

# Property Inspection Report

## Avocet Inspections LLC



828 S. Elm St., Baltimore, MD  
Inspection prepared for: Mary Smith  
Real Estate Agent: Edward Fielder -

Date of Inspection: 2/21/2024 Time: 10am  
Age of Home: 1910 Size: 2262  
Weather: Sunny, 40

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## Summary of Notable Items

| Exterior Areas               |                       |  |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Page 4 Item: 1               | Roof                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rubber roofing in older, serviceable condition with coating. Coating is worn, especially on front section. Recommend re-coating with white roofing compound.</li> </ul>   |
| Page 5 Item: 7               | Decks & Steps         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Openings between stair treads exceeds 4 inch recommended maximum. Current spacing width is considered unsafe by today's safety standards.</li> <li>• Handrail not graspable. By today's standards, handrails should be installed that a hand may fully grasp to promote safety.</li> <li>• Replace rotted deck components as necessary</li> <li>• Hand railings are climbable. This is not considered child safe. Modify to promote safety</li> <li>• Recommend installation of hand railing at front steps to promote safety.</li> </ul> |
| Page 7 Item: 8               | Electrical, Exterior  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wiring from outlet to light fixture at parking pad is not professionally installed. Wiring is loose. Secure as necessary.</li> <li>• Doorbell non-functional</li> </ul>   |
| Garage, Basement & Attic     |                       |  |
| Page 8 Item: 2               | Basement / Crawlspace | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crawlspace vapor barrier is missing. Recommend installing 6 mil polyethylene sheeting.</li> <li>• Remove debris in crawlspace.</li> <li>• Opening in ductwork in basement. Seal or install vent register</li> </ul>   |
| Electric, Heat, Water Heater |                       |  |
| Page 9 Item: 2               | HVAC Unit             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sediment trap not installed on gas supply line to hvac unit in basement. Install.</li> </ul>  |
| Page 11 Item: 3              | Water Heater          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion tank not installed. An expansion tank is required to be installed on all plumbing systems having a pressure regulator or check valve or on new installations.</li> </ul>  |
| Interior Features            |                       |  |
| Page 11 Item: 1              | Kitchen               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non GFCI protected outlet to left of sink in kitchen, recommend replacement with GFCI type to promote safety.</li> </ul>  |
| Page 12 Item: 2              | Master Bath           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toilet not draining, about to overflow. Have licensed plumber repair as necessary. 3rd floor.</li> </ul>  |
| Page 13 Item: 7              | Plumbing              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSST gas piping installed. Does not appear to have proper bonding to the electrical grounding system as called for by the manufacturer. Have qualified, licensed electrician evaluate/correct. Please see this website for more information. <a href="http://www.csstsafety.com/">http://www.csstsafety.com/</a></li> <li>• Handle missing at front hose faucet. Install.</li> </ul>  |

|                  |                          |   |
|------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Page 14 Item: 9  | Floors, Ceilings & Walls | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Possible organic substance noted. Utility room - 2nd floor. You may wish to test for mold.</li><li>• Overheight step 2nd floor. Use caution</li></ul>   |
| Page 15 Item: 12 | Stairways                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hand Rail Components missing at basement stairs. Install to promote safety.</li><li>• Openings at stairs exceeds 4 inch spacing, which is not considered safe by today's standards. Adjust to promote safety.</li></ul> |

## Exterior Areas

### 1. Roof

Materials: Roofing inspected photographically, Roofing inspected from deck, Flat roof - rubber roofing

Observations:

- **Rubber roofing in older, serviceable condition with coating. Coating is worn, especially on front section. Recommend re-coating with white roofing compound.**



Rubber roofing in older, serviceable condition with coating. Coating is worn, especially on front section. Recommend re-coating with white roofing compound.

Rubber roofing in older, serviceable condition with coating. Coating is worn, especially on front section. Recommend re-coating with white roofing compound.

### 2. Chimney

Observations:

- No Chimney

### 3. Gutters & Grading

Information: Aluminum gutters and downspouts

Observations:

- No major system safety or function concerns noted at time of inspection.

### 4. Drives & Walks

Information: Concrete driveway, Concrete sidewalk.

Observations:

- No major system safety or function concerns noted at time of inspection.

### 5. Siding

Information: Brick, vinyl siding, wood frame interior construction, brick foundation.

Observations:

- No major system safety or function concerns noted at time of inspection.
- Missing mortar at front facade (minor) - Replace as necessary



Rear of property

## 6. Vegetation

Observations:

- No major system safety or function concerns noted at time of inspection.

## 7. Decks & Steps

Observations:

- Deck structure is sound.
- **Openings between stair treads exceeds 4 inch recommended maximum. Current spacing width is considered unsafe by today's safety standards.**
- **Handrail not graspable. By today's standards, handrails should be installed that a hand may fully grasp to promote safety.**
- **Replace rotted deck components as necessary**
- **Hand railings are climbable. This is not considered child safe. Modify to promote safety**
- **Recommend installation of hand railing at front steps to promote safety.**



Openings between stair treads exceeds 4 inch recommended maximum. Current spacing width is considered unsafe by today's safety standards.



Handrail not graspable. By today's standards, handrails should be installed that a hand may fully grasp to promote safety.



Hand railings are climable. This is not considered child safe. Modify to promote safety



Deck structure is sound.



Replace rotted deck components as necessary



Replace rotted deck components as necessary



Recommend installation of hand railing at front steps to promote safety.

## 8. Electrical, Exterior

Observations:

- **Wiring from outlet to light fixture at parking pad is not professionally installed. Wiring is loose. Secure as necessary.**
- **Doorbell non-functional**



Main electrical shut off switch. Above entrance to basement



Wiring from outlet to light fixture at parking pad is not professionally installed. Wiring is loose. Secure as necessary.



Doorbell non-functional

## 9. Doors

Observations:

- No major system safety or function concerns noted at time of inspection.

## 10. Window Condition

Observations:

- No major system safety or function concerns noted at time of inspection.



## Garage, Basement & Attic

### 1. Garage

Observations:

- No Garage

### 2. Basement / Crawlspace

Observations:

- Sump pump operational
- **Crawlspace vapor barrier is missing. Recommend installing 6 mil polyethylene sheeting.**
- **Remove debris in crawlspace.**
- **Opening in ductwork in basement. Seal or install vent register**



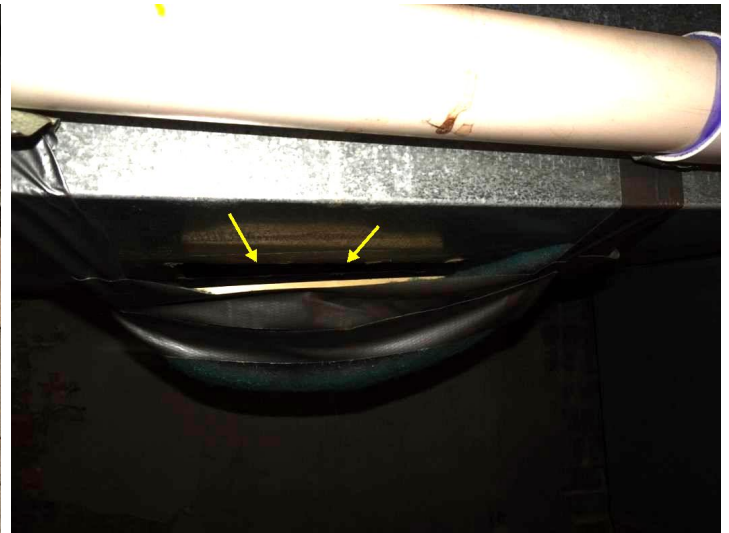
Crawlspace vapor barrier is missing. Recommend installing 6 mil polyethylene sheeting.



Sump pump operational



Remove debris in crawlspace.



Opening in ductwork in basement. Seal or install vent register

### 3. Attic

Observations:

- No accessible attic

## Electric, Heat, Water Heater

**Electric:** Note that only actual GFCI outlets are tested and tripped. Some baths may have non-GFCI outlets which are protected by a GFCI outlet in a remote area (garage, another bath, etc.). Confirm that apparent non-GFCI outlets within 8' of wet areas are thus protected. Smoke Detectors are typically good for a maximum of 10 years. Carbon Monoxide (CO) detectors should be present if there is oil or gas burning equipment in the property.

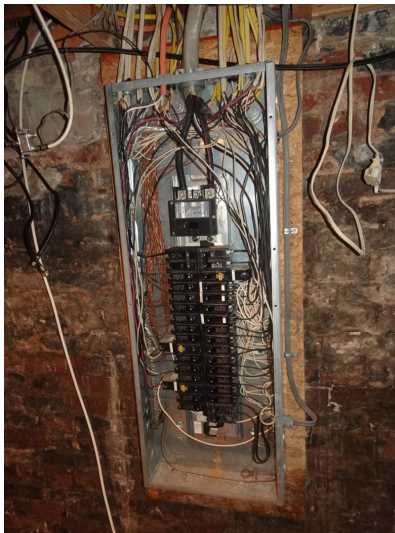
**Heat:** The heating, ventilation, air conditioning and cooling system (often referred to as HVAC) is the climate control system for the structure. The goal of these systems is to keep the occupants at a comfortable level while maintaining indoor air quality, ventilation while keeping maintenance costs at a minimum. The HVAC system is usually powered by electricity or natural gas, but can also be powered by other sources such as, oil, propane, solar panels, or wood. The inspector will test the heating and air conditioner using the thermostat or other controls. A more thorough investigation of the system, including the heat ("firebox") exchanger, should be conducted by a licensed HVAC service person every year. Failure to do so may result in carbon monoxide escaping through cracks in a heat exchanger or flue pipe, resulting in death.

### 1. Electrical Panel

Materials: Overhead Service, 200 Amp, 220 volt Service, Cutler-Hammer, Eaton, Main Panel box located in basement, Branch circuit wiring type: Vinyl coated, non-metallic, "Romex" type. Copper.

Observations:

- No major system safety or function concerns noted at time of inspection at main panel box.



200 amp panel

### 2. HVAC Unit

Information: Goodman , Natural gas furnaces (2) in basement and 2nd floor utility closet

Observations:

- No major system safety or function concerns noted at time of inspection.
- Heating/Cooling distribution - Galvanized ducting and flex ducting
- Operational in heat mode.
- Air conditioning not tested due to low outside temperature. Manufacturers do not recommend testing of air conditioning below 60 degrees (exterior temperature) as it may damage the unit.
- **HVAC** unit - older units, budget for replacement
- **Sediment trap not installed on gas supply line to hvac unit in basement. Install.**



HVAC unit mfg. date(s) - 2004



HVAC unit mfg. date(s) - 2004



Sediment trap not installed on gas supply line to hvac unit in basement. Install.



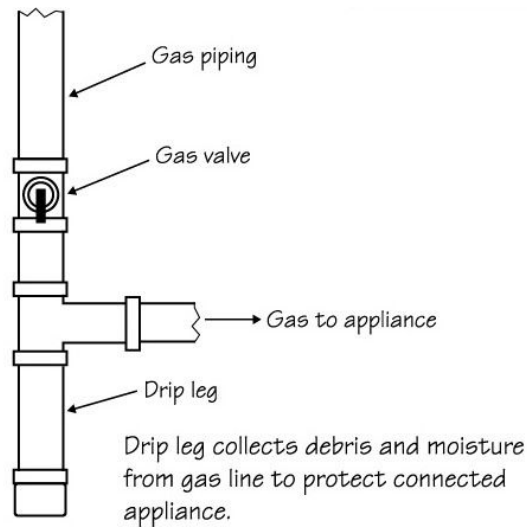
Heat output at vent



HVAC unit mfg. date(s) - 2004 - 2nd floor



HVAC unit mfg. date(s) - 2004



Sediment trap not installed on gas supply line to hvac unit in basement. Install.

### 3. Water Heater

Information: Bradford White, Electric water heater, Copper main supply pipe, Copper supply lines , CPVC supply lines , Waste Pipe: **PVC**, 80 +/- gallons capacity, Main water shutoff: see photo, Water heater located in basement, Water/Sewage - Municipal

Observations:

- **Expansion tank** not installed. An expansion tank is required to be installed on all plumbing systems having a pressure regulator or check valve or on new installations.



Water heater mfg. date(s) - 2012



Expansion tank not installed. An expansion tank is required to be installed on all plumbing systems having a pressure regulator or check valve or on new installations.

## Interior Features

### 1. Kitchen

Observations:

- **Non GFCI** protected outlet to left of sink in kitchen, recommend replacement with GFCI type to promote safety.



Non GFCI protected outlet to left of sink in kitchen, recommend replacement with GFCI type to promote safety.

## 2. Master Bath

Observations:

- **Toilet not draining, about to overflow. Have licensed plumber repair as necessary. 3rd floor.**



Toilet not draining, about to overflow. Have licensed plumber repair as necessary. 3rd floor.

## 3. Bath

Observations:

- No major system safety or function concerns noted at time of inspection.

## 4. Bath #2

Observations:

- No major system safety or function concerns noted at time of inspection.

## 5. Bath (Half)

Observations:

- No major system safety or function concerns noted at time of inspection.

## 6. Laundry

### Observations:

- No major system safety or function concerns noted at time of inspection.
- Washing machine and dryer operational



Washing machine and dryer operational

## 7. Plumbing

Materials: **CSST** gas piping

### Observations:

- **CSST gas piping installed. Does not appear to have proper bonding to the electrical grounding system as called for by the manufacturer. Have qualified, licensed electrician evaluate/correct.**

**Please see this website for more information.**

<http://www.csstsafety.com/>

- **Handle missing at front hose faucet. Install.**



Gas Valve location - Front wall of basement



CSST gas piping. See notes.



Handle missing at front hose faucet. Install.

#### 8. Interior Electric

Observations:

- No major system safety or function concerns noted at time of inspection.
- Smoke detectors operational, CO detectors operational

#### 9. Floors, Ceilings & Walls

Observations:

- **Possible organic substance noted. Utility room - 2nd floor. You may wish to test for mold.**
- **Overheight step 2nd floor. Use caution**



Possible organic substance noted. Utility room - 2nd floor. You may wish to test for mold.



Overheight step 2nd floor. Use caution

#### 10. Doors

Observations:

- No major system safety or function concerns noted at time of inspection.

#### 11. Windows

Observations:

- No major system safety or function concerns noted at time of inspection.

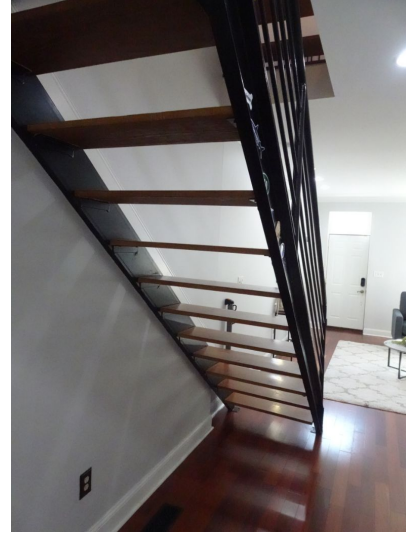
## 12. Stairways

Observations:

- **Hand Rail Components missing at basement stairs. Install to promote safety.**
- **Openings at stairs exceeds 4 inch spacing, which is not considered safe by today's standards. Adjust to promote safety.**



Hand Rail Components missing at basement stairs. Install to promote safety.



Openings at stairs exceeds 4 inch spacing, which is not considered safe by today's standards. Adjust to promote safety.

## 13. Structural Damage

Observations:

- No structural defects noted.

### What We Inspect:

A Home Inspection is a non-invasive visual examination of a residential dwelling, performed for a fee, which is intended to identify observable material defects within specific components of said dwelling. Components may include any combination of mechanical, structural, roofing, electrical, plumbing, or other essential systems or portions of the home, as identified and agreed to by the Client and Inspector, prior to the inspection process.

A home inspection is intended to assist in evaluation of the overall condition of the dwelling. The inspection is based on observation of the visible condition of the structure and its components on the date of the inspection and is not a prediction of future conditions.

A home inspection will not reveal every concern that exists or ever could exist, but only those material defects observed on the day of the inspection.

A material defect is a condition with a residential real property or any portion of it that would have a significant adverse impact on the property or that involves an unreasonable risk to people on the property.

An Inspection report shall describe and identify in written format the inspected systems, structures, and components of the dwelling and shall identify material



defects observed. Inspection reports may contain recommendations regarding conditions reported or recommendations for correction, monitoring or further evaluation by professionals, but this is not required.

# General Notes

## 1. General Notes

### Observations:

Final walk through: This report is a snapshot in time, at the time and date of the inspection. Conditions in a property can change at any time, for any number of reasons. For this reason, we recommend a complete walk through of the property before closing.

Inaccessibility and Non-Inspection: When inspection of any system or component is limited or is designated as not inspected due to inaccessibility or for any other reason, the Client must understand that conditions affecting the structure, systems or components may be present. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that the Client take additional measures to examine these areas or items.

Fire and carbon monoxide protection – By today's standards: The installation of smoke alarm(s) is recommended inside of all bedrooms and in any rooms designated for the purpose of sleeping, and outside within proximity of the doors to bedrooms. Test all alarms and detectors weekly or monthly per manufacturer instructions. The installation of carbon monoxide (CO) detector(s) is recommended in homes with fuel-fired appliances at every floor elevation and any areas where fuel-fired equipment is located. The installation of Type ABC fire extinguisher(s) at the kitchen, laundry, and garage, if applicable, is also recommended. Install new batteries as needed. Initiate and practice plans of escape and protection for all occupants in case any emergencies arise. Failure to repair defective or install absent alarms, detectors, and other safety equipment immediately can result in serious injury or death. For further information about fire safety and CO poisoning, consult your local fire department and your equipment manufacture(s), and read these links: [www.cpssc.gov/CPSCPUB/PUBS/464.pdf](http://www.cpssc.gov/CPSCPUB/PUBS/464.pdf), [www.carbonmonoxidekills.com](http://www.carbonmonoxidekills.com), [www.nfpa.org/index.asp](http://www.nfpa.org/index.asp), and [www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pyfff/inhome.html](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pyfff/inhome.html).

Structures that are occupied and fully or partially furnished at the time of the inspection may prevent inspectors from seeing everything, testing everything, or having access to everything. Concealed defects are not within the scope of the property inspection. Recommend careful observation during final walk through.

This report is not a guaranty or warranty. Anything can fail at any time. This inspection report is only reporting on the conditions as observed at the time of the inspection, and is not intended to be considered as a guaranty or warranty, expressed or implied, of the adequacy of, or performance of, systems or structures, or their component parts, or of their remaining life expectancy or usefulness. Systems, equipment and components can, and do, fail without prior warning.

Exterior light function may not be able to be determined during a daytime inspection due to sensors or burned out bulbs. You may wish to visit the property during evening hours if this is a particular concern or have seller demonstrate operation.

Your Property Inspection Report is not a code inspection, nor is the inspector licensed to perform code inspections pertaining to this specific property. All code enforcement questions must be directed to the authority having jurisdiction. Contact the local building department for further details.

Please visit this link for life spans of house components.  
<http://www.nachi.org/life-expectancy.htm>

Pictures - Pictures are included to help you understand and see what I saw at the time of the inspection. They are intended to show an example or illustration of an area of concern but may not show every occurrence and may not accurately depict its severity. Also note that not all areas of concern will be pictured. Do not rely on pictures alone. Please read the complete inspection report before your inspection contingency period expires.

Discussion, verbal (Discussion prior to report delivery) – Your printed or emailed Property Inspection Report shall always supersede any and all discussion at time of inspection. Do not rely on any verbal discussions about your home or the property inspection. Please contact me if you have any questions.

## Glossary

| Term           | Definition  |
|----------------|---|
| CSST           | Corrugated Stainless Steel Tubing (CSST) is a type of conduit used for natural gas heating in homes. It was introduced in the United States in 1988. CSST consists of a continuous, flexible stainless-steel pipe with an exterior PVC covering. The piping is produced in coils that are air-tested for leaks  |
| Expansion Tank | An expansion tank or expansion vessel is a small tank used to protect closed (not open to atmospheric pressure) water heating systems and domestic hot water systems from excessive pressure. The tank is partially filled with air, whose compressibility cushions shock caused by water hammer and absorbs excess water pressure caused by thermal expansion. |
| GFCI           | A special outlet that is intended for the protection of personnel by de-energizing a circuit, capable of opening the circuit when even a small amount of current is flowing through the grounding system.   |
| HVAC           | Abbreviation for Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning  |
| PVC            | Polyvinyl chloride, which is used in the manufacture of white plastic pipe typically used for waste water drain and vent lines.   |

**Title 09 DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, LICENSING, AND REGULATION**

**Subtitle 36 COMMISSION OF REAL ESTATE APPRAISERS, APPRAISAL MANAGEMENT COMPANIES AND HOME INSPECTORS – HOME INSPECTORS**

**Chapter 07 Minimum Standards of Practice**

***.01 Definitions.***

A. In this chapter, the following terms have the meaning indicated.

B. Terms Defined.

(1) Activate.

(a) "Active" means to turn on, supply power, or enable systems, equipment, or devices to become active by normal control means.

(b) "Active" includes:

(i) Turning on the gas or water supply valves to fixtures and appliances;

(ii) Activating electrical breakers or fuses.

(2) Additional Inspection Services.

(a) "Additional Inspections Services" means any service offered in addition to the home inspection as defined in Standards of Practice for Maryland Licensed Home Inspectors;

(b) "Additional Inspections Services" includes, but is not limited to services to detect the presence of a wood-destroying insect or organism.

(c) "Additional Inspections Services" includes environmental testing that includes but, is not limited to tests to determine:

(i) Radon levels:

(ii) Well water potability;

(iii) Functional ability of septic system; and

(iv) Air quality, to include the presence of contaminants, mold spores, noxious gases and other harmful particulates in the air supply.

(3) "Adversely affect" means to constitute, or potentially constitute, a negative or destructive impact on the durability or soundness of a structure.

(4) Alarm System.

(a) "Alarm System" means a device to generate an audible or visible warning of an unsafe condition:

(b) "Alarm system" includes, but is not limited to:

- (i) A warning device installed or free-standing;
- (ii) A carbon monoxide detector and alarm;
- (iii) A flue gas detector;
- (iv) A water or other spillage detector;
- (v) Security equipment;
- (vi) An ejector pump; and
- (vii) A smoke detector or alarm.

(5) "Automatic safety controls" means a device designed and installed to protect systems and components from unsafe conditions.

(6) "Component" means a permanently installed appliance, fixture, element or part of a system necessary for the system to operate as designed.

(7) "CSST" means corrugated stainless steel tubing used as flexible gas piping in fuel distribution systems.

(8) "Decorative" means ornamental or something not required for the operation of the essential systems and components of a home.

(9) "Describe" means to report a system or component by its type or other observed significant characteristics to distinguish it from other systems or components.

(10) "Dismantle" means 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.

(11) "Engineering service" means a professional service or creative work requiring

(a) Engineering education, training, and experience; and

(b) 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 or processes.

(12) "Functional drainage" means a drain is:

(a) Able to empty in a reasonable amount of time; and

(b) Not subject to overflow when one of its supply faucets is left on.

(13) "Functional flow" means sufficient water flow to provide uninterrupted supply to the highest, unrestricted tap or faucet farthest from the source when a single intermediate, unrestricted tap or faucet is operated simultaneously with uninterrupted flow.

(14) "Further evaluation" means an examination and analysis by a qualified professional, tradesman, or service technician beyond that provided by the home inspection.

(15) Heat source.

(a) "Heat source" means a mechanical means to transfer heat;

(b) "Heat Source" includes but is not limited to:

(i) A radiator;

(ii) A convector unit;

(iii) A radiant panel;

(iv) A heat pipe;

(v) Ductwork;

(vi) A grille;

(vii) A register; and

(viii) Any other device from which heat is intended to be emitted.

(16) "Household appliance" means a kitchen or laundry apparatus designed to perform a particular task or function, whether installed or free-standing.

(17) "Inspect" means 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.

(18) "Installed" means attached such that removal requires tools.

(19) "Intended function" means:

(a) Performing, or able to perform the usual function for which an item is Designed, or fitted; and

(b) Being in a condition or state of repair appropriate to this function, its age and location.

(20) "Normal operating control" means a device such as a thermostat, switch, or valve that may be operated by an individual and does not require specialized skill or knowledge.

(21) "Readily accessible" means available for visual inspection without requiring moving of personal property, dismantling, destructive measures, or any action which will likely involve risk to a person or property.

(22) "Readily openable access panel" means a panel provided for homeowner inspection and maintenance that:

- (a) Is within normal reach;
- (b) Can be easily removed by one person, and
- (c) Is not sealed in place.

(23) Recreational facility.

(a) "Recreational facility" means a fitness or entertainment device or equipment:

(b) "Recreational facility" includes, but is not limited to:

- (i) A spa;
- (ii) A sauna;
- (ii) A steam bath;
- (iv) Exercise equipment;
- (v) Entertainment devices;
- (vi) Athletic equipment;
- (vii) Playground equipment; and
- (viii) Other similar equipment and associated accessories.

(24) "Representative number" means a quantity of components of any system or structure enough like others in its class or kind so as to serve as an example of the class or kind.

(25) "Roof drainage system" means a component used to carry water off a roof and away from a building.

(26) "Shut down" means a state in which a system or component cannot be operated by normal operating controls.

(27) "Significantly deficient" means to be unsafe or not functioning as designed or intended.

(28) Solid fuel burning appliance.

(a) "Solid fuel burning appliance" means a hearth and fire chamber or similar prepared place:

- (i) In which a fire may be built; and
- (ii) That is constructed in conjunction with a chimney;

(b) "Solid fuel burning appliance" includes a listed assembly of a fire chamber, its chimney and related factory-made parts designed for unit assembly without requiring field construction.



(29) "Structural component" means a component that supports nonvariable forces or weights and variable forces or weights.

(30) "System" means a combination of interacting or interdependent components that are designed and assembled to carry out one or more functions.

(31) "Technically exhaustive" means an investigation to identify concealed conditions or latent defects that involves dismantling, extensive use of advanced techniques, measurements, instruments, testing, calculations, or other means.

(32) "Under-floor crawl space" means the area within the confines of the foundation and between the ground and the underside of the floor.

(33) "Unsafe" means a condition in a readily accessible, installed system or component that:  
(a) Is determined to create a significant risk of personal injury during normal, day-to-day use; and  
(b) May be the result of damage, deterioration, improper installation or a change in accepted residential construction standards.

(34) Wiring methods.

(a) "Wiring methods" means the identification of electrical conductors or wires by their general type.

(b) "Wiring methods" includes, but is not limited to:

(i) Non-metallic sheathed cable;

(ii) Armored cable; and

(iii) Knob and tube.

## **.02. General.**

A. Purpose. In the general public interest, these standards are promulgated to establish a minimum and uniform standard of performance to be exercised by a home inspector licensed by the Maryland State Commission of Real Estate Appraisers and Home Inspectors.

B. Conflicts. If these regulations conflict with other Federal or State requirements, the home inspector shall follow the more stringent requirements.

C. Scope. The Standards of Practice apply only to the inspection of residential building containing one to four dwelling units.

D. Inspections.

(1) These standards of practice set forth in this chapter:

(a) Identify the items, components, systems and certain terms included in the scope of a home inspection; and

(b) Apply to a visual inspection of the readily accessible areas of the included items, components, and systems are performing their intended function or are determined to be significantly deficient.

(2) A home inspection performed in accordance with the standards of practice set forth in this chapter:

(a) Is intended to provide a client with objective information regarding the condition of the systems and components of a home as inspected at the time of the home inspection;

(b) Acts to identify visible defects and conditions that, in the judgment of the home inspector, adversely affect the function or integrity of the items, components, and systems inspected, including those items or components near the end of their serviceable life;

(c) May not be construed as a compliance inspection pursuant to any code or governmental regulation;

(d) Is not intended to be construed as a guarantee, warranty, or any form of insurance;

(e) Is not an express or implied warranty or a guarantee of the adequacy, performance, or useful life of any item, component, or system in, on, or about the inspected property;

(f) Is based on the visual observation of the home inspector; and

(g) Shall be performed in a time period sufficient to allow compliance with the provisions of the standards of practice set forth in this chapter.

E. Representative Number. For the purpose of making a finding or conclusion as a result of a home inspection, an inspector may consider for representative number:

(1) Electrical outlets;

(2) Exterior windows;

(3) Exterior shutters;

(4) Doors; and

(5) Siding materials.

F. Report. A home inspection report:

(1) Shall contain the written opinions of the home inspector based upon the judgment and experience of the home inspector;

(2) Is not intended to be technically exhaustive; and

(3) May identify items in need of further evaluation.

### **.03 Limitations and Exclusions.**

A. A home inspection performed in accordance with these Standards of Practice set forth in this chapter:

- (1) Is not technically exhaustive; and
- (2) May not identify concealed conditions or latent defects.

B. Except as may be required by lawful authority, a home inspector is not required to perform any action or make any determination unless specifically stated in the standards of practice set forth in this chapter.

C. A home inspector is not required to determine any of the following:

- (1) Condition of a system or component which is not readily accessible;
- (2) Remaining life of any system or component;
- (3) Strength, adequacy, effectiveness, or efficiency of any system or component;
- (4) Causes of any condition or deficiency;
- (5) Methods, materials, or costs of corrections;
- (6) Future conditions including, but not limited to, failure of systems and components;
- (7) Suitability of the property for any specialized use;
- (8) Property boundary lines or encroachments;
- (9) Compliance of the structure with applicable provisions of local ordinances, regulations, or codes;
- (10) Market value of the property or its marketability;
- (11) Advisability of the purchase of the property;
- (12) Indoor air quality or sickness of any building including, but not limited to, the presence or absence of all manner of biological activity, such as carcinogens, mold, insects, birds, pets mammals, and other flora and fauna, and their consequent damage, toxicity, odors, waste products, and noxiousness;
- (13) Effectiveness of any system installed or methods utilized to control or remove suspected hazardous substances;
- (14) Operating costs of a system or component;
- (15) Acoustical properties of any system or component; or
- (16) The existence of manufacturer's recalls.

D. A home inspector is not required to offer or perform any of the following:

- (1) Any act or service contrary to law;

- (2) Engineering services;
  - (3) Work in any trade or any professional service other than home inspection; or
  - (4) Warranties or guarantees of any kind.
- E. A home inspector is not required to operate any system or component that:
- (1) Is shut down or otherwise inoperable; or
  - (2) Does not respond to normal operating controls.
- F. A home inspector is not required to enter:
- (1) Any area that may be, in the opinion of the home inspector, dangerous to the inspector or other persons or damage the property or its systems or components; or
  - (2) Under-floor crawl spaces or attics those are not readily accessible.
- G. A home inspector is not required to inspect any of the following:
- (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 set forth in this chapter;
  - (5) Detached structures other than garages and carports;
  - (6) Common elements or common areas in multi-unit housing, such as condominium properties or cooperative house; or
  - (7) A common condominium component, system, or evaluated condominium reserve accounts.
- H. A home inspector is not required to:
- (1) Perform any procedure or operation which may, in the opinion of the inspector, 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 set forth in this chapter; or
  - (4) Include in a written report any information from any source concerning previous:
    - (a) Property, geological, environment or hazardous waste conditions;

(b) Manufacturer recalls or conformance of proper manufacturers' installation of any component or system, or

(c) Information contained in a consumer protection bulletin of publication.

#### **.04 Structural System.**

A. The home inspector shall visually inspect the structural system, including the structural components including foundation and framing.

B. Probing.

(1) A home inspector may probe a representative number of structural components where deterioration is suspected or where clear indications of possible deterioration exist.

(2) Probing is not required:

(a) If it will damage any finished surface; or

(b) Where no deterioration is visible.

C. A home inspector shall describe the structural system, including the:

(1) Foundation, and report the methods used to inspect the under-floor crawl spaces and basements;

(2) Floor structure;

(3) Wall structure;

(4) Ceiling structure; and

(5) Roof structure and report the methods used to inspect the attic.

D. A home inspector is not required to:

(1) Provide any engineering service; or

(2) Offer an opinion as to the adequacy of any structural system or component.

#### **05 Exterior.**

A. A home inspector shall visually inspect the home exterior including:

(1) Exterior wall covering, flashing and trim;

(2) All exterior doors;

(3) Attached decks, balconies, stoops, steps, porches, and their associated railings;

(4) Eaves, soffits, and fascias where accessible from the ground level;

(5) Vegetation, grading, surface drainage and retaining walls on the property when any of these may adversely affect the building; and

(6) Walkways, patios, and driveways leading to dwelling entrances.

B. A home inspector shall describe the exterior wall covering.

C. A home inspector is not required to inspect any of the following:

(1) Screening, shutters, awnings, and similar seasonal accessories:

(2) Fences;

(3) Geological, geotechnical or hydrological conditions;

(4) Recreational facilities;

(5) Outbuildings;

(6) Seawalls, break-walls, and docks; or

(7) Erosion control and earth stabilization measures.

#### **.06 Roof System.**

A. A home inspector shall visually inspect a roof system including:

(1) The roof covering;

(2) Roof drainage systems;

(3) Flashings; and

(4) Skylights, chimneys, exterior and roof penetrations.

B. A home inspector shall describe the roof covering and report the methods used to inspect the roof.

C. A home inspector is not required to:

(1) Inspect:

(a) Antennae;

(b) Interiors of flues or chimneys which are not readily accessible; or

(c) Other installed accessories.

(2) Walk on or access a roof where it could damage the roof or roofing material or be unsafe for the home inspector;

(3) Remove snow, ice, debris, or other conditions that prohibit the observation of the roof surfaces; or

- (4) Determine:
  - (a) The remaining life expectancy of roof coverings;
  - (b) The presence or absence of hail damage;
  - (c) Manufacturers' defects;
  - (d) Installation methods; or
  - (e) The number of layers of roofing material.

**.07 Plumbing System.**

- A. A home inspector shall visually inspect the plumbing system including:
  - (1) Interior water supply and distribution systems including all fixtures and faucets;
  - (2) Drain, waste and vent systems including all fixtures;
  - (3) Water heating equipment;
  - (4) Vent systems, flues, and chimneys;
  - (5) Fuel storage and fuel distribution systems for the presence of CSST;
  - (6) Drainage sumps, sump pumps, and related piping;
  - (7) The functional flow of all fixtures and faucets, and
  - (8) The functional drainage of all fixtures.
- B. A home inspector shall describe the plumbing system including:
  - (1) Water supply, drain, waste, and vent piping materials;
  - (2) Water heating equipment, including the energy source
  - (3) The location of main water and main fuel shut-off valves; and
  - (4) The presence of CSST with the recommendation that the bonding of the  
CSST be reviewed by a licensed master electrician.
- C. A home inspector is not required to:
  - (1) Inspect any of the following:
    - (a) Clothes washing machine connections;
    - (b) Interiors of flues or chimneys which are not readily accessible;

- (c) Wells, well pumps, or water storage related equipment;
  - (d) Water conditioning systems;
  - (e) Solar water heating systems;
  - (f) Fire and lawn sprinkler systems; or
  - (g) Private waste disposal systems.
- (2) Determine:
- (a) Whether water supply and waste disposal systems are public or private;
  - (b) The quantity or quality of the water supply; or
  - (c) Operate safety valves or shut-off valves.

**.08 Electrical Systems.**

- A. A home inspector shall visually inspect an electrical system including:
- (1) The service drop;
  - (2) Service entrance conductors, cables, and raceways;
  - (3) Service equipment and main disconnects;
  - (4) Service grounding;
  - (5) Interior components of service panels and sub panels;
  - (6) Conductors;
  - (7) Overcurrent protection devices;
  - (8) A representative number of installed lighting fixtures, switches, and receptacles;
  - (9) Ground fault and arc fault circuit interrupters; and
  - (10) The general condition of visible branch circuit conductors that may constitute a hazard to the occupant or the structure by reason of improper use or installation of electrical components.
- B. A home inspector shall describe the electrical system, including the:
- (1) Amperage and voltage rating of the service;
  - (2) Location of main disconnect and subpanels; and
  - (3) Wiring methods.
- C. If applicable, a home inspector shall include in a written report the:



- (1) Presence of solid conductor aluminum branch circuit wiring; and
- (2) Absence of smoke detectors.
- (3) Presence of CSST gas piping with the recommendation that the bonding of the CSST be reviewed by a licensed master electrician.

D. A home inspector is not required to:

- (1) Inspect:
  - (a) Remote control devices unless the device is the only control device;
  - (b) Alarm systems and components;
  - (c) Low voltage wiring systems and components;
  - (d) Ancillary wiring, systems and components that are not a part of the primary electrical power distribution system; or
  - (e) the existing bonding method for CSST; or
- (2) Measure amperage, voltage, or impedance.

#### **.09 Heating System.**

A. A home inspector shall visually inspect:

- (1) Installed heating equipment;
- (2) Vent systems, flues, and chimneys; and
- (3) Heating distribution.

B. A home inspector shall describe energy sources and heating methods by distinguishing characteristics and means of distribution.

C. A home inspector is not required to:

- (1) Inspect:
  - (a) Flue or chimney interiors that are not readily accessible;
  - (b) Heat exchangers;
  - (c) Humidifiers or dehumidifiers;
  - (d) Electronic air filters; or
  - (e) Solar space heating systems;
- (2) Determine the adequacy of the heat system or the distribution balance.

**.10 Air-Conditioning System.**

A. A home inspector shall inspect the installed central and through-wall cooling equipment.

B. A home inspector shall describe energy sources and cooling methods by distinguishing characteristics and means of distribution.

C. A home inspector is not required to:

- (1) Inspect electronic air filters; or
- (2) Determine the adequacy of the cooling system or the distribution balance.

**.11 Interior.**

A. A home inspector shall visually inspect:

- (1) Walls, ceilings, and floors;
- (2) Steps stairways, and railings;
- (3) Countertops and a representative number of installed cabinets;
- (4) A representative number of doors and windows; and
- (5) Garage doors and garage door operators.

B. A home inspector is not required to inspect:

- (1) Paint, wallpaper, and other finish treatments;
- (2) Carpeting;
- (3) Window treatments;
- (4) Central vacuum systems;
- (5) Household appliances; or
- (6) Recreational facilities.

**.12 Insulation and Ventilation.**

A. A home inspector shall visually inspect:

- (1) Insulation and vapor retarders in unfinished spaces;
- (2) Ventilation of attics and foundation areas; and
- (3) Mechanical ventilation systems.

B. A home inspector shall describe:

- (1) Insulation and vapor retarders in unfinished spaces; and
- (2) If applicable, the absence of insulation in unfinished spaces at conditioned surfaces.

C. A home inspector is not required to:

- (1) Disturb insulation or vapor retarders; or
- (2) Determine indoor air quality.

### **.13 Fireplaces and Solid Fuel Burning Appliances.**

A. A home inspector shall visually inspect:

- (1) System components of fireplaces and solid fuel burning appliances; and
- (2) Vent systems, flues, and chimneys.

B. A home inspector shall describe:

- (1) Fireplaces and solid fuel burning appliances; and
- (2) Chimneys.

C. A home inspector is not required to:

- (1) Inspect any of the following:
  - (a) Interiors of flues or chimneys;
  - (b) Firescreens and doors;
  - (c) Seals and gaskets;
  - (d) Automatic fuel feed devices;
  - (e) Mantles and fireplace surrounds;
  - (f) Combustion make-up air devices; or
  - (g) Gravity controlled and fan assisted heat distribution assists;
- (2) Ignite or extinguish fires;
- (3) Determine draft characteristics; or
- (4) Move fireplace inserts or stoves or firebox contents.

# Home Inspection Standards of Practice

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4. Glossary of Terms

### 1. Definitions and Scope

**1.1. A 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.

- The home inspection is based on the observations made on the date of the inspection, and not a prediction of future conditions.
- 
- The 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 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:

- An inspection is not technically exhaustive.
- An inspection will not identify concealed or latent defects.
- An inspection will not deal with aesthetic concerns, or what could be deemed matters of taste, cosmetic defects, etc.
- An inspection will not determine the suitability of the property for any use.
- An inspection does not determine the market value of the property or its marketability.
- An inspection does not determine the insurability of the property.
- An inspection does not determine the advisability or inadvisability of the purchase of the inspected property.
- An inspection does not determine the life expectancy of the property or any components or systems therein.
- An inspection does not include items not permanently installed.
- This Standards of Practice applies 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:

- property boundary lines or encroachments.
- the condition of any component or system that is not readily accessible.
- the service life expectancy of any component or system.
- the size, capacity, BTU, performance or efficiency of any component or system.
- the cause or reason of any condition.
- the cause for the need of correction, repair or replacement of any system or component.
- future conditions.
- compliance with codes or regulations.
- the presence of evidence of rodents, birds, bats, animals, insects, or other pests.
- the presence of mold, mildew or fungus.
- the presence of airborne hazards, including radon.
- the air quality.
- the existence of environmental hazards, including lead paint, asbestos or toxic drywall.
- the existence of electromagnetic fields.
- any hazardous waste conditions.
- any manufacturers' recalls or conformance with manufacturer installation, or any information included for consumer protection purposes.
- acoustical properties.
- correction, replacement or repair cost estimates.
- estimates of the cost to operate any given system.

II. The inspector is not required to operate:

- any system that is shut down.
- any system that does not function properly.
- 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.
  -
- any system that does not turn on with the use of normal operating controls.
- any shut-off valves or manual stop valves.
- any electrical disconnect or over-current protection devices.
- any alarm systems.
- moisture meters, gas detectors or similar equipment.

III. The inspector is not required to:

- 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.
- dismantle, open or uncover any system or component.
- enter or access any area that may, in the inspector's opinion, be unsafe.
- enter crawlspaces or other areas that may be unsafe or not readily accessible.
- 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.
- 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.
- inspect decorative items.
- inspect common elements or areas in multi-unit housing.
- inspect intercoms, speaker systems or security systems.
- offer guarantees or warranties.

- offer or perform any engineering services.
- offer or perform any trade or professional service other than a home inspection.
- 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.
- 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.
- determine the insurability of a property.
- perform or offer Phase 1 or environmental audits.
- inspect any system or component that is not included in these Standards.

### **3. Standards of Practice**

#### **3.1. Roof**

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

#### **3.2. Exterior**

- I. The inspector shall inspect:
  - the exterior wall-covering materials;
  - the eaves, soffits and fascia;
  - a representative number of windows;
  - all exterior doors;
  - flashing and trim;
  - adjacent walkways and driveways;
  - stairs, steps, stoops, stairways and ramps;
  - porches, patios, decks, balconies and carports;
  - railings, guards and handrails; and
  - 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:

- the type of exterior wall-covering materials.
- III. The inspector shall report as in need of correction:
- any improper spacing between intermediate balusters, spindles and rails.
- IV. The inspector is not required to:
- inspect or operate screens, storm windows, shutters, awnings, fences, outbuildings, or exterior accent lighting.
  - inspect items that are not visible or readily accessible from the ground, including window and door flashing.
  - inspect or identify geological, geotechnical, hydrological or soil conditions.
  - inspect recreational facilities or playground equipment.
  - inspect seawalls, breakwalls or docks.
  - inspect erosion-control or earth-stabilization measures.
  - inspect for safety-type glass.
  - inspect underground utilities.
  - inspect underground items.
  - inspect wells or springs.
  - inspect solar, wind or geothermal systems.
  - inspect swimming pools or spas.
  - inspect wastewater treatment systems, septic systems or cesspools.
  - inspect irrigation or sprinkler systems.
  - inspect drainfields or dry wells.
  - determine the integrity of multiple-pane window glazing or thermal window seals.

### **3.3. Basement, Foundation, CrawlSpace & Structure**

- I. The inspector shall inspect:
- the foundation;
  - the basement;
  - the crawlspace; and
  - structural components.
- II. The inspector shall describe:
- the type of foundation; and
  - the location of the access to the under-floor space.
- III. The inspector shall report as in need of correction:
- observed indications of wood in contact with or near soil;
  - observed indications of active water penetration;
  - observed indications of possible foundation movement, such as sheetrock cracks, brick cracks, out-of-square door frames, and unlevel floors; and
  - 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:
- enter any crawlspace that is not readily accessible, or where entry could cause damage or pose a hazard to him/herself.
  - move stored items or debris.
  - operate sump pumps with inaccessible floats.
  - identify the size, spacing, span or location or determine the adequacy of foundation bolting, bracing, joists, joist spans or support systems.
  - provide any engineering or architectural service.
  - report on the adequacy of any structural system or component.

### **3.4. Heating**

- I. The inspector shall inspect:
  - the heating system, using normal operating controls.
- II. The inspector shall describe:
  - the location of the thermostat for the heating system;
  - the energy source; and
  - the heating method.
- III. The inspector shall report as in need of correction:
  - any heating system that did not operate; and
  - if the heating system was deemed inaccessible.
- IV. The inspector is not required to:
  - inspect, measure, or evaluate the interior of flues or chimneys, fire chambers, heat exchangers, combustion air systems, fresh-air intakes, makeup air, humidifiers, dehumidifiers, electronic air filters, geothermal systems, or solar heating systems.
  - inspect fuel tanks or underground or concealed fuel supply systems.
  - determine the uniformity, temperature, flow, balance, distribution, size, capacity, BTU, or supply adequacy of the heating system.
  - light or ignite pilot flames.
  - 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.
  - override electronic thermostats.
  - evaluate fuel quality.
  - verify thermostat calibration, heat anticipation, or automatic setbacks, timers, programs or clocks.
  - measure or calculate the air for combustion, ventilation, or dilution of flue gases for appliances.

### **3.5. Cooling**

- I. The inspector shall inspect:
  - the cooling system, using normal operating controls.
- II. The inspector shall describe:
  - the location of the thermostat for the cooling system; and
  - the cooling method.
- III. The inspector shall report as in need of correction:
  - any cooling system that did not operate; and
  - if the cooling system was deemed inaccessible.
- IV. The inspector is not required to:
  - determine the uniformity, temperature, flow, balance, distribution, size, capacity, BTU, or supply adequacy of the cooling system.
  - inspect portable window units, through-wall units, or electronic air filters.
  - 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.
  - inspect or determine thermostat calibration, cooling anticipation, or automatic setbacks or clocks.
  - examine electrical current, coolant fluids or gases, or coolant leakage.

### **3.6. Plumbing**

- I. The inspector shall inspect:
  - the main water supply shut-off valve;
  - the main fuel supply shut-off valve;
  - the water heating equipment, including the energy source, venting connections, temperature/pressure-relief (TPR) valves, Watts 210 valves, and seismic bracing;
  - interior water supply, including all fixtures and faucets, by running the water;
  - all toilets for proper operation by flushing;



- all sinks, tubs and showers for functional drainage;
  - the drain, waste and vent system; and
  - drainage sump pumps with accessible floats.
- II. The inspector shall describe:
- whether the water supply is public or private based upon observed evidence;
  - the location of the main water supply shut-off valve;
  - the location of the main fuel supply shut-off valve;
  - the location of any observed fuel-storage system; and
  - the capacity of the water heating equipment, if labeled.
- III. The inspector shall report as in need of correction:
- deficiencies in the water supply by viewing the functional flow in two fixtures operated simultaneously;
  - deficiencies in the installation of hot and cold water faucets;
  - active plumbing water leaks that were observed during the inspection; and
  - 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:
- light or ignite pilot flames.
  - measure the capacity, temperature, age, life expectancy or adequacy of the water heater.
  - 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.
  - determine the exact flow rate, volume, pressure, temperature or adequacy of the water supply.
  - determine the water quality, potability or reliability of the water supply or source.
  - open sealed plumbing access panels.
  - inspect clothes washing machines or their connections.
  - operate any valve.
  - test shower pans, tub and shower surrounds or enclosures for leakage or functional overflow protection.
  - 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.
  - determine the effectiveness of anti-siphon, back-flow prevention or drain-stop devices.
  - determine whether there are sufficient cleanouts for effective cleaning of drains.
  - evaluate fuel storage tanks or supply systems.
  - inspect wastewater treatment systems.
  - inspect water treatment systems or water filters.
  - inspect water storage tanks, pressure pumps, or bladder tanks.
  - evaluate wait time to obtain hot water at fixtures, or perform testing of any kind to water heater elements.
  - evaluate or determine the adequacy of combustion air.
  - test, operate, open or close: safety controls, manual stop valves, temperature/pressure-relief valves, control valves, or check valves.
  - examine ancillary or auxiliary systems or components, such as, but not limited to, those related to solar water heating and hot water circulation.
  - determine the existence or condition of polybutylene, polyethylene, or similar plastic piping.
  - inspect or test for gas or fuel leaks, or indications thereof.

### **3.7. Electrical**

- I. The inspector shall inspect:
- the service drop;
  - the overhead service conductors and attachment point;
  - the service head, gooseneck and drip loops;

- the service mast, service conduit and raceway;
  - the electric meter and base;
  - service-entrance conductors;
  - the main service disconnect;
  - panelboards and over-current protection devices (circuit breakers and fuses);
  - service grounding and bonding;
  - 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;
  - all ground-fault circuit interrupter receptacles and circuit breakers observed and deemed to be GFCIs using a GFCI tester, where possible; and
  - for the presence of smoke and carbon-monoxide detectors.
- II. The inspector shall describe:
- the main service disconnect's amperage rating, if labeled; and
  - the type of wiring observed.
- III. The inspector shall report as in need of correction:
- deficiencies in the integrity of the service-entrance conductors' insulation, drip loop, and vertical clearances from grade and roofs;
  - any unused circuit-breaker panel opening that was not filled;
  - the presence of solid conductor aluminum branch-circuit wiring, if readily visible;
  - 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
  - the absence of smoke and/or carbon monoxide detectors.
- IV. The inspector is not required to:
- insert any tool, probe or device into the main panelboard, sub-panels, distribution panelboards, or electrical fixtures.
  - operate electrical systems that are shut down.
  - remove panelboard cabinet covers or dead fronts.
  - operate or re-set over-current protection devices or overload devices.
  - operate or test smoke or carbon-monoxide detectors or alarms.
  - inspect, operate or test any security, fire or alarm systems or components, or other warning or signaling systems.
  - measure or determine the amperage or voltage of the main service equipment, if not visibly labeled.
  - inspect ancillary wiring or remote-control devices.
  - activate any electrical systems or branch circuits that are not energized.
  - inspect low-voltage systems, electrical de-icing tapes, swimming pool wiring, or any time-controlled devices.
  - verify the service ground.
  - inspect private or emergency electrical supply sources, including, but not limited to: generators, windmills, photovoltaic solar collectors, or battery or electrical storage facility.
  - inspect spark or lightning arrestors.
  - inspect or test de-icing equipment.
  - conduct voltage-drop calculations.
  - determine the accuracy of labeling.
  - inspect exterior lighting.

### **3.8. Fireplace**

- I. The inspector shall inspect:
- readily accessible and visible portions of the fireplaces and chimneys;

- lintels above the fireplace openings;
  - damper doors by opening and closing them, if readily accessible and manually operable; and
  - cleanout doors and frames.
- II. The inspector shall describe:
- the type of fireplace.
- III. The inspector shall report as in need of correction:
- evidence of joint separation, damage or deterioration of the hearth, hearth extension or chambers;
  - manually operated dampers that did not open and close;
  - the lack of a smoke detector in the same room as the fireplace;
  - the lack of a carbon-monoxide detector in the same room as the fireplace; and
  - cleanouts not made of metal, pre-cast cement, or other non-combustible material.
- IV. The inspector is not required to:
- inspect the flue or vent system.
  - inspect the interior of chimneys or flues, fire doors or screens, seals or gaskets, or mantels.
  - determine the need for a chimney sweep.
  - operate gas fireplace inserts.
  - light pilot flames.
  - determine the appropriateness of any installation.
  - inspect automatic fuel-fed devices.
  - inspect combustion and/or make-up air devices.
  - inspect heat-distribution assists, whether gravity-controlled or fan-assisted.
  - ignite or extinguish fires.
  - determine the adequacy of drafts or draft characteristics.
  - move fireplace inserts, stoves or firebox contents.
  - perform a smoke test.
  - dismantle or remove any component.
  - perform a National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)-style inspection.
  - perform a Phase I fireplace and chimney inspection.

### **3.9. Attic, Insulation & Ventilation**

- I. The inspector shall inspect:
- insulation in unfinished spaces, including attics, crawlspaces and foundation areas;
  - ventilation of unfinished spaces, including attics, crawlspaces and foundation areas; and
  - mechanical exhaust systems in the kitchen, bathrooms and laundry area.
- II. The inspector shall describe:
- the type of insulation observed; and
  - 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:
- the general absence of insulation or ventilation in unfinished spaces.
- IV. The inspector is not required to:
- 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.
  - move, touch or disturb insulation.
  - move, touch or disturb vapor retarders.
  - break or otherwise damage the surface finish or weather seal on or around access panels or covers.
  - identify the composition or R-value of insulation material.
  - activate thermostatically operated fans.

- determine the types of materials used in insulation or wrapping of pipes, ducts, jackets, boilers or wiring.
- determine the adequacy of ventilation.

### **3.10. Doors, Windows & Interior**

#### **I. The inspector shall inspect:**

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

#### **II. The inspector shall describe:**

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

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

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

#### **IV. The inspector is not required to:**

- inspect paint, wallpaper, window treatments or finish treatments.
- inspect floor coverings or carpeting.
- inspect central vacuum systems.
- inspect for safety glazing.
- inspect security systems or components.
- evaluate the fastening of islands, countertops, cabinets, sink tops or fixtures.
- move furniture, stored items, or any coverings, such as carpets or rugs, in order to inspect the concealed floor structure.
- move suspended-ceiling tiles.
- inspect or move any household appliances.
- inspect or operate equipment housed in the garage, except as otherwise noted.
- verify or certify the proper operation of any pressure-activated auto-reverse or related safety feature of a garage door.
- operate or evaluate any security bar release and opening mechanisms, whether interior or exterior, including their compliance with local, state or federal standards.
- operate any system, appliance or component that requires the use of special keys, codes, combinations or devices.
- operate or evaluate self-cleaning oven cycles, tilt guards/latches, or signal lights.
- inspect microwave ovens or test leakage from microwave ovens.
- 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.
- inspect elevators.
- inspect remote controls.
- inspect appliances.
- inspect items not permanently installed.
- discover firewall compromises.
- inspect pools, spas or fountains.
- determine the adequacy of whirlpool or spa jets, water force, or bubble effects.
- 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:** See "home inspection."
- **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.

- **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.

## **Disclosure**

**(i) “An inspection is intended to assist in the evaluation of the overall condition of a building. The inspection is based on observation of the visible and apparent condition of the building and its components on the date of the inspection”;**

**(ii) “The results of this home inspection are not intended to make any representation regarding latent or concealed defects that may exist, and no warranty or guaranty is expressed or implied”;**

**(iii) “If your home inspector is not a licensed structural engineer or other professional whose license authorizes the rendering of an opinion as to structural integrity of a building or the condition of its components or systems, you may wish to seek the professional opinion of a licensed structural engineer or other professional regarding any possible defects or other observations set forth in this report”; and**

**(iv) “Only home inspections performed by Maryland licensed home inspectors will be recognized as a valid home inspection under a real estate contract”.**

**(b) The licensee shall give the person or the person’s representative the report:**

**(1) by the date set in a written agreement by the parties to the home inspection; or**

**(2) within 7 business days after the home inspection was performed, if no date was set in a written agreement by the parties to the home inspection.**

**(c) Any limitation of the liability of the licensee for any damages resulting from the report on the home inspection shall be agreed to in writing by the parties to the home inspection prior to the performance of the home inspection.**