

# **STANDARDS OF PRACTICE**

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# **CODE OF ETHICS**

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## **1 - INTRODUCTION**

The American Institute of Inspectors®<sup>®</sup>, Inc., or A.I.I.<sup>™</sup>, is a NOT-FOR-PROFIT ASSOCIATION of individuals who themselves perform inspections of residential, industrial, and commercial properties, prepare written reports on their condition and who have met the requirements for membership as determined by the Board of Directors.

This association was formed in order:

- TO bring professionalism to the home inspector.
- TO promote excellence within the Home Inspection profession and to improve industry standards through the A.I.I.<sup>™</sup> philosophy of business as set forth in the A.I.I.<sup>™</sup> Standards of Practice, Code of Ethics, and related standards.
- TO provide members and other professionals with a forum in which to enhance their background, education and experience through education, exchange of ideas, and other related benefits that can be provided best by this association of professionals.
- TO interact with related professions, the legal community and government bodies as a recognized authority in the home, commercial, industrial and building inspection profession.

The Standards of Practice and the Code of Ethics are the minimum mandatory standards to which a member shall be held in order to maintain membership in the association.

[“Standards” as used in this text shall mean “Standards of Practice”]

## **CODE OF ETHICS**

The PHILOSOPHY required for success in the inspection industry is embodied in our Code of Ethics to which all members subscribe and will be held accountable.

1. Members SHALL discharge their duties with fidelity to the public, their clients, and with fairness and impartiality to all and shall respect and recognize the rights, individuality and dignity of individuals and not knowingly discriminate or permit discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or religion.
2. Every effort SHALL be made to avoid a conflict of interest. The member shall have absolutely no vested interest in the outcome of the report. The inspection may not be used as a vehicle to deliberately obtain additional work in another field.
3. Member Inspectors shall NOT overly scrutinize the property. The Inspectors opinion shall only be based on their education, experience, and honest convictions. The purpose of an A.I.I. Certified Inspection is to objectively state the conditions of the property so that the buyer can make an informed purchase decision.
4. Member Inspectors SHALL address the "Durability" and "Serviceability" of the components of a property as outlined in the A.I.I.<sup>™</sup> Report Forms and shall NOT be used to determine the "Desirability" or value of a property.
5. Members shall NOT make repairs or give repair estimates for any condition found on an inspected property or offer an appraisal or opinion of the market value of the inspected property.

6. All members agree to submit to binding arbitration any disputes concerning the practice of their profession.
7. Member Inspectors SHALL fully disclose the scope of the inspection work, the fee structure and make no false representations regarding services or qualifications.
8. Member Inspectors SHALL refrain from making derogatory comments of other members or members of related professions in the real estate or inspection community. High professional standards of integrity and performance are guiding principles.
9. It shall be a violation of the code of Ethics for a member of the Board of Directors to take a position as a Witness against an A.I.I.™ member in a court of law. 11-8-2002
10. A member will NOT disclose any information concerning the results of the inspection without the approval of the client.
11. A member shall NOT accept compensation from more than one interested party for the same service.
12. A member shall NOT accept nor offer commissions or allowances, rebates, kickbacks, or gifts, directly or indirectly, from other parties to induce referrals or reciprocity in the practice of their business beyond items of nominal value given as part of advertising or normal conduct of business.
13. Members SHALL always advertise and seek business according to the A.I.I.™ Advertising Guidelines and shall not engage in false or misleading advertising or otherwise misrepresent any matters to the public.
14. A member SHALL execute work in conformity with federal, state, and local laws, maintain all necessary licenses and qualifications, and refuse to be a party to any action that violates these regulations.
15. Members SHALL make every effort to uphold, maintain, and improve the professional integrity, reputation and practice of the inspection industry.
16. Members are committed to ongoing professional development and continuing education as established by the AII™ Board of Directors.

## **2 - PURPOSE and SCOPE**

### 2.1 The inspector SHALL:

- Observe installed systems and components listed in these Standards.
- Submit a written report to the client, which shall:
  1. Provide a summation of a limited visual inspection of the readily accessible and observable systems and components of a property.
  2. Identify only observable components specified in these Standards and exclude all systems/components that are not accessible, are turned off, or are not functional (for any reason) and why said item could not be observed.
  3. State the observed general condition(s) of the readily accessible systems and components as is more fully set forth and listed within these Standards. Statements of condition shall note any observable condition that may affect the function or operation of any system or component as set forth in the Standards.
  4. Identify observable hazards of systems and conditions as set forth in the Standards.
  5. Include the inspection of detached buildings located on the property when the detached buildings are listed as part of the property to be inspected, and the client requests the inspection for an additional fee and agreement between the inspector and client.
- These Standards are NOT intended to limit the inspector from:
  1. Reporting observations and conditions in addition to those required
  2. Providing any additional inspection services. Additional inspection services may be provided based on the experience, qualification, certification and/or licensing for such services that have been obtained by individual inspectors or inspection companies. These inspections are performed under specific agreement and contracted separately between the Inspector and/or Inspection Company and the client, with separate fee structures.
  3. Excluding various installed systems or components and any other services from the inspection if requested by the client or dictated by other circumstances. The inspection agreement will govern the conditions to be inspected and said contract/agreement will supercede the Standards by contract.

2.2 These Standards are intended to provide guidelines under which Real Estate property inspections shall be conducted. Style or aesthetics shall not be considered in the evaluation or conclusions of conditions noted. The inspection reports may contain recommendations for further evaluation by licensed professionals for specific conditions depending on the conditions found.

2.3 These Standards are A.I.I™ standards and may be superseded by individual State requirements. Inspectors should insure that they comply with their State standards and/or requirements.

## **3 - GENERAL LIMITATIONS and EXCLUSIONS**

### 3.1 General limitations:

- Inspections performed in accordance with these Standards are for a limited visual inspection of the readily accessible components of the property, only, and are NOT contractually intended to be technically exhaustive.
- Inspections performed cannot identify concealed conditions or latent defects.

## 2.2 General exclusions:

- The inspector IS NOT REQUIRED TO report on:
  1. The causes of any condition found that may adversely affect the function or operation of a system or component. Such a notification is outside the scope of this inspection and the Standards.
  2. The suitability/desirability of the property for any “usage”. The inspector is not an expert on land use, zoning and the usage of the property.
  3. Compliance or non-compliance with governing codes, ordinances restrictive covenants, and statutes including, but not limited to local building codes, zoning and land use.
  4. The market value of the property or its marketability.
  5. The advisability or inadvisability of purchase of the property.
  6. Any system, component or structure that was not observed, except to report that it was not observed and why.
  7. Any system, component or structure not contained in a limited visual inspection of the property. If the inspector limits the inspection to specific systems, components or structures, the inspector shall confirm in the report that the inspection has been limited to such individual specific systems, components and structures of the property.
  8. Any items that are concealed or not readily accessible.
  9. The life expectancy, warranties or guarantees of any kind for any component or system.
  10. The methods, materials, or costs of corrections for any condition noted.
  11. The presence or absence of wood destroying organisms unless specifically contracted for such service, which must follow state licensing and/or training requirements.
  12. Cosmetic or decorative items, underground items, items not permanently installed or detached structures.
  13. Any systems, components or structures not specifically identified in these Standards or by a separate contract with an individual inspector or inspection company.
  
- The inspector will NOT:
  1. Offer or perform any act or service contrary to law.
  2. Offer or perform engineering, architectural services, plumbing, electrical or any other job function (professional trade) on inspected property.
  3. Offer guarantees or warranties of any kind other than as set forth in the Standards.
  4. Determine the causes for possible repairs, offer to make repairs or estimates of cost for repairs, methods or materials to be used for repairs on any property inspected by he/she or their company.
  5. Calculate the strength, adequacy, or efficiency of any system or component.
  6. Enter any area or perform any procedure that may damage the property or its components or be dangerous to the inspector or other persons.
  7. Operate any system or component that is shut down or otherwise inoperable using normal operational controls.
  8. Enter into under-floor crawl spaces or into attics that are not readily accessible or, in the judgment of the inspector, may be hazardous to the inspectors health/safety.
  9. Operate any shut-off valve.
  10. Determine the existence of any hidden deficiencies or defects.
  11. Determine the effectiveness of system controls or predict future conditions, operating costs or failure of components.

12. Operate any system or component that does not respond to normal operating controls.
13. Dismantle or perform any destructive examination, test or analysis of any system, component or structure.
14. Move suspended ceiling tiles, personal items, furniture, equipment, plant life, soil, snow, ice, debris, or disturb insulation that obstructs access or visibility.
15. Remove access panels and covers that are not readily detachable without tools, except electrical main distribution and sub-panels (sub-panels only in areas that are inspected).
16. Enter into any area or perform any procedure that will, in the opinion of the inspector, likely be dangerous to the inspector or other persons or damage the property or its system components.
17. Obtain or review information from any third party or research the history of the property (unless specifically contracted for that service).
18. Make any determination about damage caused to the structure or any systems by termites and/or any other insects, or organisms, if contradictory to state law. However, any findings that tend to indicate that termites or other insects may have infested the inspected property shall be described with recommendations that further evaluation by an appropriate professional be obtained. [Inspectors who are not State licensed pest inspectors shall comply with any and all State regulations that may apply to Pest Reports.]
19. Evaluate the acoustical or other nuisance characteristics of the property its components, complex, adjoining property or neighborhood
20. Determine the presence or absence of any suspected hazardous substance or material including, but not limited to: asbestos, odors, molds, fungi, mildew, sick home syndrome, electromagnetic fields, fiberglass, formaldehyde, hazardous wastes, lead, radon, soils contamination, underground storage tank contamination or quality of drinking water or waste disposal, etc. Consideration of any hazardous substance or material may require additional specialized training, certification, experience and/or State licensing. Inspectors shall comply with any and all State regulations that may apply to specialized inspections and are to contract them separately and specifically. This does not prevent the inspector from reporting an observed presence or conditions that requires further evaluation by an appropriate professional.
21. Operate or evaluate any low voltage electrical (less than 120-volt line voltage) system or component (except doorbell if installed).
22. Operate or evaluate any security, monitoring or fire suppressant system on the property (Components of monitoring systems, such as smoke alarms, will not be tested with normal controls if connected to an external central monitoring agency unless there is confirmation that the monitoring system has been deactivated.)
23. Examine any fire resistant aspects of the property.
24. Examine every individual component of a system or structure where representative samples are only available and accessible; such as, doors, windows, switches, outlets, etc.
25. Determine the age of construction or installation of any system, component or structure or differentiate between original construction and modifications and upgrades.

Limitations and exclusions specific to individual systems are listed in the following sections.

## **4 – SYSTEM: SITE CHARACTERISTICS**

4.1 The Inspector shall observe and describe:

- Site grade and surface water drainage characteristics at the foundation if observable. Most buildings have shrubbery or other growth around the property that limit or eliminate the ability of the inspector to visualize the drainage or grade of the property.
- Condition of walkways and exterior stairways, stoops, landings, patios and decks.
- Condition of driveways and other paved or masonry areas.
- Visibly accessible retaining walls and rockeries.
- Earth to wood proximity.

4.2 The Inspector shall NOT report the following unless said inspections are contained within a separate contract:

- Ownership of property, fencing, privacy walls, retaining walls, or related issues.
- Condition of trees, shrubs, or vegetation.
- Soil or geological conditions, site engineering, property boundaries, encroachments or easements.
- Adequacy of retaining walls, sea walls, waterfront bulkhead, docks and piers.
- Ponds, fountains or decorative water features.

## **5 - SYSTEM: STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS**

5.1 The Inspector SHALL observe and report on visible Structural components including:

- Foundations and other support and anchoring components.
- Floors and visible floor framing,
- Substructure and substructure ventilation.
- Walls
- Ceilings
- Stairs
- Roofs and visible roof framing.
- The presence of drainage systems, sumps, sump pumps, and related equipment.

5.2 The inspector SHALL:

- Identify the type of:
  1. Foundation
  2. Floor structure
  3. Wall structure
  4. Roof structure
  5. Ceiling structure
- Evaluate components where deterioration is suspected. Probing is NOT required when probing would damage any finished surface.
- Enter under floor crawl spaces and attic spaces.
- Report the methods used to observe under floor crawl spaces and attics when these areas are not entered or when access or visibility is limited.
- Report on signs of unusual or harmful water penetration into/onto the structure or structural components.

5.3 The inspector shall NOT REQUIRED TO:

- Enter substructure areas that are not accessible or where entry could cause damage or expose the inspector to a hazard.
- Enter crawl spaces or attic spaces where access opening is less than 18" x 24".
- Enter under floor crawl spaces when obstructed, restricted or when headroom is less than 18 inches below the floor joists.
- Enter into attics when there is less than 36 inches below rafters or when entry could damage the property, or when dangerous or adverse situations are suspected.
- Move owner stored items or furnishings, vegetation or debris, or perform any excavations or other intrusive functions to gain access to systems or components.
- Operate or evaluate the adequacy of sump pumps or drainage systems.
- Identify size or adequacy of any bolting or bracing systems in the substructure.
- Perform any intrusive examination or testing.

## **6 - SYSTEM: EXTERIOR**

6.1 The inspector SHALL observe and report on:

- Exterior wall coverings, flashings and trim.
- Primary windows and doors.
- Garage-door operators.
- Attached garages and carports.
- Attached decks, balconies, stoops, steps, columns, areaways, and porches including hand railings and guardrails.
- Eaves, soffits, and fascias.
- Vegetation, grading, drainage, driveways, patios, walkways and retaining walls with respect to their effect on the condition of the building. [Retaining walls are reported on based on their existence, visual function and whether weep holes are present. The adequacy and engineering aspects are left to the appropriate professional].

6.2 The inspector SHALL:

- Identify exterior wall covering materials.
- Operate all exterior doors including garage doors, manually or by using permanently installed controls of any garage door operator.
- Report whether or not any garage door operator will automatically reverse when meeting reasonable resistance during closing and/or when the electronic eye beam (if installed) is interrupted.

6.3 The inspector is NOT required to report on:

- Garage door operator remote control transmitters.
- Operation or condition of storm doors, storm windows, screening, shutters or awnings.
- Geological, geotechnical or hydrological conditions.
- Soil conditions.
- Recreational facilities, including, but not limited to, spas, saunas, steam baths, swimming pools, tennis courts, playground equipment, and other exercise, entertainment, or athletic facilities [unless specifically contracted for by the client and the inspector possesses the proper technical expertise, training and applicable State licensing and/or certification for such inspections].
- Foundation, roof and all underground drainage systems.

- Detached outbuildings and structures, other than primary parking garage and carport, unless specifically contracted for inclusion in the report by the client.
- Areas or items that are not visible from a readily accessible walking surface.
- Waterfront boathouses, piers and docks, waterfront bulkheading.
- Outdoor barbecues.

## **7 - SYSTEM: ROOFING**

7.1 The inspector SHALL observe the roof and report on:

- Roof coverings
- Roof drainage systems
- Flashings
- Skylights, chimneys and roof penetrations.
- Visible condition of the exterior of chimneys and flues.
- Any appearance of instability or missing attachment or guying system for antennae or TV dish system.
- Signs of leaks or abnormal water intrusion into/onto building components.

7.2 The inspector SHALL:

- Identify the type of roof covering materials
- Report the methods used to observe the roofing.
- Report on overall condition of the roofing.
- Report on any conditions that are damaging to the roof.

7.3 The inspector is NOT required to:

- Walk on the roofing when walking could damage the property or be unsafe to the inspector.
- Report on any antennae or Satellite dish system function, operation or its grounding system.
- Report on the interior of flues or chimneys that are not readily accessible and/or visible.

## **8 - SYSTEM: PLUMBING**

8.1 The inspector SHALL observe and report on:

- Interior water supply and distribution system including:
  1. Piping materials, supports and insulation.
  2. Fixtures and faucets.
  3. Manual flow.
  4. Evidence of leaks.
  5. Presence of visible cross connections
  6. Presence of visible backflow prevention devices.
- Interior drain, waste and vent system including:
  1. Traps, drains waste, and vent piping, and piping supports.
  2. Evidence of leaks.
  3. Normal drainage.
  4. Evidence of lack of drainage or leaking waste drain system.
  5. Presence of cleanouts and absence of any drain line plugs.

- Hot water systems including:
  1. Water heating equipment, energy source and type of connection.
  2. Normal operating controls.
  3. Presence of safety temperature-pressure relief valve and drain piping.
  4. Combustion air and venting.
  5. Clearance to combustibles.
  6. Presence of seismic bracing.
  
- Fuel storage and distribution of systems including:
  1. Fuel storage equipment, supply piping, venting, and supports.
  2. Evidence of leaks.

## 8.2 The inspector SHALL:

- Identify Water supply and distribution piping materials.
- Identify drain, waste, and vent piping materials.
- Identify water-heating equipment.
- Operate all plumbing fixtures, hose bibs, and faucets, where the faucets are not connected to a household appliance. (Sprinkler systems are not operated).
- Identify the presence of sump pump and sewage ejection pumps if visible (evaluation of function or adequacy is not included).

## 8.3 The inspector is NOT required to:

- State the effectiveness (quantitatively or qualitatively) of anti-siphon, back-flow prevention or drain-stop devices.
- Determine whether water supply and waste disposal systems are public or private.
- Operate automatic safety controls.
- Operate any valve except toilet flush valves, hose bibs and fixture faucets.
- Operate any system fixture or component that is shut down, turned off or disconnected.
- Examine or evaluate the operation of private water systems, including, but not limited to wells, pumps, tanks, and related equipment.
- Verify the functional flow, pressure, temperature or volume at any fixture that is capped or connected to an appliance.
- Examine any overflow device of any fixture.
- Evaluate the potability (quality) of water or conformance to any State standards or design.
- Evaluate the gas or propane system for any leakage.
- Evaluate gas, liquid propane, or oil storage tanks.
- Determine whether there are sufficient clean-outs installed in the waste system piping.
- Test shower pans for leakage or fill any fixture with water during an inspection.
- Inspect drainage to or from any appliance, unit, or apparatus to or from said property.
- Report on:
  1. Water conditioning systems.
  2. Fire and lawn sprinkler systems.
  3. On-site potable water supply quality and quantity.
  4. On-site waste disposal systems.
  5. Foundation irrigation systems.
  6. Jetted tubs, except as to functional flow and functional drainage.
  7. Swimming Pools, ponds and spas.

[NOTE: Examination of specific areas may be justified if the Inspector possesses proper experience, certification and licensing for such examinations and they are contracted separately, with separate fee structures, between the Inspector and the Client]

## **9 - SYSTEM: ELECTRICAL**

9.1 The inspector SHALL observe and report on:

- Service entrance conductor's type and condition.
- Service equipment, grounding equipment, main over-current device, and main and downstream distribution panels (subpanels) [downstream panels are to be in inspected areas].
- Amperage and voltage ratings of the service.
- Branch circuit conductors, their over-current devices, and the compatibility of their ampacity and voltages.
- The operation of a representative number of installed ceiling fans, lighting fixtures, switches and receptacles located inside the house and attached garage, and on the dwelling exterior walls.
- The polarity and grounding of all accessible outlets.
- The presence of GFI outlets within six feet of interior plumbing fixtures, in the garage or carport, unfinished concrete floor basements and attached to the exterior of the inspected structure.
- The operation of Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI) test button.
- The operation of Arc Fault Circuit Interrupter (AFCI) breaker test button.

9.2 The inspector SHALL identify and describe:

- Service amperage and voltage.
- Service entry conductor material.
- Service type as being overhead or underground.
- Location of electrical main disconnect.
- Location and description of electrical downstream panels (if located in an inspected area).
- The presence of any 110-volt solid aluminum branch circuit wiring.

9.3 The inspector is NOT required to:

- Insert any tool, probe or testing device inside the electrical panels.
- Test or operate any over-current device except Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI) and Arc Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) breakers using the installed test buttons.
- Dismantle any electrical device or control other than to remove the covers of the main and auxiliary distribution panels.
- Operate electrical systems or components that are disconnected or switched off at the main electrical panel.
- Disconnect any energized system or appliance.
- Move furnishings or storage to gain access to the electrical panel.
- Evaluate the electrical panel if insufficient clearance does not permit safe access.
- Examine de-icing equipment, private or emergency electrical supply sources, including but not limited to: generators, windmills, photovoltaic solar collectors, or battery or electrical storage facilities.
- Observe or report on:
  1. Low voltage systems except to report the presence of solenoid-type lighting systems.
  2. Alarm systems, security system devices, heat detectors or carbon monoxide detectors.
  3. Intercom telephone, security, TV, lightning arrestors or other ancillary wiring that is not part of the primary electrical distribution system.
  4. Built-in vacuum equipment.
  5. Measurement of amperage, voltage or impedance in any electrical system, device or appliance.

## **10 - SYSTEM: HEATING**

10.1 The inspector SHALL observe and report on:

- Permanently installed heating systems including:
  1. Heating equipment.
  2. Normal operating controls.
  3. Automatic safety controls.
  4. Chimneys, flues, and vents, where readily visible.
  5. Combustion air supply.
  6. Clearance to combustibles.
  7. Heat distribution systems including blowers, pumps, ducts, piping, radiators, convectors, registers, air filters, insulation and fan coil units.
  8. The presence of an installed heat source in each room.
  
- The inspector SHALL:
  1. Identify the energy source and type of connection.
  2. Identify heating equipment and distribution type.
  3. Operate the system(s) using normal operating controls.
  4. Open the readily accessible panels provided by the manufacturer or installer for routine homeowner maintenance.

10.2 The inspector is NOT required to:

- Operate heating systems when weather conditions or other circumstances may cause equipment damage or if, in the opinion of the inspector, the ability to operate it is unsafe or hazardous.
- Operate Automatic safety controls
- Ignite or extinguish solid fuel fires.
- Start a gas, propane or oil furnace if shut down or open any gas, propane or oil supply valve.
- Override automatic safety controls to activate the equipment.
- Examine or evaluate the condition of heat exchangers.
- Examine electric heater elements or heat pump fluid/gas materials or examine below grade systems and components.
- Examine any solar-energy heating systems or components.
- Report on:
  1. The interior of flues or combustion chambers
  2. Humidifiers
  3. Electronic air filters
  4. The uniformity or adequacy of heat supply to the various rooms.

## **11 - SYSTEM: CENTRAL AIR CONDITIONING**

11.1 The inspector SHALL observe and report on:

- Central air conditioning including cooling and air handling equipment and normal operating controls.
- Distribution systems including ducts, registers, air filters, fans, pumps and piping, with associated supports, insulation, and fan-coil units if different than heating system.
- The presence of an installed cooling source in each room.

11.2 The inspector SHALL:

- Identify energy sources.
- Identify cooling equipment type.
- Report on condensate drains where visible and accessible.
- Operate the systems using normal operating controls.
- Open readily accessible and unsecured access panels provided by the manufacturer or installer for routine homeowner maintenance.

11.3 The inspector is NOT required to:

- Examine or report on cooling systems when weather conditions or other circumstances may cause equipment damage.
- Examine or report on: non-central air conditioners; gas fired, solar or geothermal cooling system; food, wine or similar storage cooling systems. Permanently installed wall air conditioning units may be reported on by using normal operating controls.
- Report on the uniformity or adequacy of cold air supply to the various rooms.
- Examine or report on any humidity control systems or components.

## **12 - SYSTEM: INTERIORS**

12.1 The inspector SHALL observe and report on:

- Wall, ceiling, and floor surfaces.
- Steps, stairways, balconies, and hand railings and guardrails.
- Cabinets and counters.
- Closets.
- Windows and doors including hardware.
- Fire resistant separation at chimneys, walls, ceilings, and doors between a dwelling unit and an attached garage.
- The operation of the auto-reverse safety features on automatic garage door openers from the installed operator mechanism (remote operator devices are not considered).
- The presence of Glass that is not safety glass and location, where the area for visible markings is accessible and visible.
- The presence or absence of smoke alarms including testing their operation through the installed manufacturer supplied test device, if accessible.

12.2 The inspector SHALL:

- Identify window types.
- Operate all accessible primary windows and interior doors.
- Report on visible signs of abnormal or harmful water leakage.

12.3 The inspector is NOT required to report on:

- Finishes on the interior walls, ceilings, and floors.
- Carpeting.
- Draperies, blinds, or other window treatments.
- Household appliances.
- Central vacuum, security or intercom systems.

## **13 - SYSTEM: INSULATION AND VENTILATION**

13.1 The inspector SHALL observe and report on:

- Insulation in unfinished attic and foundation areas.
- Ventilation of attic and foundation areas.
- Kitchen, bath, and laundry venting systems and whether the vents terminate at the exterior of the dwelling.
- The presence of any attic ventilation fan.
- The presence or absence (only) of storm doors or thermal windows.
- Evidence of visible condensation and other consequences of inadequate ventilation.
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13.2 The inspector SHALL identify:

- Insulation in unfinished attics and estimated quantity.
- Insulation in under-floor crawl spaces and estimated quantity.
- The absence or presence of insulation in unfinished spaces next to heated living areas.

13.3 The inspector is NOT required to:

- Report on insulation and vapor retarders concealed in ceilings or exterior walls.
- Report on venting equipment and fans that are integral with household appliances.
- Report on the thermal efficiency ratings or concealed ventilation systems.
- Disturb insulation or vapor retarders.
- Determine indoor air quality.

## **14 - SYSTEM: FIREPLACES, CHIMNEYS AND SOLID FUEL BURNING APPLIANCES**

14.1 The Inspector shall inspect and report on:

- The condition of the visible areas of the chimneys, flues, dampers and associated system components.
- The condition of the visible areas of the fireboxes, hearth extensions, mantles fireplace surrounds and permanently installed screens and/or glass doors.
- The manufactured solid-fuel or gas-burning appliance installation.
- Presence or absence of any seals or gaskets to glass doors.

14.2 The Inspector is NOT required to:

- Inspect the interiors of flues, chimneys or fireplace insert flue connection beyond visible areas.
- Inspect the automatic fuel feed devices.
- Inspect the combustion make-up devices.
- Ignite or extinguish fires.
- Determine draft characteristics.
- Move fireplace inserts or stoves or firebox contents.
- Determine structural integrity of fireplaces or chimneys.

## **15 – BUILT-IN APPLIANCES AND SYSTEMS**

15.1 The Inspector shall observe and operate the basic functions of the following using normal operating controls:

- Installed dishwasher, through a normal cycle.
- Range, cook top and installed oven.
- Garbage disposal.
- Ventilation equipment or range hood.

15.2 The Inspector is NOT required to evaluate:

- Trash compactor (unless mandated by State requirement).
- Installed microwave ovens or microwave leakage (unless mandated by State requirement).
- Built-in or other refrigerator and any associated water connections.
- Refrigeration units that are not installed.
- Clocks, timers, self-cleaning oven function, or thermostats for calibration or automatic characteristics of operation.
- Appliances that are not built-in; such as, washers, dryers, toaster, icemaker, coffee maker, can-opener, blender, instant hot water dispenser, or any other similar small, ancillary or non-built-in appliance.

15.3 The Inspector is NOT required to evaluate:

- Appliances that are in use or that contain owner items (such as dishwashers).
- Any system, component, or appliance that does not respond to normal user controls.
- Any system, component, or appliance that requires use of special codes, keys, combinations, or devices.
- Solar heating systems.
- Geothermal systems.
- Saunas
- Swimming pools.
- Tennis courts.
- Piers and docks.
- Boathouses.
- Waterfront bulkheads.
- Cabanas.
- Cottages/guest houses.
- Private water supply system.
- Private wastewater analysis and system.
- Satellite dish systems.

## **16 - GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

- **Automatic (System) Safety Controls**: Devices designed and installed to protect systems and components from excessively high or low pressures and temperatures, excessive electrical current, loss of water, loss of ignition, fuel leaks, fire, freezing, or other unsafe conditions.
- **Central Air Conditioning**: A system that uses ducts to distribute cooled and/or dehumidified air to more than one room at a time, and which is not plugged into an electrical convenience outlet.
- **Clearance to Combustibles**: The distance between a heat producing appliance, chimney, chimney connector, vent, vent connector, or plenum and other surfaces. Also, in garages, the distance between the floor and an installed source of ignition.
- **Component**: A permanently installed appliance, fixture, element, or part of a system.
- **Cross Connections**: Any physical connection or arrangement between potable water and any source of contamination.
- **Dangerous or Adverse situations**: Situations that pose a threat of injury to the inspector, and those situations that require use of special protective clothing or safety equipment.
- **Dismantle**: To take apart or remove any component, device or piece of equipment that is bolted, screwed, (or fastened by other means), that would not be removed by a homeowner in the course of normal household maintenance.
- **Eminent Hazard**: A hazard to the safety and/or health of persons that will happen unless corrective action is taken on the condition noted. This hazard requires the Inspector to notify the client and/or agent and may require the Inspector to take temporary corrective action.
- **Engineering**: Analysis or design work requiring extensive education, training, preparation and experience in the use of mathematics, chemistry, physics, and the engineering sciences.
- **Functional Drainage**: A drain is functional when it empties in a reasonable amount of time and does not overflow when another fixture is drained simultaneously.
- **Functional Flow**: A reasonable flow at the highest fixture in a dwelling when another fixture is operated simultaneously.
- **Further Evaluation**: Examination and/or analysis by a qualified professional, licensed tradesperson or technician beyond the scope provided by the Home Inspection.
- **Home Inspection**: The process by which an Inspector provides a limited visual examination of the readily accessible systems, components and structures of a property and which describes those systems, components and structures, in accordance with these Standards of Practice, in a written report that summarizes the conditions observed.
- **Household Appliances**: Kitchen, laundry, and similar appliances are not included in these Standards since a visual inspection may not indicate the effectiveness of their operation.

- Hazard: Danger to the health and/or safety of people.
- Identify: Report in writing a system or component by its type, or other observed characteristics, to distinguish it from other systems or components used for the same purpose.
- Inspector: Any person who examines any component of a building, through limited visual means and through normal user controls, without the use of mathematical sciences, in accordance with these Standards of Practice.
- Installed: Attached (connected) to the structural, mechanical, plumbing or electrical system of the house such that the item installed cannot be removed without the use of tools.
- Normal Operating Controls: Homeowner operated devices such as a thermostat, wall switch or safety switch.
- Observe: The act of making a limited visual examination.
- Operate: To cause systems or equipment to function with normal operating controls.
- Potential Hazard: A hazard to the safety and/or health of people that has a good chance of occurring if corrective action is not taken on the condition noted.
- Primary Windows and Doors: Windows and exterior doors that are designed to remain in their respective openings year round.
- Readily Accessible: Available for limited visual inspection without requiring moving of personal property, dismantling or destructive measures, or any action which will likely involve risk to persons or property.
- Readily Openable Access Panel: A panel provided for homeowner inspection and maintenance which has removable or operable fasteners or latch devices in order to be lifted off, swung open, or otherwise removed by one person (without the use of tools) and its edges and fasteners are not painted in place. Limited to those panels within normal reach or from a 4-foot stepladder, and which are not blocked by stored items, furniture, or building components.
- Recreational Facilities: Spas, saunas, steam baths, swimming pools, tennis courts, playground equipment, and other exercise, entertainment, or athletic equipment.
- Representative Number: For multiple identical components such as windows and electric outlets - one such component per room. For multiple identical exterior components - one such component on each side of the building.
- Report: The Inspection Report is a written document prepared for a fee and issued after the property inspection. It identifies the systems, components and structure and summarizes the observed conditions noted during the evaluation process of the property.
- Roof Drainage Systems: Gutters, downspouts, leaders, splash blocks, and similar components used to carry water off a roof and away from a building.

- Shut Down: A piece of equipment or system is shut down when it cannot be operated by the device or control that a homeowner would use to normally operate the equipment or system. If the safety switch, fuse, or circuit breaker is in the "OFF" position, the Inspector is NOT required to operate the equipment or system.
- Soft Story: Living space located over a garage; living room, bedroom etc.
- Solid Fuel Heating Device: Any wood, coal, or other similar organic fuel-burning device, including but not limited to fireplaces, whether masonry or factory built, fireplace inserts and stoves, wood stoves (room heaters), central furnaces, and combinations of these devices.
- Structural Component: A building component which supports interior or exterior finish materials or other building components.
- System: The sum total of the components that function as a whole (such as Electrical System, HVAC System).
- Technically Exhaustive: An inspection is technically exhaustive when it involves the extensive use of measurements, instruments, testing, calculations, and other means to develop scientific or engineering findings, conclusions, and recommendations. This is beyond the scope of a normal Property/Home Inspection.
- Under-floor Crawl Space: The area within the confines of the foundation and between the ground and the underside of the lowest floor structural component.
- Water Supply Quality: Water quality is based on the bacterial, chemical, mineral and solids content of the water.

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