

CALIFORNIA REAL ESTATE INSPECTION ASSOCIATION

Residential Standards of Practice

Part I. Definitions and Scope

These Standards of Practice provide guidelines for a *home inspection* and define certain terms relating to these *inspections*. Italicized words in these Standards are defined in Part IV, Glossary of Terms.

- A. A *home inspection* is a noninvasive visual survey and basic *operation* of the systems and *components* of a home which can be reached, entered, or viewed without difficulty, moving obstructions, or requiring any action which may result in damage to the property or personal injury to the *Inspector*. The purpose of the inspection is to provide the Client with information regarding the general *condition of the building(s)* to assist client in determining what further evaluation, inspection, and repair estimates Client should perform or obtain prior to the release of contingencies.
- B. A *home inspection* report provides written documentation of material defects discovered in the *inspected building's systems* and *components* which, in the opinion of the *Inspector*, are *safety hazards*, are not *functioning* properly, or appear to be at the ends of their service lives. The report may include the *Inspector's* recommendations for correction or further evaluation.
- C. All further evaluation, inspection, and repair work needs to be provided by competent and qualified professionals who are licensed and/or certified.
- D. Client should consider all available information when negotiating regarding the Property.
- E. *Inspections* performed in accordance with these Standards of Practice are not *technically exhaustive* and shall apply to the *primary building* and its associated *primary parking structure*.
- F. Cosmetic and aesthetic *conditions* shall not be considered

Part II. Standards of Practice

A *home inspection* includes the *readily accessible systems* and *components* or a *representative number* of multiple similar *components* listed in Sections 1 through 9 subject to the limitations, exceptions, and exclusions in Part III.

SECTION 1 - Foundation, Basement, and Under-floor Areas

- A. Items to be *inspected*:
 1. Foundation *system*
 2. Floor framing *system*
 3. Under-floor ventilation
 4. Foundation anchoring and cripple wall bracing
 5. Wood separation from soil
 6. Insulation
- B. The *Inspector* is not required to:
 1. Determine size, spacing, location, or adequacy of foundation bolting/bracing *components* or reinforcing *systems*
 2. Determine the composition or energy rating of insulation materials.

SECTION 2 - Exterior

- A. Items to be *inspected*:
 1. Surface grade directly adjacent to the buildings
 2. Doors and windows
 3. Attached decks, porches, patios, balconies, stairways and their enclosures, handrails and guardrails
 4. Wall cladding and trim
 5. Portions of walkways and driveways that are adjacent to the buildings
 6. Pool or spa drowning prevention features, for the sole purpose of identifying which, if any, are present.
- B. The *Inspector* is not required to:
 1. Inspect door or window screens, shutters, awnings, or security bars
 2. Inspect fences or gates or *operate* automated door or gate openers or their safety devices
 3. Use a ladder to *inspect systems* or *components*
 4. Determine if ASTM standards are met or any drowning prevention feature of a pool or spa is installed properly or is adequate or effective.
 5. Test or *operate* any drowning prevention feature.

SECTION 3 - Roof Covering

- A. Items to be *inspected*:
 1. Covering
 2. Drainage
 3. Flashings
 4. Penetrations
 5. Skylights
- B. The *Inspector* is not required to:
 1. Walk on the roof surface if in the opinion of the *Inspector* there is risk of damage or a *hazard* to the *Inspector*
 2. Warrant or certify that roof *systems*, coverings, or *components* are free from leakage

SECTION 4 - Attic Areas and Roof Framing

- A. Items to be *inspected*:
 1. Framing
 2. Ventilation
 3. Insulation
- B. The *Inspector* is not required to:
 1. Inspect mechanical attic ventilation *systems* or *components*
 2. *Determine* the composition or energy rating of insulation materials

SECTION 5 - Plumbing

- A. Items to be *inspected*:
 1. Water supply piping
 2. Drain, waste, and vent piping
 3. Faucets, toilets, sinks, tubs, showers
 4. Fuel gas piping
 5. Water heaters
- B. The *Inspector* is not required to:
 1. Fill any *fixture* with water, inspect overflow drains or drain-stops, or evaluate backflow devices, waste ejectors, sump pumps, or drain line cleanouts
 2. *Inspect* or evaluate water temperature balancing *devices*, temperature fluctuation, time to obtain hot water, water circulation, or solar heating *systems* or *components*
 3. *Inspect* whirlpool baths, steam showers, or sauna *systems* or *components*
 4. *Inspect* fuel tanks or *determine* if the fuel gas system is free of leaks
 5. *Inspect* wells, private water supply or water treatment *systems*

SECTION 6 - Electrical

- A. Items to be *inspected*:
 1. Service equipment
 2. Electrical panels
 3. Circuit wiring
 4. Switches, receptacles, outlets, and lighting fixtures
- B. The *Inspector* is not required to:
 1. *Operate* circuit breakers or circuit interrupters
 2. Remove cover plates
 3. *Inspect* de-icing *systems* or *components*
 4. *Inspect* onsite electrical generation or storage or emergency electrical supply *systems* or *components*

SECTION 7 - Heating and Cooling

- A. Items to be *inspected*:
 1. Heating equipment
 2. Central cooling equipment
 3. Energy source and connections
 4. Combustion air and exhaust vent *systems*
 5. Condensate drainage
 6. Conditioned air distribution *systems*
- B. The *Inspector* is not required to:
 1. *Inspect* heat exchangers or electric heating elements
 2. *Inspect* non-central air conditioning units or evaporative coolers
 3. *Inspect* radiant, solar, hydronic, or geothermal *systems* or *components*

4. Determine volume, uniformity, temperature, airflow, balance, or leakage of any air distribution system
5. Inspect electronic air filtering or humidity control systems or components

SECTION 8 - Building Interior

- A. Items to be inspected:
 1. Walls, ceilings, and floors
 2. Doors and windows
 3. Stairways, handrails, and guardrails
 4. Permanently installed cabinets
 5. Permanently installed cook-tops, mechanical range vents, ovens, dishwashers, and food waste disposals
 6. Absence of smoke and carbon monoxide alarms
 7. Vehicle doors and openers
- B. The Inspector is not required to:
 1. Inspect window, door, or floor coverings
 2. Determine whether a building is secure from unauthorized entry
 3. Operate, test or determine the type of smoke or carbon monoxide alarms or test vehicle door safety devices
 4. Use a ladder to inspect systems or components

SECTION 9 - Fireplaces and Chimneys

- A. Items to be inspected:
 1. Chimney exterior
 2. Spark arrestor
 3. Firebox
 4. Damper
 5. Hearth extension
- B. The Inspector is not required to:
 1. Inspect chimney interiors
 2. Inspect fireplace inserts, seals, or gaskets
 3. Operate any fireplace or determine if a fireplace can be safely used

Part III. Limitations, Exceptions, and Exclusions

- A. The following are excluded from a home inspection:
 1. Systems or components of a building, or portions thereof, which are not readily accessible, not permanently installed, or not inspected due to circumstances beyond the control of the Inspector or which the Client has agreed or specified are not to be inspected
 2. Site improvements or amenities, including, but not limited to; accessory buildings, fences, planters, landscaping, irrigation, swimming pools, spas, ponds, waterfalls, fountains or their components or accessories
 3. Auxiliary features of appliances beyond the appliance's basic function
 4. Systems or components, or portions thereof, which are under ground, under water, or where the Inspector must come into contact with water
 5. Common areas as defined in California Civil Code section 1351, et seq., and any dwelling unit systems or components located in common areas
 6. Determining compliance with manufacturers' installation guidelines or specifications, building codes, accessibility standards, conservation or energy standards, regulations, ordinances, easements, setbacks, covenants, or other restrictions
 7. Determining adequacy, efficiency, suitability, quality, age, or remaining life of any building, system, or component, or marketability or advisability of purchase
 8. Structural, architectural, geological, environmental, hydrological, land surveying, or soils-related examinations
 9. Acoustical or other nuisance characteristics of any system or component of a building, complex, adjoining property, or neighborhood
 10. Wood Destroying Organisms (WDO) including termites or any insect, as well as rot or any fungus, that damage wood. Under California law, only an inspector licensed by the Structural Pest Control Board is qualified or authorized to inspect for any rot or termite activity or damage. You are advised to obtain a current WDO report and must rely on that report for any potential rot or termite activity and recommendations for repair.
 11. Risks associated with events or conditions of nature including, but not limited to; geological, seismic, wildfire, and flood

12. Water testing any building, system, or component or determine leakage in shower pans, pools, spas, or any body of water
 13. Determining the integrity of hermetic seals or reflective coatings at multi-pane glazing
 14. Differentiating between original construction or subsequent additions or modifications
 15. Reviewing or interpreting information or reports from any third-party, including but not limited to; permits, disclosures, product defects, construction documents, litigation concerning the Property, recalls, or similar notices
 16. Specifying repairs/replacement procedures or estimating cost to correct
 17. Communication, computer, security, or low-voltage systems and remote, timer, sensor, or similarly controlled systems or components
 18. Fire extinguishing and suppression systems and components or determining fire resistive qualities of materials or assemblies
 19. Elevators, lifts, and dumbwaiters
 20. Lighting pilot lights or activating or operating any system, component, or appliance that is shut down, unsafe to operate, or does not respond to normal user controls
 21. Operating shutoff valves or shutting down any system or component
 22. Dismantling any system, structure or component or removing access panels other than those provided for homeowner maintenance
- B. The Inspector may, at his or her discretion:
 1. Inspect any building, system, component, appliance, or improvement not included or otherwise excluded by these Standards of Practice. Any such inspection shall comply with all other provisions of these Standards.
 2. Include photographs in the written report or take photographs for Inspector's reference without inclusion in the written report. Photographs may not be used in lieu of written documentation.

IV. Glossary of Terms

*Note: All definitions apply to derivatives of these terms when italicized in the text.

- Appliance:** An item such as an oven, dishwasher, heater, etc. which performs a specific function
- Building:** The subject of the inspection and its primary parking structure
- Component:** A part of a system, appliance, fixture, or device
- Condition:** Conspicuous state of being
- Determine:** Arrive at an opinion or conclusion pursuant to a real estate inspection
- Device:** A component designed to perform a particular task or function
- Fixture:** A plumbing or electrical component with a fixed position and function
- Function:** The normal and characteristic purpose or action of a system, component, or device
- Home Inspection:** Refer to Part I, 'Definitions and Scope', Paragraph A
- Inspect:** Refer to Part I, 'Definition and Scope', Paragraph A
- Inspector:** One who performs a home inspection
- Normal User Control:** Switch or other device that activates a system or component and is provided for use by an occupant of a building
- Operate:** Cause a system, appliance, fixture, or device to function using normal user controls
- Permanently Installed:** Fixed in place, e.g. screwed, bolted, nailed, or glued
- Primary Building:** A building that an Inspector has agreed to inspect
- Primary Parking structure:** A building for the purpose of vehicle storage associated with the primary building
- Readily Accessible:** Can be reached, entered, or viewed without difficulty, moving obstructions, or requiring any action which may harm persons or property
- Representative Number:** Example, an average of one component per area for multiple similar components such as windows, doors, and electrical outlets
- Safety Hazard:** A condition that could result in significant physical injury
- Shut Down:** Disconnected or turned off in a way so as not to respond to normal user controls
- System:** An assemblage of various components designed to function as a whole
- Technically Exhaustive:** Examination beyond the scope of a home inspection, which may require disassembly, specialized knowledge, special equipment, measuring, calculating, quantifying, testing, exploratory probing, research, or analysis



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