

## CANADIAN NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CERTIFIED HOME INSPECTORS

The Standards of Practice are a set of guidelines for home inspectors to follow in the performance of their inspections. The Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics are recognized by many related professionals as the definitive standard for professional performance in the industry.



The Canadian Association of Home Inspectors (CanNACHI) is a not for-profit association. CanNACHI's objectives include promotion of excellence within the profession and continual improvement of inspection services to the public.

### A. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1. The purpose of these Standards of Practice is to establish a standard for private, fee-paid home inspectors who are members of CanNACHI. 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.
2. The Inspector shall inspect readily accessible and installed systems and components of homes listed in these Standards of Practice.
3. The Inspector shall report on those systems and components inspected which, in the professional opinion of the inspector, are significantly deficient, or are near the end of their service lives.
4. The Inspector shall report a reason why, if not self-evident, the system or component is significantly deficient or near the end of its service life.
5. The Inspector shall make recommendations (if he or she chooses to) to correct or monitor the reported deficiency.
6. The Inspector shall report 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 they were not inspected.
7. These Standards of Practice are not intended to limit inspectors from:
  - including other inspection services, systems or components in addition to those required by these Standards of Practice.
  - specifying repairs, provided the inspector is appropriately qualified and willing to do so.
  - excluding systems and components from the inspection if requested by the client.

***The Inspector is required to:***  
***Observe and report on the systems and components herein.***

***The Inspector is not required to:***  
***Observe and report on the systems and components herein.***

### B. ROOF

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Roof covering materials.</li><li>2. Roof penetrations and flashings.</li><li>3. Chimneys</li><li>4. Skylights</li><li>5. Roof drainage components including gutters and downspouts.</li><li>6. General structure of the roof from the readily accessible panels, doors or stairs or hatch</li><li>7. Observe and report evidence of water penetration.</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>8. Accessories that do not make up part of the roofing such as lightning arrestor systems, antennae, solar heating systems, de-icing equipment.</li><li>9. Predict the service life expectancy of the roof.</li><li>10. Inspect underground downspout diverter drainage pipes.</li><li>11. Move or disturb insulation.</li><li>12. Perform a water test.</li><li>13. Walk on roofing where in judgement of the inspector could be dangerous or cause damage.</li><li>14. Warrant or certify or guarantee the roof.</li></ol> |
|---|--|

**The Inspector is required to:  
Observe and report on the systems and components herein.**

**The Inspector is not required to:  
Observe and report on the systems and components herein.**

## C. EXTERIOR

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Exterior wall covering/surfaces, eaves and trim.</li><li>2. Doors, windows, and flashings.</li><li>3. Garages and carports that are attached to the main building.</li><li>4. All exterior doors, decks, stoops, steps, stairs, porches, railings, eaves, soffits and fascias.</li><li>5. Balconies including stairs, guards and railings.</li><br/><li>6. Observe and report impact of lot grading and vegetation.</li><li>7. Retaining walls when these are likely to adversely affect the structure.</li><li>8. Walkways and driveways on the building.</li><li>9. Test the operation of power operated garage door openers, including the stop and automatic reverse functions.</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>10. Geological, hydrological and/or ground and soil conditions.</li><li>11. Yard fencing</li><li>12. Seasonal accessories such as removable storm windows, Storm doors, screens and shutters.</li><li>13. Storage sheds and other structures not part of the building.</li><li>14. Any items or facilities not directly related to the building structure, such as swimming pools, saunas, hot tubs, tennis courts, etc.</li><li>15. Seawalls, break-walls and docks.</li><li>16. Playground equipment or recreation facilities</li><br/><li>17. Erosion control and earth stabilization measures.</li><li>18. Drain fields or dry-wells, septic systems or cesspools.</li><br/><li>19. Water wells or springs.</li><li>20. Determine the integrity of the thermal window seals or damaged glass.</li><li>21. Verify or certify safe operation of any auto reverse or related safety function of a garage doors.</li></ol> |
|--|--|

## D. STRUCTURE

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Visible foundation walls.</li><li>2. Floors, columns, walls, roofs, attics.</li><br/><li>3. Report any general indications of foundation movement observed by the inspector, such as but not limited to drywall cracks, brick cracks, out-of-square door frames or floor slopes and concrete wall cracks.</li><li>4. Report on any cutting, notching and boring of framing members which may present a structural or safety concern.</li><li>5. Chimneys.</li><li>6. Wood in contact or near soil.</li><li>7. Crawl spaces, basements.</li><li>8. Observe and report any evidence of water penetration and condensation.</li><li>9. Observe and report any evidence of deterioration from insects, rot, or fire.</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>10. Inspect areas that are not reasonably accessible or visible.</li><li>11. Enter any crawlspaces that are not readily accessible or where entry could cause damage or pose a hazard to the inspector.</li><li>12. Move stored items or debris.</li><br/><li>13. Identify size, spacing, span, location or determine adequacy of foundation bolting, bracing, joists, joist spans or support systems.</li><li>14. Provide any engineering or architectural service.</li><li>15. Report on the adequacy of any structural system or component.</li></ol> |
|---|--|

***The Inspector is required to:  
Observe and report on the systems and components herein.***

***The Inspector is not required to:  
Observe and report on the systems and components herein.***

## **E. INSULATION & VENTILATION**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Insulation and vapour barriers in accessible attics, crawl spaces and unfinished basements.</li><li>2. Ventilation of attics and unheated crawl spaces.</li><li>3. Report on the general absence or lack of insulation.</li><li>4. Operate exhaust fan ventilation systems.</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. Concealed insulation and vapour barrier systems.</li><li>6. Inspect areas that are not reasonably accessible or visible.</li><li>7. Move, touch, or disturb insulation or vapour barriers.</li><li>8. Identify the composition or exact R-value of insulation material.</li><li>9. Determine the types of materials used in insulation or wrapping of pipes, ducts, jackets, boilers, and wiring.</li><li>10. Determine the adequacy of ventilation.</li></ol> |
|--|---|

## **F. ELECTRICAL**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Service entrance cable and location and integrity of the insulation, drip loop, or separation of conductors at weather heads and clearances from grade or rooftops.</li><li>2. Main service panel, auxiliary panels and location.</li><li>3. Test all Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) receptacles and GFCI circuit breakers observed and deemed to be GFCI's during the inspection using a GFCI tester.</li><li>4. Panel over current protection and system grounding.</li><li>5. Branch circuit wiring and related over current protection.</li><li>6. Report on any unused circuit breaker panel openings that are not filled.</li><li>7. Amperage and voltage ratings of the main service panel.</li><li>8. A representative number of switches, receptacles, lighting fixtures, AFCI receptacles.</li><li>9. The means for disconnecting the service main.</li><li>10. Outlets noted above are to be checked for polarity and grounding.</li><li>11. All exterior outlets and those within 1.5 metre of plumbing fixtures will be checked for polarity, grounding and ground fault circuit protection.</li><li>12. Report the absence of smoke detectors.</li><li>13. Report the presence of solid conductor aluminum branch circuit wiring if readily visible.</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>14. Insert any tool, probe or device into the main panel board sub-panels, distribution panel boards, or electrical fixtures.</li><li>15. Secondary wiring systems such as low voltage wiring, telephone wiring, cable television wiring, etc.</li><li>16. Any components not related to the primary electrical systems such as security systems, swimming pool wiring and time-control devices.</li><li>17. Inspect private or emergency electrical supply sources, including but not limited to generators, windmills, solar panels, or battery or electrical storage facilities.</li><li>18. Provide or remove power for equipment.</li><li>19. Inspect or test de-icing equipment.</li><li>20. Conduct voltage drop calculations.</li><li>21. Determine the accuracy of circuit labelling.</li><li>22. Verify the service ground.</li><li>23. Test the operation of smoke detectors</li><li>24. Dismantle, remove, adjust or perform any task on any electrical equipment that would require a qualified trades person to perform.</li><li>25. Insert or remove fuses, or operate circuit breakers.</li></ol> |
|--|---|

**The Inspector is required to:**  
**Observe and report on the systems and components herein.**

**The Inspector is NOT required to:**  
**Observe and report on the systems and components herein.**

## **G. PERMANENTLY INSTALLED HEATING AND COOLING SYSTEMS**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The heating systems using normal operating controls and describe the energy source and heating method.</li><li>2. Furnace and distribution system, including fans, ducts, dampers, supports, filters, insulation and registers.</li><li>3. Boilers and distribution system including pumps, piping, valves, supports, insulation, radiators and convectors.</li><li>4. Flue piping, vents, and chimneys.</li><li>5. Heat recovery ventilator.</li><li>6. Interior fuel storage equipment supply piping, venting, supports, and evidence of leakage.</li><li>7. Cooling equipment and distribution system including fans, ducts, dampers, supports, filters, insulation, registers and piping.</li><li>8. The presence of manufacturer's build-in safety controls.</li><li>9. The presence of a heat source in each room.</li><li>10. Test system using the thermostat or other similar standard operating controls.</li><li>11. Readily accessible and removable panel covers designed for homeowner access may be removed for inspection purposes.</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>12. Inspect or evaluate interiors of flues or chimneys, fire chambers, heat exchangers, humidifiers, dehumidifiers, electronic air filters, solar heating systems or fuel tanks.</li><li>13. Determine the uniformity, temperature, flow, balance, distribution, size, capacity, adequacy, BTU, or supply adequacy of the heating system.</li><li>14. Any portable heating/cooling, humidifying, dehumidifying or air cleaning equipment.</li><li>15. Activate any HVAC systems when ambient temperatures or when other circumstances are not conducive to safe operation or may damage the equipment.</li><li>16. Evaluate fuel quality.</li><li>17. Verify thermostat calibration, heat anticipation or automatic setbacks, timers, programs or clocks.</li><li>18. Examine electrical current, coolant fluids or gases, or coolant leakage.</li><li>19. Dismantle, remove, adjust or perform any function on any heating or cooling equipment that would require a qualified tradesperson to perform.</li><li>20. Light or ignite pilot flames.</li><li>21. Change settings or conditions on equipment.</li></ol> |
|--|--|

## **H. PLUMBING**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Verify the presence of and identify the location of the main water shutoff valve.</li><li>2. Water supply piping into house and within house, pipe supports and insulation.</li><li>3. Drain, waste, and vent piping, pipe supports and insulation.</li><li>4. Inspect the water heating equipment, including combustion air, venting, connections, energy sources, seismic bracing, and verify the presence or absence of temperature-pressure relief valves and/or Watts 210 valves.</li><li>5. Inspect the drainage sump pumps and test pumps with accessible floats.</li><li>6. Presence of cross-connections that could contaminate the potable water.</li><li>7. Water volume and pressure should be tested by opening the faucets to obtain a reasonable flow of one or more fixtures simultaneously, and at various locations in the house.</li><li>8. Water drainage should be tested by draining one or more fixtures simultaneously, and at various locations in the house.</li><li>9. Test the water supply by operating valves and faucets.</li><li>10. Observe and report any leaks in the piping systems.</li><li>11. Determine if the water supply is public or private.</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>13. Ignite or extinguish fires, pilot lights, change settings or conditions on equipment.</li><li>14. Determine the exact flow rate, volume, pressure, temperature, or adequacy of the water supply.</li><li>15. Operate any valves other than those used on a regular or daily basis.</li><li>16. Inspect interiors of flues or chimneys, water softening or filtering systems, well pumps, tanks, safety or shut-of valves, floor drains, lawn sprinkler systems or fire sprinkler systems.</li><li>17. Determine the water quality or pot ability or the reliability of the water supply or source.</li><li>18. Foundation drainage system and yard piping.</li><li>19. Inspect clothes washing machines or their connections.</li><li>20. Test shower pans, tub and shower surrounds or enclosures for leakage.</li><li>21. Evaluate the compliance with local conservation or energy standards, or the proper design or sizing of any water, waste or venting components, fixtures or piping.</li><li>22. Determine the effectiveness of anti-siphon, back-flow prevention or drain-stop devices.</li><li>23. Determine whether there are sufficient clean-outs for effective cleaning of drains.</li></ol> |
|---|--|

*The Inspector is required to:  
Observe and report on the systems and components herein.*

*The Inspector is NOT required to:  
Observe and report on the systems and components herein.*

## H. PLUMBING con't

12. Determine the presence and location of accessible clean-outs for the drain/waste/vent piping.

22. Test, operate, open or close safety controls, manual stop valves and/or temperature or pressure relief valves.
23. Inspect water storage tanks, pressure pumps or bladder tanks.
24. Evaluate wait time to obtain hot water at fixtures, or perform testing of any kind to water heater elements.
25. Inspect water treatment systems or water filters
26. Determine the existence or condition of polybutylene plumbing.
27. Dismantle, remove, adjust or perform any function on any plumbing equipment that would require a qualified tradesperson to perform.

## I. INTERIORS

1. Floors, walls, ceilings and trim.
2. Fire separating walls and party walls.
3. Stairs, guards and railings.
4. Observe condition of permanently installed counters and cabinets.
5. Observe and report on any evidence of water penetration and condensation.
6. The presence of smoke detectors.
7. Randomly select and operate where reasonably accessible a representative number of doors and windows.

8. Treatments such as paint, wallpaper, carpeting, blinds, drapes, and other similar treatments.
9. Kitchen, bathroom, and laundry appliances.
10. Observe fireplace insert installation.
11. Any items or facilities not directly related to the interior systems and components such as swimming pools, saunas, hot tubs, ponds and waterfalls.
12. Move furniture, stored items, or any coverings like carpets or rugs in order to inspect the concealed floor structure.
13. Move drop / suspended ceiling tiles.
14. Operate or examine any sauna, steam-jenny, kiln, toaster, plug-in kitchen appliances, or other ancillary devices.
15. Inspect elevators, remote controls, appliances, or any items not permanently installed.
16. Examine or operate any above-ground, movable, freestanding, or non-permanently installed pool/spa, recreational equipment or self-contained equipment.
17. Test the operation of Smoke Detectors.
18. Solid Fuel burning appliances including wood burning fireplaces and wood stoves

## J. GENERAL LIMITATIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

### 1. General limitations:

- a. Inspections performed in accordance with these Standards of Practice are not technically exhaustive.
- b. and will not identify concealed conditions or latent defects.
- c. These Standards of Practice are applicable to buildings with four or fewer dwelling units and their garages or carports.

### 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.
- 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 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.

### 3. Inspectors are NOT required to **offer**:

- a. or perform any act or service contrary to law
- b. or perform engineering services.
- c. or perform work in any trade or any professional service other than home inspection.
- d. warranties or guarantees of any kind.

### 4. Inspectors are NOT required to **operate**:

- a. any system or component which is shut down or otherwise inoperable.

- b. any system or component which does not respond to normal operating controls.
- c. shut-off valves.

5. Inspectors are NOT required to **enter**:

- a. 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.
- b. the under-floor crawl spaces or attics which are not readily accessible.

6. Inspectors are NOT required to **inspect**:

- a. underground items including, but not limited to underground storage tanks or other underground indications of their presence, whether abandoned or active.
- b. systems or components which are not installed.
- c. decorative items.
- d. systems or components located in areas that are not entered in accordance with these Standards of Practice.
- e. detached structures other than garages and carports.
- f. common elements or common areas in multi-unit housing, such as condominium properties or cooperative housing.

7. Inspectors are NOT required to:

- a. perform any procedure or operation 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.
- b. move suspended ceiling tiles, personal property, furniture, equipment, plants, soil, snow, ice, or debris.
- c. dismantle any system or component, except as explicitly required by these Standards of Practice.