

Comparing Projects

In this chapter you learn how to:

- create a black-line comparison between two versions of a project,
- preview the report,
- send the report to the printer, and
- export the report to rich text format.

Overview

There are a number of reasons to compare project documents electronically. One of the reasons for a comparison might include a need to see how documents produced for a recent project differ from those for a similar project produced earlier.

To facilitate the comparison of documents produced for two different projects or two different users on the same project, SpecLink provides a Compare Projects window that allows one project to be established as the “base” and the other as an “overlay.” The user can then view the base document as overlaid by the second to view the differences between them.

NOTE: The Compare Projects feature works only with SpecLink projects in native file format. Documents created in a word processor or exported to a word processor format cannot be compared using SpecLink.

Comparison Concepts

In this overlay concept, text that is identical in both documents appears normal. Other changes show up as follows:

- Text not in the base document but in the compared document is struck out:
~~Deselected, excluded, or deleted text looks like this.~~
- Text in the base document but not in the compared document is underlined:
Added text looks like this.
- Text in the base document that has been edited in the compared document may have a combination of underlining and strikethroughs:
Edited text ~~usually~~ looks something like this.

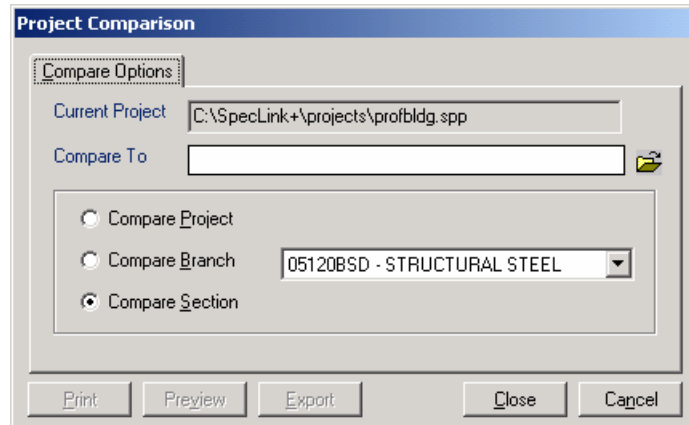
NOTE: The Compare Projects feature compares only the active text in the two projects. It does not compare any text, whether in the master or user-added, that has been deselected or excluded. It also does not include any paragraphs that have been tagged as NP (non-printing) or NS (Non-selectable).

The Compare Projects Dialog Box

Use the Compare Projects feature to see how a later project file compares to one prepared earlier.

1. Open the project you want to use as the basis for comparison (usually the one with the more recent edits).
2. From the Tools menu, choose Compare Projects, or click the Compare Projects button on the Standard toolbar.

The Project Comparison dialog box opens with the name and path of the current project automatically entered.



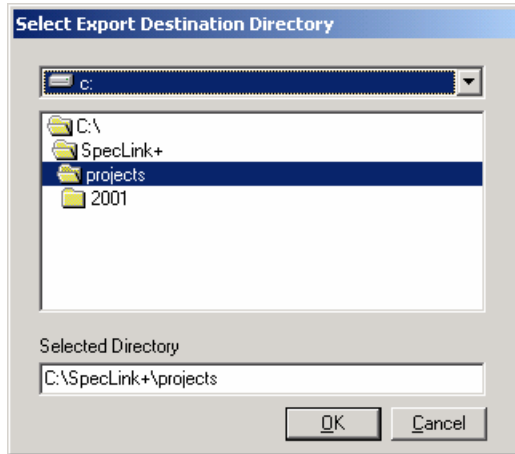
Project Comparison Dialog Box

3. To the right of the *Compare To* field, click on the folder icon. The Open dialog box opens.
4. Navigate to and select the project to be compared (the one with the older edits), and then click the Open button to return to the Project Comparison dialog box.
5. Next, click on one of the radio buttons to choose how much will be compared. You can compare the entire project, one branch, or one section. When all the settings are correct, click on the Print, Preview, or Export button.

NOTE: Only one compared section can be previewed at a time. If you choose to compare project or branch, you will need to choose Print or Export.

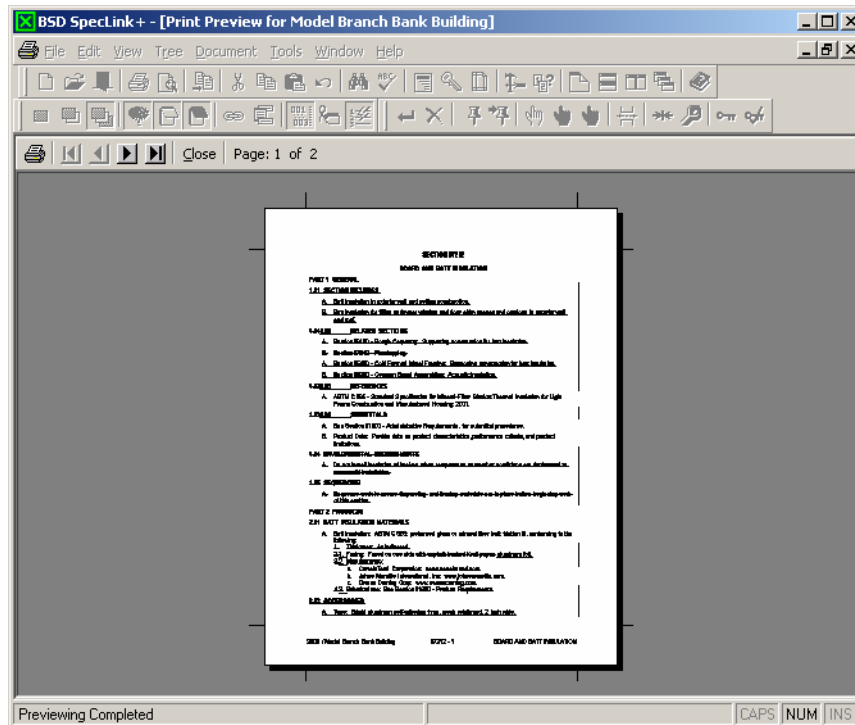
- If you click Print, the compared document is sent to the default printer, using the current print settings.

- If you click Export, a dialog box opens that asks you to enter the appropriate path for the file. If necessary, click the drop-down list to choose the appropriate drive, then double-click the folders to navigate to the desired location. If the folder you want to export to does not exist, you will need to create it in Windows Explorer first, and then export the compared files. Each compared section will export as a separate file with a file name of its section number and acronym (for example, 03300_BSD.rtf).



Select Export Destination Directory dialog box

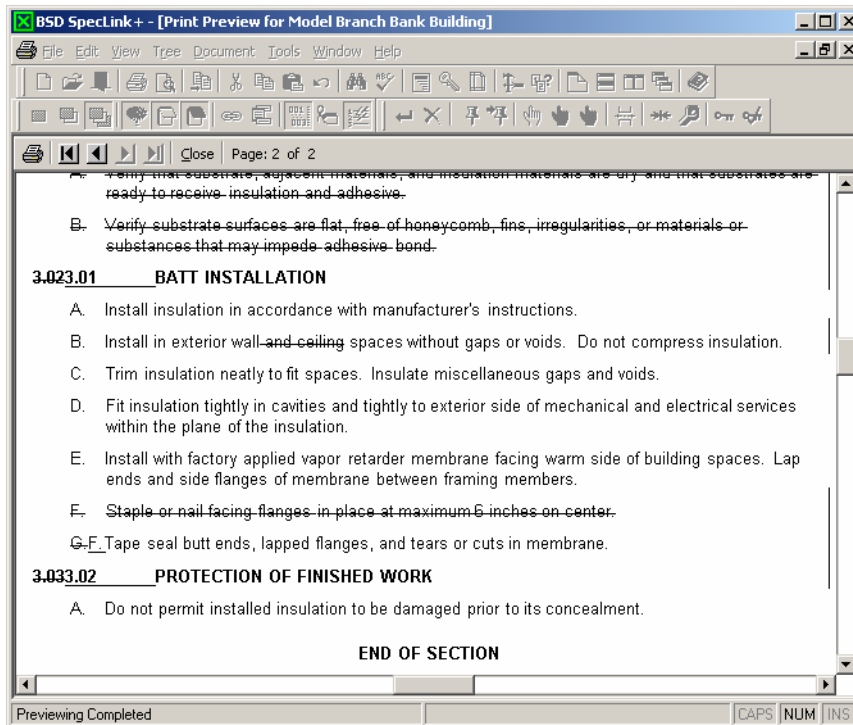
- If you click Preview, the compared section appears in a Compare Print Preview window. Click anywhere within the document to “zoom” in for a closer look.



Compare Print Preview Window

Viewing a Project Comparison

View a Project Comparison as you would any report in the Preview Window. Use the Move To arrows to move to the first, next, previous, and last pages of the report. Click anywhere within the document to enlarge the view. Click again to return to the overall page view.



Compare Project Window in Zoom Mode

Printing a Project Comparison

Print the Project Comparison by clicking on the Print button in the Compare Project Preview window, using the current default print settings. You can also return to the Project Comparison dialog box and click on the Print button.

The printed Project Comparison shows the differences between the two projects by means of underlining and strikethrough. Paragraphs with changes are also indicated by means of a vertical line in the right margin.