

ICC-SRCC INSPECTION FAQ



Ongoing surveillance of the production facilities are a key part of accredited product certification programs. ICC-SRCC outlines the requirements for certification surveillance in the [Rules for Solar Heating & Cooling Product Listing Reports](#) that governs SRCC's certification programs. This document provides information on policies and procedures for these inspections in a FAQ format for the use of SRCC clients and applicants. See the [SRCC website](#) or [contact us](#) for any additional questions.

Are inspections required to maintain my ICC-SRCC Certification?

Yes. Whether the requirement for the year is an on-site inspection or a self-assessment, inspections provide critical information to ICC-SRCC to confirm continued compliance with certification requirements.

Why does ICC-SRCC conduct inspections?

ICC-SRCC operates accredited third-party certification programs. This means that it confirms that the product submitted for certification meets the requirements of the program at the time of application, and as long as the certification is continued. Periodic ICC-SRCC inspections confirm that the products produced continue to meet the requirements of the standards and program, and that quality processes are in place to continue to produce compliant products.

Many regulatory bodies that specify ICC-SRCC certification require follow-up inspections. But they also provide value to consumers and listees. Inspections provide consumers with confidence that the products produced continue to perform as well and as safely as those originally tested or evaluated for the ICC-SRCC certification. Inspections provide listees with confidence that ICC-SRCC's policies for certification are being enforced for all, and that there is a "level playing field."

What is the difference between a Qualifying and Surveillance Inspection?

Qualifying Inspections must be conducted for all production facilities and Quality Management Systems that have not been previously inspected by ICC-SRCC. The Qualifying Inspection seeks to capture baseline information on the facility and systems for use in subsequent inspections. A Qualifying Inspection may also be triggered if a production facility is moved or if it undergoes a significant modification.

Surveillance Inspections are conducted for production facilities and Quality Management Systems that have previously been documented in a Qualifying Inspection. They seek to evaluate changes since the last inspection and confirm continued implementation and adherence to the Quality Management System requirements. Surveillance inspections may also select specific products for a review to confirm continued adherence to ICC-SRCC policies for certification.

Qualifying and Surveillance inspections are documented using two different forms, which can be found [online](#). The inspections are billed at the same rate and involve the same inspection providers.

Do I need to contract with the inspector to conduct the required inspections?

No, ICC-SRCC will assign and contract with the assigned inspection provider that will conduct the inspections. All invoicing for inspections is handled by ICC-SRCC. You will not receive a bill from the inspector.

Which ICC-SRCC programs require inspections?

Products certified under the OG-100, OG-300, OG-400, listings and ENERGY STAR programs are subject to inspection to maintain the certification.

I have OG-100 and OG-300 certifications. Will I need separate inspections for each?

Generally, as long as the same Quality Management System is used for both the solar thermal collectors and the solar water heating system, inspection requirements for OG-100 and OG-300 can be satisfied with a single inspection. Contact ICC-SRCC if you have multiple manufacturing locations to discuss your specific requirements.

We do not have a manufacturing line for the product we have certified with SRCC. Do we still need to undergo an inspection?

If the product is manufactured entirely by another company, ICC-SRCC will need to inspect that supplier's manufacturing facility.

If components are manufactured by another company and then shipped to the listee's facility for assembly into a finished product, ICC-SRCC will only inspect the listee's facility. Incoming goods procedures are then used to inspect the externally manufactured component.

If the product is comprised entirely of off-the-shelf components that are assembled in the field, ICC-SRCC will require an inspection of the Quality Management Systems – even though no manufacturing takes place at the listee’s facility. This can occur for certain types of OG-300 systems and some OG-100 collectors (e.g., PV water heating, solar air heating collectors).

I’m applying for my first ICC-SRCC certification. Do I need a factory inspection before the certification can be awarded?

No. ICC-SRCC allows new certifications to be issued prior to the conduct of a Qualifying (initial) Inspection. But that Qualifying Inspection must be carried out within 6 months of the award of the certification.

I already have some ICC-SRCC certifications, but I’m applying for a new one. Will I need an inspection for the new one?

Generally, no, if the product is manufactured at the same facility as the others under the same Quality Management System. In that case, the new certification will be included in the next inspection. If, however, the product covered by the new certification is manufactured at an entirely different facility, contact ICC-SRCC staff to determine whether an inspection of that additional facility will be required.

Some of my certified products are manufactured in one location and some in another. Will both locations need to be inspected?

Possibly. The answer depends on the details of each situation. Contact ICC-SRCC directly.

We have a Private Label certification; is it subject to inspection?

No. SRCC inspections are conducted on the facilities and Quality Systems of the original certification holder and manufacturer only.

Who does the inspections?

Inspections for each product are assigned to an inspection provider by ICC-SRCC. ICC-SRCC contracts with numerous inspectors around the world. Inspectors are selected based on their availability, expertise, and location. Before an inspection is scheduled, ICC-SRCC will notify the manufacturer of the required upcoming inspection and the assigned inspector. All assigned inspectors must agree to comply with ICC-SRCC’s policies for inspections, confidentiality, and conflict of interest. They receive training on the proper conduct of inspections for ICC-SRCC. If

there are any concerns or questions regarding the inspector assigned, manufacturers should contact ICC-SRCC right away.

In most cases, inspections are conducted by a single inspector. But some inspection providers may involve more than one inspector with different specialties, or for training purposes. A lead inspector will be identified who will serve as the primary point of contact for both the manufacturer and ICC-SRCC.

Occasionally, ICC-SRCC staff or representatives may attend and witness an inspection for quality control purposes. This is done to monitor the quality of the service they provide and ensure consistency between inspection providers.

I have Solar Keymark certification in Europe in addition to SRCC in North America. Can the inspections for each program be combined?

In some cases, yes. ICC-SRCC has agreements with several Solar Keymark inspectors to allow them to conduct joint inspections for Solar Keymark certifications and ICC-SRCC certifications at the same time. In this case, the joint inspection must be arranged in advance since ICC-SRCC must have an agreement in place with the inspector and train them on the policies and procedures. At the conclusion of the inspection, the inspector would complete two separate reports – one using the SKN form and the other using the SRCC form. Billing for the inspections is kept separate. ICC-SRCC contracts with the inspector for the SRCC portion of the inspection in the same manner as any other inspector and ICC-SRCC issues the invoice for the services. Billing for the SKN portion of the inspection is handled by the inspector and the associated SKN certification body, with no involvement from ICC-SRCC.

Manufacturers interested in setting up joint SKN/SRCC inspections should contact us prior to the conduct of the inspection.

How often will an inspection be required?

In most cases, factory inspections are required every two years, although the interval may be longer for certain legacy certifications. ICC-SRCC reserves the right to require inspections more frequently if certification policies are violated or serious non-conformities are identified. For more information on the inspection interval currently assigned to your certifications, contact ICC-SRCC staff.

How will I know if I need an inspection each year?

ICC-SRCC will send each certification holder a notification at the beginning of each year indicating whether a factory inspection will be required that year. If yes, the notification will

identify the assigned inspection provider. The inspector will then contact the manufacturer directly to schedule the inspection.

If not, the manufacturer is then eligible to submit a self-assessment form that year instead of having a full inspection. The self-assessment form will be supplied at the time of renewal. It must be completed and returned with the renewal application and fees to process the renewal. A self-assessment processing fee will be added to the renewal as well. [Click here](#) to access the self-assessment form. The information provided in the self-assessment form will be verified during the next factory inspection and will be available to the inspector.

Is there anything I need to do on years when no inspection is scheduled?

On years when a full factory inspection is not required, the manufacturer is eligible to submit a self-assessment form instead. The self-assessment form will be supplied at the time of renewal. It must be completed and returned with the renewal application and fees to process the renewal. A self-assessment processing fee will be added to the renewal as well. [Click here](#) to access the self-assessment form. The information provided in the self-assessment form will be verified during the next factory inspection and will be available to the inspector.

How is the inspection scheduled? Are there any unannounced inspections?

After a manufacturer is notified of the need for an inspection and the assigned inspector, the inspector will reach out to the designated facility contact for scheduling. Inspectors make every effort to conduct inspections during normal business hours and to avoid weekends and scheduled holidays. ICC-SRCC does not conduct unannounced inspections.

If an inspection is scheduled and the manufacturer needs to reschedule, they must do so BEFORE the date of the inspection. If the inspector arrives and is unable to gain access or if the necessary staff are not available (necessitating a return trip), additional fees will be imposed.

What should I do if I need to reschedule an inspection that has already been scheduled?

If an inspection is scheduled and the manufacturer needs to reschedule, they must do so BEFORE the date of the inspection. If the inspector arrives and is unable to gain access or if the necessary staff are not available (necessitating a return trip), additional fees will be imposed.

Are inspection costs included with my annual renewal fees?

No. Inspection fees are billed by ICC-SRCC after we receive the completed report from the inspector. Inspections do not occur every year and are on a different schedule than renewals. By keeping them separated, renewals can be processed promptly to ensure that certification can be maintained continuously. It also allows for more flexibility in the scheduling of the inspection for a date that works best for your schedule.

How much do inspections cost? Will I get a separate bill for the inspector's travel costs?

Inspection fees vary by location. In most cases, inspection fees billed by ICC-SRCC include travel costs. Travel is only billed separately for certain locations that are difficult to reach. For information on the inspection fees for a specific location, please contact us.

Invoices for inspections and processing are sent to the manufacturer after the inspection has been completed and the completed inspection report has been sent to ICC-SRCC. You will not receive a bill from the inspector, only ICC-SRCC.

How long will the inspection take?

Inspection times may vary depending on the number of certifications and details of the site. But generally, about 4-6 hours onsite. Inspectors may request some documentation in advance to reduce the time spent on-site.

Who needs to attend the inspection?

Manufacturers should designate a primary contact for each facility subject to inspection. That person is responsible for identifying individuals within the organization who can address the questions from the inspector. See the Qualifying Inspection Form for more information on the kind of information that will be needed. But there is no limit to the number of individuals who may attend. The names and titles of each attendee must be recorded in the inspection report form.

Can I request a remote/virtual inspection instead of an onsite inspection?

ICC-SRCC strongly prefers to conduct inspections onsite and in-person. However, in some cases, a virtual inspection may be specified. ICC-SRCC will notify manufacturers if they are eligible for a virtual inspection.

Does the production line need to be running during the inspection?

It is preferred that the production line be in operation for any product subject to inspection, but this is not required.

Do I still need to be inspected if my production line has not run since the last inspection?

Yes. Inspection is still necessary if the production line has not been operated since the last inspection.

The production line is not yet operating for the product I have certified. Do I still need to be inspected?

If the production line has not yet begun operation for a new product, an assigned inspection may be postponed at the discretion of ICC-SRCC. Listees in this situation should contact ICC-SRCC directly to determine the options available for their certification.

What does SRCC inspect?

During inspections related to ICC-SRCC certifications and listings, the inspector will:

- Review the manufacturer's quality management system and confirm that it is effectively implemented. Quality systems should include the following (as applicable):
 - Factory production quality controls
 - Incoming goods inspections
 - Instrument calibration and control
 - Staff training for production and quality control
 - Product design control and documentation
 - Complaint management.
- Check for any product design or manufacturing changes,
- Confirm that product labeling meets ICC-SRCC requirements,
- Review any special requirements in the certification or listing.
- Specify any other discrepancies between conditions at the manufacturing plant and ICC-SRCC program requirements.

The results of the inspection are recorded on the ICC-SRCC inspection report, which is [available online](#).

Where can I find information on things that will be inspected to prepare for the inspection?

ICC-SRCC provides several documents and resources that can be used by listees to prepare for an inspection.

- Qualifying and Surveillance Inspection Report Forms: These forms are completed by the inspector and lay out the items that will be assessed. The current forms are [available online](#).
- ICC-SRCC Rules for Solar Heating & Cooling Listing Reports: This document establishes the policies and procedures used for all ICC-SRCC solar heating and cooling product certifications and listings. The current document is [available online](#).
- ICC-SRCC Rules for Mark and Certificate Use: This document establishes requirements for the use of ICC-SRCC certification marks and labels required under each certification program. The current document is [available online](#).

For additional questions, please [contact us](#) or ask your assigned inspector.

What if the inspector identifies non-conformities?

Non-conformities are documented deviations between the ICC-SRCC program requirements or areas where the Quality Management System has been found to be deficient in some way. If identified by the inspector, they will be documented in Part E of the Qualifying or Surveillance Inspection Report Form. Each is described in detail, the significance is rated, and recommended action to resolve the non-conformity is provided. Small corrections may be completed at the time of the inspection at the discretion of the inspector.

Upon receipt of an inspection report with non-conformities, ICC-SRCC staff will review each to confirm. Staff will then notify the listee that a corrective action plan is required within 30 days. A corrective action plan lays out the steps the listee plans to take to resolve the non-conformity, along with a schedule for implementation. ICC-SRCC staff will then review and approve the corrective action plan or request revisions. Depending on the severity of the correction needed, the listee will then be directed to document the completion of the plan, or the corrections will be verified during the next scheduled inspection. If the corrections are found to be very significant or hazardous, ICC-SRCC may order another follow-up inspection to confirm their completion.

Will I get a copy of the inspection report?

Yes. The completed inspection report must be signed by the listee's authorized representative indicating receipt.