

1. INTRODUCTION

The Florida Association of Building inspectors (FABI) is a not-for-profit professional society established in 1984. Membership in FABI is voluntary and its members include private, fee-paid home inspectors. FABI's objectives include promotion of excellence within the profession through continuing education, member's voluntary adherence to a higher level of inspection standards than that set by the State of Florida for licensing, and continued improvement of its members' skills, integrity, and ethics through education.

2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

2.1

A. The purpose of these Standards of Practice is to establish a higher minimum and uniform standard for private, fee-paid home inspectors who are members of the Florida Association of Building Inspectors. Home Inspections performed to these Standards of Practice are intended to provide the client with information regarding the condition of the systems and components of the home as inspected at the time of the Home Inspection.

B. These standards shall not be construed as limiting the scope of the inspection process in those areas where the inspector is qualified and/or has special knowledge.

2.2

The inspector shall:

A. Inspect:

1. Readily accessible systems and components of homes listed in these Standards of Practice.
2. Installed systems and components of homes listed in these Standards of Practice.

B. Describe:

Systems and components by their nomenclature, capacity, output rating or other means of descriptive terminology typically used by tradesmen.

C. Report:

1. On those systems and components inspected which, in the professional opinion of the inspector, are not functioning properly, are unsafe, are significantly deficient or are near the end of their service lives.
2. A reason why, if not self-evident, the system or component is significantly deficient or near the end of its service life.
3. The inspector's recommendations to correct or monitor the reported deficiency, i.e. needs repair, needs additional evaluation, etc.
4. On any systems and components designated for inspection in these Standards of Practice which were present at the time of the Home Inspection but were not inspected and a reason why they were not inspected.

2.3

These Standards of Practice are not intended to limit inspectors from:

- A. Including other inspection services, systems or components in addition to those required by these Standards of Practice.
- B. Specifying repairs, provided the inspector is appropriately qualified and willing to do so.
- C. Excluding systems and components from the inspection if requested by the client.

3. STRUCTURE (Including interior and exterior sections)

3.1

The inspector shall:

A. Inspect:

1. The structural components including visible portions of the foundation, walls, posts, beams, columns, joists, trusses, and framing.
2. By probing of structural components where deterioration is suspected or where clear indications of possible deterioration exist. Probing is NOT required when, in the opinion of the inspector, probing would only further damage any area already identified as defective or where no deterioration is visible.
3. The exterior grade and drainage including water runoff management components such as gutters, downspouts, and installed drainage systems designed to protect the structure and prevent water retention against exterior walls and foundations.
4. The vegetation, grading, surface drainage, and the retaining walls on the property when any of these are likely to adversely affect the building.
5. The interior doors, and their operating mechanisms, locks and latches.

6. The exterior wall cladding, flashing and trim, including caulking, sealants, and protective coatings.
7. All exterior doors and mechanical components and the ability of the door to provide a weathertight seal
8. All exterior glazed openings, their weather tight seal and mechanical components
9. Attached decks, balconies, stoops, steps, porches, and their associated railings.
10. Walkways, patios, and driveways leading to the dwelling entrances.
11. Interior walls, ceilings, and floors.
12. Steps, stairways, and railings.
13. Countertops and installed cabinets.
14. Garage doors and garage door operators.
15. The insulation and vapor retarders in unfinished spaces.
16. The ventilation of attics and foundation areas.
17. The mechanical ventilation systems.

B. Describe:

1. The foundation and report the methods used to inspect the under-floor crawl space, if present.
2. The methods used to inspect the attic space, if present. Entry into and traversing of the under-floor crawl space and the attic are at the discretion of the inspector.
3. The floor structure.
4. The wall structure.
5. The ceiling structure.
6. The roof structure and report the methods used to inspect the attic.
7. The insulation in unfinished spaces.

C. Report:

1. Evidence of failed, deteriorated, or improperly installed structural components.
2. Deterioration of structural components.
3. The absence of insulation in unfinished spaces at conditioned surfaces including proper baffles where ventilation is required.
4. Windows with broken or cracked glass, obvious signs of failed seals in dual paned windows, inoperable locks or latches or defective balance springs or operating mechanisms.
5. Conditions that, in the opinion of the inspector, require professional engineering services or additional professional engineer evaluation to determine structural adequacy of a component, or to design appropriate repairs for deficiencies.

3.2 The inspector is NOT required to:

A. Enter or traverse any under-floor crawl space or attic, if in the opinion of the inspector:

1. An unsafe or unsanitary condition exists.
2. Inadequate clearance exists to allow entering or traversing.
3. The potential exists to cause damage to ductwork, electrical components, or stored items.

B. Open or operate any windows or doors that are permanently or temporarily secured by mechanical means, are painted shut, or are blocked by stored items.

C. Provide any engineering service or architectural service.

D. Offer an opinion as to the adequacy of any structural system or component.

E. Apply the FABI Standards of Practice to inspection work performed specifically intended to meet the requirements of the Florida insurance industry underwriting requirements (Wind Mitigation, Uniform Mitigation Verification Inspection, and 4-Point Inspections).

F. Inspect:

1. Temporary screening, shutters (except when shutter and mounts are permanently attached to the structure), awnings, and similar seasonal accessories.
2. Fences.
3. Geological, geotechnical or hydrological conditions.
4. Recreational facilities.

5. Outbuildings.
6. Seawalls, break-walls, and docks.
7. Erosion control and earth stabilization measures.
8. The paint, wallpaper, window treatments, and other finish treatments.

4. ROOF SYSTEMS

4.1 The inspector shall:

A. Inspect: (by entering onto and traversing the roof surface if appropriate).

1. The roofing material.
2. The soffits and fascia.
3. The visible flashings and valley components.
4. The skylights, chimneys, and roof penetrations.

B. Describe:

1. The roofing material and type.
2. The style of the roof (i.e. gable, hip, mansard, low slope).

C. Report:

1. The methods used to inspect the roof.
2. Roofing material failures or damage to the roofing material.
3. Visible signs of leaking in ceilings, walls, roof sheathing, trusses, rafters, joists, soffits and fascia.
4. Unworkmanlike or unconventional repairs and materials.
5. The adequacy of low slope design roofs to properly drain and avoid ponding.

4.2 The inspector is NOT required to:

A. Inspect:

1. Antenna or other installed accessories.
2. Interiors of flues or chimneys which are not readily accessible.

B. Enter onto or traverse the roof surface when, in the opinion of the inspector, the following conditions exist:

1. The roof slope is excessive to safely enter or traverse.
2. There is no safe access to the roof.
3. The climatic conditions render the roof unsafe to enter or traverse.
4. The condition of the roofing material or roof decking render the roof unsafe to enter or traverse or walking on the roofing material could cause damage

5. PLUMBING SYSTEM

5.1 The inspector shall:

A. Inspect:

1. The interior water supply and distribution systems including all fixtures, faucets, and components not encased in floors, walls, and ceilings, or otherwise hidden from view.
2. The drain, waste and vent systems.
3. The water heating equipment.
4. Shower stalls.
5. The vent systems, flues, and chimneys.
6. The drainage sumps, sump pumps, and related piping.
7. Permanently installed irrigation systems.

B. Describe:

1. The water supply, drain, waste, and vent piping materials.
2. The water heating equipment including the energy source.
3. The location of main water and main fuel shut-off valves.
4. The type of irrigation system (well, municipal source, reclaimed water, etc).

C. Report:

1. Leaks in supply lines, fixtures, and faucets.
2. Leaks and suspected leaks in shower stalls and the means used to identify leaks (i.e. visual, moisture meter, etc) .
3. Low water pressure to one or more fixtures.
4. Leaking, defective or unsafely installed water heaters.
5. Non functional or clogged drains.
6. On the presence of polybutylene supply lines, cast iron waste lines, and other plumbing pipes or components with a documented history of functional defects.
7. Defective or ineffective pumps and irrigation system component parts (exclusive of wells).

5.2 The inspector is NOT required to:

A. Inspect:

1. Wells, or water storage related equipment.
2. Water conditioning systems.
3. Solar water heating systems.
4. Fire sprinkler systems.
5. Private waste disposal systems.

B. Determine:

1. Whether water supply and waste disposal systems are public or private.
2. The quantity or quality of the water supply, including the quantity or quality of the irrigation system supply.

C. Operate safety valves or shut-off valves.

6. ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

6.1 The inspector shall:

A. Inspect:

1. The service entry.
2. The service entrance conductors, cables, and raceways.
3. The service equipment and main disconnects.
4. The service grounding.
5. The interior components of service panels and sub panels.
6. The conductors.
7. The overcurrent protection devices.
8. All accessible installed lighting fixtures, switches, and receptacles.
9. The ground fault circuit interrupters and the method used to test.
10. The arc fault circuit interrupters and the method used to test.
11. The installed/mounted smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors and the method used to test.

B. Describe:

1. The amperage and voltage rating of the service.
2. The location of main disconnect(s) and sub panels.
3. the manufacturer of service equipment panels
4. The wiring method or type.

C. Report:

1. On the presence of solid conductor aluminum branch circuit wiring.
2. On the presence of electric panels with a documented history of functional defects
3. On the presence of obsolete wiring or components, i. e. knob and tube wiring, fused overprotection devices, two prong wall outlets, etc.
4. On the presence of unrated electrical components.
5. On the presence of undersized wiring, inappropriate double tapping / double lugging, improperly routed, protected, or terminated wiring.

6. On the presence of evidence of overheating in electrical components.
7. On the lack of, or improper grounding.
8. On the absence or failure to de-energize or “trip” in the “test” mode of; ground fault circuit interrupters and arc fault interrupters.
9. On the absence of or failure to sound in the “test” mode of; smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors.

6.2 The inspector is NOT required to:

A. Inspect:

1. Remote control devices unless the device is the only control device.
2. Security alarm systems and components.
3. Low voltage wiring, systems and components, ancillary wiring and systems and components not a part of the primary electrical power distribution system.

B. Measure amperage, voltage or impedance.

7. HEATING SYSTEM

7.1 *The inspector shall:*

A. Inspect:

1. The installed heating equipment and controls.
2. The fuel storage and fuel distribution systems.
3. The vent systems, flues, and chimneys.

B. Describe:

1. The energy source.
2. The heating method by its distinguishing characteristics.
3. The heating system capacity in BTUs or kilowatts.

C. Report:

1. The location and condition of the air handler unit / furnace.
2. The success or failure of the operator controls / thermostat to activate and deactivate the system. .
3. The location, type, and condition of the ductwork.
4. Improperly vented combustion vents or the potential for backdrafting in combustion vented systems.
5. The heat rise obtained during operation.
6. Systems that are inoperable or fail to operate in the manner which was intended.
7. Conditions that will result in reduced component life expectancy, premature failure, or inefficient system operation.

7.2 The inspector is NOT required to:

A. To inspect:

1. Interiors of flues or chimneys which are not readily accessible.
2. Heat exchangers.
3. Humidifiers or dehumidifiers.
4. Electronic air filters.
5. Solar space heating systems.

B. Determine heat supply adequacy or distribution balance.

C. Operate heat pump systems when ambient temperatures pose the potential for damage to the heating system.

8. AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS

8.1 The inspector shall:

- A. Inspect the installed central and through-wall cooling equipment.

B. Describe:

1. The energy source.
2. The cooling method by its distinguishing characteristics.
3. Permanently installed components intended to improve air quality (i. e. electronic air filters, UV lights, etc) or enhance system function (i. e. zoned systems, programmable thermostats, etc.)

C. Report:

1. The condition of the condensing unit.
2. The condition of the evaporator coil (when accessible).
3. The success or failure of the operator controls / thermostat to activate and deactivate the system.
4. The type and condition of the ductwork.
5. The temperature differential achieved by the system.
6. The presence or absence of functional condensate over flow warning/shutoff devices.
7. Systems that are inoperable or fail to operate in the manner which was intended.
8. Conditions that will result in reduced component life expectancy, premature failure, or inefficient system operation.

8.2 The inspector is NOT required to:

A. Inspect:

1. Electronic air filters.
2. Humidistats

B. Determine cooling supply adequacy or distribution balance.

C. Determine indoor air quality.

D. Operate the air conditioning system when ambient temperatures pose the potential for damage to the air conditioning system.

9. FIREPLACES AND SOLID FUEL BURNING APPLIANCES

9.1 The inspector shall:

A. Inspect:

1. The system components.
2. The vent systems, flues, and chimneys.

B. Describe:

1. The fireplaces and solid fuel burning appliances.
2. The chimneys.

C. Report:

1. The type of fireplace (masonry, insert, free standing, etc.).
2. The condition of the fire brick or refractory panels, flue door, chimney / chimney chase cap, and flue cap.
3. Unsafe conditions.

9.2 The inspector is NOT required to:

A. Inspect:

1. The interiors of flues or chimneys.
2. The firescreens and doors, if not permanently attached.
3. The seals and gaskets.
4. The automatic fuel feed devices.
5. The mantles and fireplace surrounds.
6. The combustion make-up air devices.
7. The heat distribution assists whether gravity controlled or fan assisted.

- B. Ignite or extinguish fires.
- C. Determine draft characteristics.
- D. Move fireplace inserts or stoves or firebox contents.

10. GENERAL LIMITATIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

10.1 General limitations:

- A. Inspections performed in accordance with these Standards of Practice.
 - 1. Are not technically exhaustive.
 - 2. Will not identify concealed conditions or latent defects.
- B. These Standards of Practice are applicable to buildings with four or fewer dwelling units and their garages or carports.

10.2 General exclusions:

- A. The inspector is not required to perform any action or make any determination unless specifically stated in these Standards of Practice, except as may be required by lawful authority.
- B. Inspectors are NOT required to determine:
 - 1. The condition of systems or components which are not readily accessible.
 - 2. The remaining life of any system or component.
 - 3. The strength, adequacy, effectiveness, or efficiency of any system or component.
 - 4. The causes of any condition or deficiency.
 - 5. The methods, materials, or costs of corrections.
 - 6. Future conditions including, but not limited to, failure of systems and components.
 - 7. The suitability of the property for any specialized use.
 - 8. Compliance with regulatory requirements (codes, regulations, laws, ordinances, etc.)
 - 9. The market value of the property or its marketability.
 - 10. The advisability of the purchase of the property.
 - 11. The presence of potentially hazardous plants or animals including, but not limited to wood destroying organisms or diseases harmful to humans.
 - 12. The presence of any environmental hazards including, but not limited to molds, toxins, carcinogens, noise, and contaminants in soil, water, and air.
 - 13. The effectiveness of any system installed or methods utilized to control or remove suspected hazardous substances.
 - 14. The operating costs of systems or components.
 - 15. The acoustical properties of any system or component.
- C. Inspectors are NOT required to offer:
 - 1. Or perform any act or service contrary to law.
 - 2. Or perform engineering services.
 - 3. Or perform work in any trade or any professional service other than home inspection.
 - 4. Warranties or guarantees of any kind.
- D. Inspectors are NOT required to operate:
 - 1. Any system or component which is shut down or otherwise inoperable.
 - 2. Any system or component which does not respond to normal operating controls.
 - 3. Shut-off valves.
- E. Inspectors are NOT required to enter:
 - 1. Any area which will, in the opinion of the inspector, likely be dangerous to the inspector or other persons or damage the property or its systems or components.
 - 2. The under-floor crawl space or attics which are not readily accessible.

F. Inspectors are NOT required to inspect:

1. Underground items including, but not limited to underground storage tanks or other underground indications of their presence, whether abandoned or active.
2. systems or components which are not installed.
3. Decorative items.
4. Systems or components located in areas that are not entered in accordance with these Standards of Practice.
5. Detached structures other than garages and carports.
6. Common elements or common areas in multi-unit housing, such as condominium properties or cooperative housing.

G. Inspectors are NOT required to:

1. Perform any procedure or operation which will, in the opinion of the inspector, likely to be dangerous to the inspector or other persons or damage the property or its systems or components.
2. Move suspended ceiling tiles, personal property, furniture, equipment, plants, soil, snow, ice, or debris.
3. Dismantle any system or component, except as explicitly required by these Standards of Practice.

11. HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES

11.1 Household appliances to be inspected are limited to the following – Built-in central vacuums, ranges, cook-tops, built-in dishwashers, food waste disposers, garage door openers, built-in ovens, built-in microwave ovens, refrigerators, freezers, clothes washers, clothes dryers, built-in trash compactors, ceiling fans or whole-house fans.

11.2 The inspector shall:

A. Inspect:

1. Household appliances specifically identified to be examined during the inspection.
2. The basic operation of appliances included in the inspection, limited to those items listed above.

B. Describe:

1. The type of appliance and its general function.

C. Report:

1. The completion of a full cycle of the appliances intended use.
2. The adequacy of controls or switches in operating the appliance.
3. Missing or defective components or parts.
4. Failure or stoppage during operation.
5. The presence or absence of necessary safety devices.
6. The success or failure of the appliance to perform in the manner intended.

11.2 The inspector is NOT required to:

- A. Activate any system or appliance that is shut down, disconnected, or otherwise rendered inoperable.
- B. Operate or evaluate any system, component or appliance that does not respond to normal user controls.
- C. Operate any gas appliance that requires the manual lighting of a pilot light or burner device.
- D. Operate any system or appliance that requires the use of special codes, keys, combinations, or devices.
- E. Operate any system, component, or appliance where in the opinion of the inspector, damage may occur.
- F. Determine oven or cook top thermostat(s) calibration, adequacy of heating elements, operate or evaluate self cleaning oven cycles, indicator lights, timers, clocks or timed features, defrost cycles or frost free features of refrigerators and freezers.
- G. Determine leakage from microwaves ovens.
- H. Determine the presence or operation of back draft damper devices in exhaust devices.
- I. Examine any wine cooler, sauna, steam-room, still or other water producing or purification device, kiln, toaster, ice maker, coffee-maker, can-opener, bread warmer, blender, instant hot water dispenser, or any other similar small, ancillary or non- built- in appliances, including commercial grade kitchen appliances.

12. POOLS AND SPAS (optional)

- 12.1 The inspector and the client may agree to the inspection of optional items. When this agreement is made the following standards shall apply:
- 12.2 The inspector shall:
- A. Inspect:
1. Pools, spas, and normally necessary and present equipment such as: pumps, heaters, filters, lights, ladders, railings related mechanical and electrical connections, and safety items such as barriers.
 2. Enclosures, fencing, barriers, and related gates.
 3. Decks, patios, and adjoining structures and drainage related to the inspected pool or spa.
- B. Describe:
1. Type of pool or spa examined (Concrete, Vinyl lined, Fiberglass, Above ground, etc).
 2. Conditions limiting or otherwise inhibiting inspection, such as water clarity.
 3. Condition of visible portions of systems, structures, or components.
- C. Report:
1. Pool and spa finish condition, including pool shell cracks.
 2. Cracked, broken, or missing water line tiles.
 3. Defective or unsafe pumps, heaters, filter housings, main drain covers, and related mechanical and electrical connections.
 4. Missing or damaged safety barrier components around the pool.
 5. Excessive settlement of the pool deck.
 6. Inadequate drainage of the pool deck.
- 12.3. The inspector is NOT required to:
- A. Enter the pool or otherwise come into contact with pool or spa water to examine the system, structure or components.
 - B. Determine adequacy of pool or spa jet water force or bubble effect.
 - C. Determine structural integrity of the pool or determine or identify leakage of any kind.
 - D. Evaluate thermostat(s) or their calibration, heating elements, chemical dispensers, water chemistry or conditioning devices, chlorine generators, low voltage or computer controls, remote controls, timers, filter medium, sweeps or cleaners, pool or spa covers and related components.
 - E. Operate or evaluate filter backwash systems.
 - F. Turn on gas supplies or light pilot lights necessary for the operation of gas fired pool or spa heaters.
 - G. Examine accessories, such as, but not limited to: Solar heating systems, aerators or air motors / blowers, fiber optic lighting, diving or jump boards, skimmers, waterfalls, slides or steps.

13. DOCKS AND SEAWALLS (optional)

- 13.1 The inspector and the client may agree to the inspection of optional items. When this agreement is made the following standards shall apply.
- 13.2 The inspector shall:
- A. Inspect:
1. The seawall components, including but not limited to, the seawall cap, bulkhead, panels, footings, and any other component which is visible from the land side of the structure. (In-water inspection by walking on the bottom or diving is optional and is not considered a mandatory part of a seawall inspection).
 2. The land side components of the wall system for signs of settlement or soil loss by either visual means or probing the soil behind the seawall, or a combination of both.
 3. The dock structure, including but not limited to pilings, collars, stringers, joists, and decking.
 4. Boat house walls and roof, if present. (Standards of Practice for Roof Systems apply.)
 5. Operation of mechanical boat lifts and davits.
 6. Visible components of water and electric service, if present. (Standards of Practice for Electrical Systems and Plumbing Systems apply.)

B. Describe:

1. The method of marine construction and the materials used, to include type of seawall, bulkhead or panel material, visible reinforcements pilings, decks, etc.

C. Report:

1. The evidence of structural deterioration, failure, or inadequacy in the seawall and dock components.
2. Settlement or soil loss behind the seawall.
3. Fastener failures in dock and deck components.
4. Mechanical failures of boat lifts and davits.

13.3 The inspector is NOT required to:

- A. Dig or otherwise unearth tie-backs, anchors, retaining walls or other seawall or dock components below landside or waterside grade.
- B. Determine the load capacity of boat lifts.
- C. Offer an opinion as to the structural adequacy, life expectancy, or expansion potential of any seawall or dock.
- D. Inspect adjoining or contiguous seawall systems or storm sewers projecting through the bulkhead.

14. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Alarm Systems: Warning devices, installed or free standing, including but not limited to: carbon monoxide detectors, flue gas and other spillage detectors, security equipment, ejector pumps and smoke alarms.

Architectural Service: Any practice involving the art and science of building design for construction of any structure or groupings of structures and the use of space within and surrounding the structures or the design for construction, including but not specifically limited to, schematic design, design development, preparation of construction contract documents, and administration of the construction contract.

Automatic Safety Controls: Devices designed and installed to protect systems and components from unsafe conditions.

Component: A part of a system.

Decorative: Ornamental; not required for the operation of the essential systems and components of a home.

Describe: To report a system or component by its type or other observed, significant characteristics to distinguish it from other systems or components.

Dismantle: To take apart or remove any component, device or piece of equipment that would not be taken apart or removed by a homeowner in the course of normal and routine homeowner maintenance.

Engineering Service: Any professional service or creative work requiring engineering education, training and experience and the application of special knowledge of the mathematical, physical and engineering services to such professional service or creative work as consultation, investigation, evaluation, planning, design and supervision of construction for the purpose of assuring compliance with the specifications and design, in conjunction with structures, buildings, machines, equipment, works or processes.

Further Evaluation: Examination and analysis by a qualified professional tradesman or service technician beyond that provided by the home inspection.

Home Inspection: The process by which an inspector visually examines the readily accessible systems and components of a home which describes those systems and components in accordance with these Standards of Practice.

Household Appliances: Kitchen, laundry, and similar appliances, whether installed or free-standing.

Inspect: To examine readily accessible systems and components of a building in accordance with these Standards of Practice, using normal operating controls and opening readily openable access panels

Inspector: A person hired to examine any system or component of a building in accordance with these Standards of Practice.

Installed: Attached such that removal requires tools.

Normal Operating Controls: Devices such as thermostats, switches or valves intended to be operated by the homeowner.

Readily Accessible: Available for visual inspection without requiring moving of personal property, dismantling, 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 that is within normal reach, can be removed by one person and is not sealed in place.

Recreational Facilities: Spas, saunas, steam baths, swimming pools, exercise, entertainment, athletic, playground or other similar equipment and associated accessories.

Report: To communicate in writing.

Representative Number: One component per room for multiple similar interior components such as window and electric outlets; one component on each side of the building for multiple similar exterior components.

Roof Drainage Systems: Components used to carry water off a roof and away from a building.

Significantly Deficient: Unsafe or not functioning.

Shut Down: A state in which a system or component cannot be operated by normal operating controls.

Solid Fuel Burning Appliances: A hearth and fire chamber or similar prepared place in which a fire may be built and which is built in conjunction with a chimney; or a listed assembly of a fire chamber, its chimney and related factory-made parts designed for unit assembly without requiring field construction.

Structural Component: A component that supports non-variable forces or weights (dead loads) and variable forces or weights (live loads).

System: A combination of interacting or interdependent components, assembled to carry out one or more functions.

Technically Exhaustive: An investigation that involves dismantling; the extensive use of advanced techniques, measurements, instruments, testing, calculations, or other means.

Under-floor Crawl Space: The area within the confines of the foundation and between the ground and the underside of the floor.

Unsafe: A condition in a readily accessible, installed system or component which is judged to be a significant risk of personal injury during normal, day-to-day use. The risk may be due to damage, deterioration, improper installation or a change in accepted residential construction standards.

Wiring Methods: Identification of electrical conductors or wires by their general type, such as "non-metallic sheathed cable" ("Romex"), "armored cable" ("bx") or "knob and tube", etc.

FABI Standards of Practice.

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**The International Standards of Practice for
Performing a General Home Inspection**

and

The International Code of Ethics for Home Inspectors



www.NACHI.org

Effective June 2013

InterNACHI's Vision and Mission

InterNACHI, the International Association of Certified Home Inspectors, is [the world's largest organization of residential and commercial property inspectors](#).

As a [federally tax-exempt, 501\(c\)\(6\) non-profit](#), InterNACHI provides [training, certification, and Continuing Education](#) for its membership, including property inspectors, licensed real estate agents, and building contractors; and provides for its membership [business training, software products, marketing services](#), and [membership benefits](#).

InterNACHI members follow a comprehensive [Standards of Practice](#) and are bound by a strict [Code of Ethics](#). The membership takes part in the regular exchange of professional experiences and ideas to support each other. InterNACHI maintains an [industry blog](#), [Inspection Forum](#), and [local Chapters](#) in support of this exchange of information. InterNACHI provides its members with other means of direct and membership-wide communication to further their understanding of their particular roles in the inspection industry and how best to serve their clients. The benefits of this cross-communication enhance the members' ability to build their businesses and develop specialized ancillary services.

In fulfilling this fundamental objective of training and mentoring its inspector-members, InterNACHI's broader mission is to educate homeowners by helping them understand the functions, materials, systems and components of their properties. InterNACHI inspectors are committed to providing consistent, accessible and trusted information to their clients about their properties' condition.

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Estándares de Práctica, the Spanish version of the International Standards of Practice for Performing a General Home Inspection, is available online at <http://www.nachi.org/sopspanish.htm>

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**The International Standards of Practice for
Performing a General Home Inspection**

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1. Definitions and Scope

1.1. A general home inspection is a non-invasive, visual examination of the accessible areas of a residential property (as delineated below), performed for a fee, which is designed to identify defects within specific systems and components defined by these Standards that are both observed and deemed material by the inspector. The scope of work may be modified by the Client and Inspector prior to the inspection process.

- I. The general home inspection is based on the observations made on the date of the inspection, and not a prediction of future conditions.
- II. The general home inspection will not reveal every issue that exists or ever could exist, but only those material defects observed on the date of the inspection.

1.2. A material defect is a specific issue with a system or component of a residential property that may have a significant, adverse impact on the value of the property, or that poses an unreasonable risk to people. The fact that a system or component is near, at, or beyond the

end of its normal, useful life is not, in itself, a material defect.

1.3. A general home inspection report shall identify, in written format, defects within specific systems and components defined by these Standards that are both observed and deemed material by the inspector. Inspection reports may include additional comments and recommendations.

2. Limitations, Exceptions & Exclusions

2.1. Limitations:

- I. An inspection is not technically exhaustive.
- II. An inspection will not identify concealed or latent defects.
- III. An inspection will not deal with aesthetic concerns or what could be deemed matters of taste, cosmetic defects, etc.
- IV. An inspection will not determine the suitability of the property for any use.
- V. An inspection does not determine the market value of the property or its marketability.
- VI. An inspection does not determine the insurability of the property.
- VII. An inspection does not determine the advisability or inadvisability of the purchase of the inspected property.
- VIII. An inspection does not determine the life expectancy of the property or any components or systems therein.
- IX. An inspection does not include items not permanently installed.
- X. This Standards of Practice applies only to properties with four or fewer residential units and their attached garages and carports.

2.2. Exclusions:

- I. The inspector is not required to determine:
 - A. property boundary lines or encroachments.
 - B. the condition of any component or system that is not readily accessible.
 - C. the service life expectancy of any component or system.
 - D. the size, capacity, BTU, performance or efficiency of any component or system.
 - E. the cause or reason of any condition.
 - F. the cause for the need of correction, repair or replacement of any system or component.
 - G. future conditions.
 - H. compliance with codes or regulations.

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- I. the presence of evidence of rodents, birds, animals, insects, or other pests.
 - J. the presence of mold, mildew or fungus.
 - K. the presence of airborne hazards, including radon.
 - L. the air quality.
 - M. the existence of environmental hazards, including lead paint, asbestos or toxic drywall.
 - N. the existence of electromagnetic fields.
 - O. any hazardous waste conditions.
 - P. any manufacturers' recalls or conformance with manufacturer installation, or any information included for consumer protection purposes.
 - Q. acoustical properties.
 - R. correction, replacement or repair cost estimates.
 - S. estimates of the cost to operate any given system.
- II. The inspector is not required to operate:
- A. any system that is shut down.
 - B. any system that does not function properly.
 - C. or evaluate low-voltage electrical systems, such as, but not limited to:
 - 1. phone lines;
 - 2. cable lines;
 - 3. satellite dishes;
 - 4. antennae;
 - 5. lights; or
 - 6. remote controls.
 - D. any system that does not turn on with the use of normal operating controls.
 - E. any shut-off valves or manual stop valves.
 - F. any electrical disconnect or over-current protection devices.
 - G. any alarm systems.
 - H. moisture meters, gas detectors or similar equipment.
- III. The inspector is not required to:
- A. move any personal items or other obstructions, such as, but not limited to: throw rugs, carpeting, wall coverings, furniture, ceiling tiles, window coverings, equipment, plants, ice, debris, snow, water, dirt, pets, or anything else that might restrict the visual inspection.
 - B. dismantle, open or uncover any system or component.
 - C. enter or access any area that may, in the inspector's opinion, be unsafe.
 - D. enter crawlspaces or other areas that may be unsafe or not readily accessible.
 - E. inspect underground items, such as, but not limited to: lawn-irrigation systems, or underground storage tanks (or indications of their presence), whether abandoned or actively used.
 - F. do anything that may, in the inspector's opinion, be unsafe or dangerous to him/herself or others, or damage property, such as, but not limited to: walking on roof surfaces, climbing ladders, entering attic spaces, or negotiating with pets.
 - G. inspect decorative items.
 - H. inspect common elements or areas in multi-unit housing.
 - I. inspect intercoms, speaker systems or security systems.
 - J. offer guarantees or warranties.
 - K. offer or perform any engineering services.
 - L. offer or perform any trade or professional service other than general home inspection.
 - M. research the history of the property, or report on its potential for alteration, modification, extendibility or suitability for a specific or proposed use for occupancy.
 - N. determine the age of construction or installation of any system, structure or component of a building, or differentiate between original construction and subsequent additions, improvements, renovations or replacements.
 - O. determine the insurability of a property.
 - P. perform or offer Phase 1 or environmental audits.

- Q. inspect any system or component that is not included in these Standards.

- I. perform a water test.
- J. warrant or certify the roof.
- K. confirm proper fastening or installation of any roof-covering material.

3. Standards of Practice

3.1. Roof

- I. The inspector shall inspect from ground level or the eaves:
 - A. the roof-covering materials;
 - B. the gutters;
 - C. the downspouts;
 - D. the vents, flashing, skylights, chimney, and other roof penetrations; and
 - E. the general structure of the roof from the readily accessible panels, doors or stairs.
- II. The inspector shall describe:
 - A. the type of roof-covering materials.
- III. The inspector shall report as in need of correction:
 - A. observed indications of active roof leaks.
- IV. The inspector is not required to:
 - A. walk on any roof surface.
 - B. predict the service life expectancy.
 - C. inspect underground downspout diverter drainage pipes.
 - D. remove snow, ice, debris or other conditions that prohibit the observation of the roof surfaces.
 - E. move insulation.
 - F. inspect antennae, satellite dishes, lightning arresters, de-icing equipment, or similar attachments.
 - G. walk on any roof areas that appear, in the inspector's opinion, to be unsafe.
 - H. walk on any roof areas if doing so might, in the inspector's opinion, cause damage.

3.2. Exterior

- I. The inspector shall inspect:
 - A. the exterior wall-covering materials, flashing and trim;
 - B. all exterior doors;
 - C. adjacent walkways and driveways;
 - D. stairs, steps, stoops, stairways and ramps;
 - E. porches, patios, decks, balconies and carports;
 - F. railings, guards and handrails;
 - G. the eaves, soffits and fascia;
 - H. a representative number of windows; and
 - I. vegetation, surface drainage, retaining walls and grading of the property, where they may adversely affect the structure due to moisture intrusion.
- II. The inspector shall describe:
 - A. the type of exterior wall-covering materials.
- III. The inspector shall report as in need of correction:
 - A. any improper spacing between intermediate balusters, spindles and rails.
- IV. The inspector is not required to:
 - A. inspect or operate screens, storm windows, shutters, awnings, fences, outbuildings, or exterior accent lighting.
 - B. inspect items that are not visible or readily accessible from the ground, including window and door flashing.
 - C. inspect or identify geological, geotechnical, hydrological or soil conditions.

- D. inspect recreational facilities or playground equipment.
- E. inspect seawalls, breakwalls or docks.
- F. inspect erosion-control or earth-stabilization measures.
- G. inspect for safety-type glass.
- H. inspect underground utilities.
- I. inspect underground items.
- J. inspect wells or springs.
- K. inspect solar, wind or geothermal systems.
- L. inspect swimming pools or spas.
- M. inspect wastewater treatment systems, septic systems or cesspools.
- N. inspect irrigation or sprinkler systems.
- O. inspect drainfields or dry wells.
- P. determine the integrity of multiple-pane window glazing or thermal window seals.

- C. observed indications of possible foundation movement, such as sheetrock cracks, brick cracks, out-of-square door frames, and unlevel floors; and
- D. any observed cutting, notching and boring of framing members that may, in the inspector's opinion, present a structural or safety concern.

IV. The inspector is not required to:

- A. enter any crawlspace that is not readily accessible, or where entry could cause damage or pose a hazard to him/herself.
- B. move stored items or debris.
- C. operate sump pumps with inaccessible floats.
- D. identify the size, spacing, span or location or determine the adequacy of foundation bolting, bracing, joists, joist spans or support systems.
- E. provide any engineering or architectural service.
- F. report on the adequacy of any structural system or component.

3.3. Basement, Foundation, Crawlspace & Structure

I. The inspector shall inspect:

- A. the foundation;
- B. the basement;
- C. the crawlspace; and
- D. structural components.

II. The inspector shall describe:

- A. the type of foundation; and
- B. the location of the access to the under-floor space.

III. The inspector shall report as in need of correction:

- A. observed indications of wood in contact with or near soil;
- B. observed indications of active water penetration;

3.4. Heating

I. The inspector shall inspect:

- A. the heating system, using normal operating controls.

II. The inspector shall describe:

- A. the location of the thermostat for the heating system;
- B. the energy source; and
- C. the heating method.

III. The inspector shall report as in need of correction:

- A. any heating system that did not operate; and
- B. if the heating system was deemed inaccessible.

IV. The inspector is not required to:

- A. inspect or evaluate the interior of flues or chimneys, fire chambers, heat exchangers, combustion air systems, fresh-air intakes,

humidifiers, dehumidifiers, electronic air filters, geothermal systems, or solar heating systems.

- B. inspect fuel tanks or underground or concealed fuel supply systems.
- C. determine the uniformity, temperature, flow, balance, distribution, size, capacity, BTU, or supply adequacy of the heating system.
- D. light or ignite pilot flames.
- E. activate heating, heat pump systems, or other heating systems when ambient temperatures or other circumstances are not conducive to safe operation or may damage the equipment.
- F. override electronic thermostats.
- G. evaluate fuel quality.
- H. verify thermostat calibration, heat anticipation, or automatic setbacks, timers, programs or clocks.

3.5. Cooling

I. The inspector shall inspect:

- A. the cooling system, using normal operating controls.

II. The inspector shall describe:

- A. the location of the thermostat for the cooling system; and
- B. the cooling method.

III. The inspector shall report as in need of correction:

- A. any cooling system that did not operate; and
- B. if the cooling system was deemed inaccessible.

IV. The inspector is not required to:

- A. determine the uniformity, temperature, flow, balance, distribution, size, capacity, BTU, or supply adequacy of the cooling system.
- B. inspect portable window units, through-wall units, or electronic air filters.
- C. operate equipment or systems if the exterior temperature is below 65° Fahrenheit, or when

other circumstances are not conducive to safe operation or may damage the equipment.

- D. inspect or determine thermostat calibration, cooling anticipation, or automatic setbacks or clocks.
- E. examine electrical current, coolant fluids or gases, or coolant leakage.

3.6. Plumbing

I. The inspector shall inspect:

- A. the main water supply shut-off valve;
- B. the main fuel supply shut-off valve;
- C. the water heating equipment, including the energy source, venting connections, temperature/pressure-relief (TPR) valves, Watts 210 valves, and seismic bracing;
- D. interior water supply, including all fixtures and faucets, by running the water;
- E. all toilets for proper operation by flushing;
- F. all sinks, tubs and showers for functional drainage;
- G. the drain, waste and vent system; and
- H. drainage sump pumps with accessible floats.

II. The inspector shall describe:

- A. whether the water supply is public or private based upon observed evidence;
- B. the location of the main water supply shut-off valve;
- C. the location of the main fuel supply shut-off valve;
- D. the location of any observed fuel-storage system; and
- E. the capacity of the water heating equipment, if labeled.

III. The inspector shall report as in need of correction:

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- A. deficiencies in the water supply by viewing the functional flow in two fixtures operated simultaneously;
 - B. deficiencies in the installation of hot and cold water faucets;
 - C. mechanical drain stops that were missing or did not operate if installed in sinks, lavatories and tubs; and
 - D. toilets that were damaged, had loose connections to the floor, were leaking, or had tank components that did not operate.
- IV. The inspector is not required to:
- A. light or ignite pilot flames.
 - B. measure the capacity, temperature, age, life expectancy or adequacy of the water heater.
 - C. inspect the interior of flues or chimneys, combustion air systems, water softener or filtering systems, well pumps or tanks, safety or shut-off valves, floor drains, lawn sprinkler systems, or fire sprinkler systems.
 - D. determine the exact flow rate, volume, pressure, temperature or adequacy of the water supply.
 - E. determine the water quality, potability or reliability of the water supply or source.
 - F. open sealed plumbing access panels.
 - G. inspect clothes washing machines or their connections.
 - H. operate any valve.
 - I. test shower pans, tub and shower surrounds or enclosures for leakage or functional overflow protection.
 - J. evaluate the compliance with conservation, energy or building standards, or the proper design or sizing of any water, waste or venting components, fixtures or piping.
 - K. determine the effectiveness of anti-siphon, back-flow prevention or drain-stop devices.
 - L. determine whether there are sufficient cleanouts for effective cleaning of drains.
 - M. evaluate fuel storage tanks or supply systems.
 - N. inspect wastewater treatment systems.
 - O. inspect water treatment systems or water filters.
 - P. inspect water storage tanks, pressure pumps, or bladder tanks.
 - Q. evaluate wait time to obtain hot water at fixtures, or perform testing of any kind to water heater elements.
 - R. evaluate or determine the adequacy of combustion air.
 - S. test, operate, open or close: safety controls, manual stop valves, temperature/pressure-relief valves, control valves, or check valves.
 - T. examine ancillary or auxiliary systems or components, such as, but not limited to, those related to solar water heating and hot water circulation.
 - U. determine the existence or condition of polybutylene plumbing.
 - V. inspect or test for gas or fuel leaks, or indications thereof.
- 3.7. Electrical**
- I. The inspector shall inspect:
- A. the service drop;
 - B. the overhead service conductors and attachment point;
 - C. the service head, gooseneck and drip loops;
 - D. the service mast, service conduit and raceway;
 - E. the electric meter and base;
 - F. service-entrance conductors;
 - G. the main service disconnect;
 - H. panelboards and over-current protection devices (circuit breakers and fuses);
 - I. service grounding and bonding;

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- J. a representative number of switches, lighting fixtures and receptacles, including receptacles observed and deemed to be arc-fault circuit interrupter (AFCI)-protected using the AFCI test button, where possible;
- K. all ground-fault circuit interrupter receptacles and circuit breakers observed and deemed to be GFCIs using a GFCI tester, where possible; and
- L. smoke and carbon-monoxide detectors.

II. The inspector shall describe:

- A. the main service disconnect's amperage rating, if labeled; and
- B. the type of wiring observed.

III. The inspector shall report as in need of correction:

- A. deficiencies in the integrity of the service-entrance conductors' insulation, drip loop, and vertical clearances from grade and roofs;
- B. any unused circuit-breaker panel opening that was not filled;
- C. the presence of solid conductor aluminum branch-circuit wiring, if readily visible;
- D. any tested receptacle in which power was not present, polarity was incorrect, the cover was not in place, the GFCI devices were not properly installed or did not operate properly, evidence of arcing or excessive heat, and where the receptacle was not grounded or was not secured to the wall; and
- E. the absence of smoke detectors.

IV. The inspector is not required to:

- A. insert any tool, probe or device into the main panelboard, sub-panels, distribution panelboards, or electrical fixtures.
- B. operate electrical systems that are shut down.
- C. remove panelboard cabinet covers or dead fronts.
- D. operate or re-set over-current protection devices or overload devices.

- E. operate or test smoke or carbon-monoxide detectors or alarms
- F. inspect, operate or test any security, fire or alarms systems or components, or other warning or signaling systems.
- G. measure or determine the amperage or voltage of the main service equipment, if not visibly labeled.
- H. inspect ancillary wiring or remote-control devices.
- I. activate any electrical systems or branch circuits that are not energized.
- J. inspect low-voltage systems, electrical de-icing tapes, swimming pool wiring, or any time-controlled devices.
- K. verify the service ground.
- L. inspect private or emergency electrical supply sources, including, but not limited to: generators, windmills, photovoltaic solar collectors, or battery or electrical storage facility.
- M. inspect spark or lightning arrestors.
- N. inspect or test de-icing equipment.
- O. conduct voltage-drop calculations.
- P. determine the accuracy of labeling.
- Q. inspect exterior lighting.

3.8. Fireplace

I. The inspector shall inspect:

- A. readily accessible and visible portions of the fireplaces and chimneys;
- B. lintels above the fireplace openings;
- C. damper doors by opening and closing them, if readily accessible and manually operable; and
- D. cleanout doors and frames.

II. The inspector shall describe:

- A. the type of fireplace.

III. The inspector shall report as in need of correction:

- A. evidence of joint separation, damage or deterioration of the hearth, hearth extension or chambers;
- B. manually operated dampers that did not open and close;
- C. the lack of a smoke detector in the same room as the fireplace;
- D. the lack of a carbon-monoxide detector in the same room as the fireplace; and
- E. cleanouts not made of metal, pre-cast cement, or other non-combustible material.

IV. The inspector is not required to:

- A. inspect the flue or vent system.
- B. inspect the interior of chimneys or flues, fire doors or screens, seals or gaskets, or mantels.
- C. determine the need for a chimney sweep.
- D. operate gas fireplace inserts.
- E. light pilot flames.
- F. determine the appropriateness of any installation.
- G. inspect automatic fuel-fed devices.
- H. inspect combustion and/or make-up air devices.
- I. inspect heat-distribution assists, whether gravity-controlled or fan-assisted.
- J. ignite or extinguish fires.
- K. determine the adequacy of drafts or draft characteristics.
- L. move fireplace inserts, stoves or firebox contents.
- M. perform a smoke test.
- N. dismantle or remove any component.
- O. perform a National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)-style inspection.

- P. perform a Phase I fireplace and chimney inspection.

3.9. Attic, Insulation & Ventilation

I. The inspector shall inspect:

- A. insulation in unfinished spaces, including attics, crawlspaces and foundation areas;
- B. ventilation of unfinished spaces, including attics, crawlspaces and foundation areas; and
- C. mechanical exhaust systems in the kitchen, bathrooms and laundry area.

II. The inspector shall describe:

- A. the type of insulation observed; and
- B. the approximate average depth of insulation observed at the unfinished attic floor area or roof structure.

III. The inspector shall report as in need of correction:

- A. the general absence of insulation or ventilation in unfinished spaces.

IV. The inspector is not required to:

- A. enter the attic or any unfinished spaces that are not readily accessible, or where entry could cause damage or, in the inspector's opinion, pose a safety hazard.
- B. move, touch or disturb insulation.
- C. move, touch or disturb vapor retarders.
- D. break or otherwise damage the surface finish or weather seal on or around access panels or covers.
- E. identify the composition or R-value of insulation material.
- F. activate thermostatically operated fans.
- G. determine the types of materials used in insulation or wrapping of pipes, ducts, jackets, boilers or wiring.
- H. determine the adequacy of ventilation.

3.10. Doors, Windows & Interior

I. The inspector shall inspect:

- A. a representative number of doors and windows by opening and closing them;
- B. floors, walls and ceilings;
- C. stairs, steps, landings, stairways and ramps;
- D. railings, guards and handrails; and
- E. garage vehicle doors and the operation of garage vehicle door openers, using normal operating controls.

II. The inspector shall describe:

- A. a garage vehicle door as manually-operated or installed with a garage door opener.

III. The inspector shall report as in need of correction:

- A. improper spacing between intermediate balusters, spindles and rails for steps, stairways, guards and railings;
- B. photo-electric safety sensors that did not operate properly; and
- C. any window that was obviously fogged or displayed other evidence of broken seals.

IV. The inspector is not required to:

- A. inspect paint, wallpaper, window treatments or finish treatments.
- B. inspect floor coverings or carpeting.
- C. inspect central vacuum systems.
- D. inspect for safety glazing.
- E. inspect security systems or components.
- F. evaluate the fastening of islands, countertops, cabinets, sink tops or fixtures.
- G. move furniture, stored items, or any coverings, such as carpets or rugs, in order to inspect the concealed floor structure.
- H. move suspended-ceiling tiles.
- I. inspect or move any household appliances.

- J. inspect or operate equipment housed in the garage, except as otherwise noted.
- K. verify or certify the proper operation of any pressure-activated auto-reverse or related safety feature of a garage door.
- L. operate or evaluate any security bar release and opening mechanisms, whether interior or exterior, including their compliance with local, state or federal standards.
- M. operate any system, appliance or component that requires the use of special keys, codes, combinations or devices.
- N. operate or evaluate self-cleaning oven cycles, tilt guards/latches, or signal lights.
- O. inspect microwave ovens or test leakage from microwave ovens.
- P. operate or examine any sauna, steam-generating equipment, kiln, toaster, ice maker, coffee maker, can opener, bread warmer, blender, instant hot-water dispenser, or other small, ancillary appliances or devices.
- Q. inspect elevators.
- R. inspect remote controls.
- S. inspect appliances.
- T. inspect items not permanently installed.
- U. discover firewall compromises.
- V. inspect pools, spas or fountains.
- W. determine the adequacy of whirlpool or spa jets, water force, or bubble effects.
- X. determine the structural integrity or leakage of pools or spas.

4. Glossary of Terms

- **accessible:** In the opinion of the inspector, can be approached or entered safely, without difficulty, fear or danger.
- **activate:** To turn on, supply power, or enable systems, equipment or devices to become active by normal operating controls. Examples include turning on the gas or water supply valves to the fixtures and appliances, and activating electrical breakers or fuses.
- **adversely affect:** To constitute, or potentially constitute, a negative or destructive impact.
- **alarm system:** Warning devices, installed or freestanding, including, but not limited to: carbon-monoxide detectors, flue gas and other spillage detectors, security equipment, ejector pumps, and smoke alarms.
- **appliance:** A household device operated by the use of electricity or gas. Not included in this definition are components covered under central heating, central cooling or plumbing.
- **architectural service:** Any practice involving the art and science of building design for construction of any structure or grouping of structures, and the use of space within and surrounding the structures or the design, design development, preparation of construction contract documents, and administration of the construction contract.
- **component:** A permanently installed or attached fixture, element or part of a system.
- **condition:** The visible and conspicuous state of being of an object.
- **correction:** Something that is substituted or proposed for what is incorrect, deficient, unsafe, or a defect.
- **cosmetic defect:** An irregularity or imperfection in something, which could be corrected, but is not required.
- **crawlspace:** The area within the confines of the foundation and between the ground and the underside of the lowest floor's structural component.
- **decorative:** Ornamental; not required for the operation of essential systems or components of a home.
- **describe:** To report in writing a system or component by its type or other observed characteristics in order to distinguish it from other components used for the same purpose.
- **determine:** To arrive at an opinion or conclusion pursuant to examination.
- **dismantle:** To open, take apart or remove any component, device or piece that would not typically be opened, taken apart or removed by an ordinary occupant.
- **engineering service:** Any professional service or creative work requiring engineering education, training and experience, and the application of special knowledge of the mathematical, physical and engineering sciences to such professional service or creative work as consultation, investigation, evaluation, planning, design and supervision of construction for the purpose of assuring compliance with the specifications and design, in conjunction with structures, buildings, machines, equipment, works and/or processes.
- **enter:** To go into an area to observe visible components.
- **evaluate:** To assess the systems, structures and/or components of a property.
- **evidence:** That which tends to prove or disprove something; something that makes plain or clear; grounds for belief; proof.
- **examine:** To visually look (see **inspect**).
- **foundation:** The base upon which the structure or wall rests, usually masonry, concrete or stone, and generally partially underground.
- **function:** The action for which an item, component or system is specially fitted or used, or for which an item, component or system exists; to be in action or perform a task.
- **functional:** Performing, or able to perform, a function.

- **functional defect:** A lack of or an abnormality in something that is necessary for normal and proper functioning and operation, and, therefore, requires further evaluation and correction.
- **general home inspection:** The process by which an inspector visually examines the readily accessible systems and components of a home and operates those systems and components utilizing this Standards of Practice as a guideline.
- **home inspection:** See **general home inspection**.
- **household appliances:** Kitchen and laundry appliances, room air conditioners, and similar appliances.
- **identify:** To notice and report.
- **indication:** That which serves to point out, show, or make known the present existence of something under certain conditions.
- **inspect:** To examine readily accessible systems and components safely, using normal operating controls, and accessing readily accessible areas, in accordance with this Standards of Practice.
- **inspected property:** The readily accessible areas of the buildings, site, items, components and systems included in the inspection.
- **inspection report:** A written communication (possibly including images) of any material defects observed during the inspection.
- **inspector:** One who performs a real estate inspection.
- **installed:** Attached or connected such that the installed item requires a tool for removal.
- **material defect:** A specific issue with a system or component of a residential property that may have a significant, adverse impact on the value of the property, or that poses an unreasonable risk to people. The fact that a system or component is near, at, or beyond the end of its normal, useful life is not, in itself, a material defect.
- **normal operating controls:** Describes the method by which certain devices (such as thermostats) can be operated by ordinary occupants, as they require no specialized skill or knowledge.
- **observe:** To visually notice.
- **operate:** To cause systems to function or turn on with normal operating controls.
- **readily accessible:** A system or component that, in the judgment of the inspector, is capable of being safely observed without the removal of obstacles, detachment or disengagement of connecting or securing devices, or other unsafe or difficult procedures to gain access.
- **recreational facilities:** Spas, saunas, steam baths, swimming pools, tennis courts, playground equipment, and other exercise, entertainment and athletic facilities.
- **report** (verb form): To express, communicate or provide information in writing; give a written account of. (See also **inspection report**.)
- **representative number:** A number sufficient to serve as a typical or characteristic example of the item(s) inspected.
- **residential property:** Four or fewer residential units.
- **residential unit:** A home; a single unit providing complete and independent living facilities for one or more persons, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking and sanitation.
- **safety glazing:** Tempered glass, laminated glass, or rigid plastic.
- **shut down:** Turned off, unplugged, inactive, not in service, not operational, etc.
- **structural component:** A component that supports non-variable forces or weights (dead loads) and variable forces or weights (live loads).
- **system:** An assembly of various components which function as a whole.

- **technically exhaustive:** A comprehensive and detailed examination beyond the scope of a real estate home inspection that would involve or include, but would not be limited to: dismantling, specialized knowledge or training, special equipment, measurements, calculations, testing, research, analysis, or other means.
- **unsafe:** In the inspector's opinion, a condition of an area, system, component or procedure that is judged to be a significant risk of injury during normal, day-to-day use. The risk may be due to damage, deterioration, improper installation, or a change in accepted residential construction standards.
- **verify:** To confirm or substantiate.

These terms are found within the Standards of Practice. Visit InterNACHI's full Glossary online at <http://www.nachi.org/glossary.htm>

International Code of Ethics for Home Inspectors

The International Association of Certified Home Inspectors (InterNACHI) promotes a high standard of professionalism, business ethics and inspection procedures. InterNACHI members subscribe to the following Code of Ethics in the course of their business.

I. Duty to the Public

1. The InterNACHI member shall abide by the Code of Ethics and substantially follow the InterNACHI Standards of Practice.
2. The InterNACHI member shall not engage in any practices that could be damaging to the public or bring discredit to the home inspection industry.
3. The InterNACHI member shall be fair, honest and impartial, and act in good faith in dealing with the public.
4. The InterNACHI member shall not discriminate in any business activities on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, sexual orientation, or handicap, and shall comply with all federal,

state and local laws concerning discrimination.

5. The InterNACHI member shall be truthful regarding his/her services and qualifications.
6. The InterNACHI member shall not:
 - a. have any disclosed or undisclosed conflict of interest with the client;
 - b. accept or offer any disclosed or undisclosed commissions, rebates, profits, or other benefit from real estate agents, brokers, or any third parties having financial interest in the sale of the property; or
 - c. offer or provide any disclosed or undisclosed financial compensation directly or indirectly to any real estate agent, real estate broker, or real estate company for referrals or for inclusion on lists of preferred and/or affiliated inspectors or inspection companies.
7. The InterNACHI member shall not release any information about the inspection or the client to a third party unless doing so is necessary to protect the safety of others, to comply with a law or statute, or both of the following conditions are met:
 - a. the client has been made explicitly aware of what information will be released, to whom, and for what purpose, and;
 - b. the client has provided explicit, prior written consent for the release of his/her information.
8. The InterNACHI member shall always act in the interests of the client unless doing so violates a law, statute, or this Code of Ethics.
9. The InterNACHI member shall use a written contract that specifies the services to be performed, limitations of services, and fees.
10. The InterNACHI member shall comply with all government rules and licensing

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requirements of the jurisdiction where he or she conducts business.

11. The InterNACHI member shall not perform or offer to perform, for an additional fee, any repairs or associated services to the structure for which the member or member's company has prepared a home inspection report for a period of 12 months. This provision shall not include services to components and/or systems that are not included in the InterNACHI Standards of Practice.

II. Duty to Continue Education

1. The InterNACHI member shall comply with InterNACHI's current Continuing Education requirements.
2. The InterNACHI member shall pass InterNACHI's Online Inspector Exam once every three years.

III. Duty to the Profession and to InterNACHI

1. The InterNACHI member shall strive to improve the home inspection industry by sharing his/her lessons and/or experiences for the benefit of all. This does not preclude

the member from copyrighting or marketing his/her expertise to other Inspectors or the public in any manner permitted by law.

2. The InterNACHI member shall assist the InterNACHI leadership in disseminating and publicizing the benefits of InterNACHI membership.
3. The InterNACHI member shall not engage in any act or practice that could be deemed damaging, seditious or destructive to InterNACHI, fellow InterNACHI members, InterNACHI employees, leadership or directors. Accusations of a member acting or deemed in violation of such rules shall trigger a review by the Ethics Committee for possible sanctions and/or expulsion from InterNACHI.
4. The InterNACHI member shall abide by InterNACHI's current membership requirements.
5. The InterNACHI member shall abide by InterNACHI's current message board rules.

Members of other associations are welcome to join InterNACHI, but a requirement of membership is that InterNACHI must be given equal or greater prominence in their marketing materials (brochures and websites) compared to other associations of membership.