

Original Construction Elevation (OCE) Surveys

What are OCE's?

An OCE survey is an inspection documenting the variances of elevations in a foundation due to un-level construction prior to differential movement and settlement. The Texas Residential Construction Commission (TRCC) defines an OCE as “actual elevations of the foundation taken prior to substantial completion of the residential construction project...taken at a rate of approximately one elevation per 100 square feet.”

What are the benefits of OCE's?

The survey establishes base foundation elevations to which future surveys can be compared. This comparison helps determine the exact location and magnitude of differential foundation movement by distinguishing between variations incurred during construction versus those caused by soil movement. This information helps accurately determine the cause of movement and therefore creates a course of action to alleviate a problem.

Per the TRCC, if the builder chooses to not take the elevations, “then the foundation for the habitable areas of the home are [theoretically] presumed to be level +/- 0.75 inch (three-quarters of an inch) over the length of the foundation.” With OCE's a builder can document the actual initial elevations rather than assume they are within this range. **Lacking this original survey, elevations deviating from the established allowance are all assumed to be results of differential movement, per the TRCC.**

How do I obtain OCE's?

Although it is preferable to obtain an inspection immediately after concrete placement, prior to the installation of flooring and carpet, OCE's can be taken at any time. However, the earlier a survey is taken, the more representative the measurements will be to the original elevations. OCE surveys are a service offered by Paragon Structural Engineering. Please contact us a minimum of one day in advance to schedule. Refer to our design and inspection fee schedule for pricing.

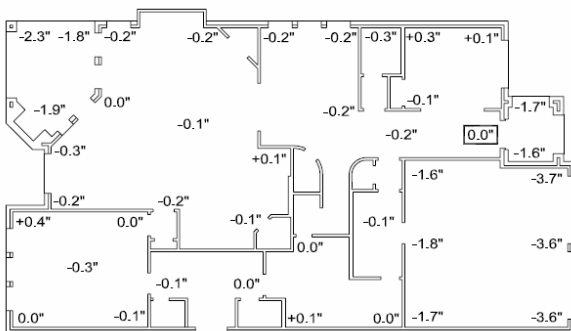


Figure 1 – Sample Original Construction Elevations



Figure 2 – Stanley CompuLevel