



**BUILDING CODE MANUAL  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
BUILDING AND SAFETY DIVISION  
Based on the 2017 LACBC**

**No. 017  
J104.2.3  
Article 1  
07-12-17  
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## **SIGNATURES OF DESIGNERS ON ENGINEERED GRADING PLANS**

Engineered grading plans must be signed and stamped by the design engineer (the civil engineer responsible for the preparation of the grading plans). Soils engineers, geotechnical engineers, and structural engineers are also civil engineers (with further authority) and may also sign engineered grading plans as the design engineer. No other professional, such as an architect or landscape architect, may sign engineered grading plans in lieu of a civil engineer.

**Background Authority:** The California Codes provide specific descriptions as to who can and who cannot perform grading design work.

1. Section 5500.1 of the Business and Professions Code defines the practice of architecture as performing services in the planning of sites, in the design (in whole or in part) of buildings, or groups of buildings and structures. This permits the architect to submit a site layout plan as part of the design of a building or group of buildings and structures. This section does not allow the practice of drainage, hydrology, hydraulic engineering, or geotechnical engineering.
2. Sections 6731 and 6731.1 of the Business and Professions Code defines the practice of civil engineering as performing services or making studies in connection with fixed works for drainage, flood control, grading, and the determination of the configuration or contours of the earth's surface or the position of fixed objects thereon (among other activities not enumerated herein).

**Exception:** Plans for grading involving less than 5,000 cubic yards and that will not support any structures shall be designated as Regular Grading per Section J104.2.1 and may be accepted without the signature of a civil engineer.

Therefore, an architect can prepare grading plans that are designated as regular grading which does not require a design that is reserved exclusively for a civil engineer. This limits the authority of the architect to establishing location of buildings and structures, establishing contours for the proposed grading, and calculating earthwork volumes.

Supersedes BCM J104.2.3 Article 1 dated 09-15-14

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