T BELIEVE MY PRIVATE BRIDGE NEEDS INSPECTION. WHAT CAN I DO?

The Code requires an inspection of any private bridge. Exceptions to this requirement based upon particular conditions must be appealed to the Board of Board of Building Standards.

**Board of Building Standards
11th floor of the Municipal Services Building
1401 JFK Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19103**

HOW CAN THE FINDINGS OF A PROFESSIONAL BE APPEALED?

Appeals related to private bridges may be filed within 30 days with:

**Board of Building Standards
11th floor of the Municipal Services Building
1401 JFK Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19103**