

1301:17-1-17            **Standards of practice.**

- (A) These Standards of Practice apply to licensed Ohio home inspectors who are providing home inspections services pursuant to Chapter 4764 of the Revised Code.
- (B) Ohio licensed home inspectors shall comply with all applicable Ohio laws and regulations.
- (C) Licensees who perform home inspections are not required to identify or disclose a property's concealed conditions, latent defects or cosmetic deficiencies that do not significantly affect a property's system or part of a system's performance for the system's intended purpose. A licensee's inspection is limited to a visual and not technically exhaustive examination of readily accessible components and systems as of the specific date and time the inspection occurred.
- (D) Any licensee who elects to operate, inspect or offer an opinion in a home inspection report regarding any of the items found in this rule that were excluded from the licensee's responsibility shall not do so in a careless or misleading manner.
- (E) A licensee is not required to determine or offer an opinion about any of the following items in a home inspection report for a property inspected:
- (1) The condition of a system or part of system installed in a property that is not readily accessible;
  - (2) The estimated remaining life of a system or part of a system;
  - (3) The adequacy or efficiency of a system or part of a system;
  - (4) The source or causes of conditions or deficiencies in the property;
  - (5) The estimated costs to correct deficiencies in the property;
  - (6) Forecasting future conditions about the property, including but not limited to, forecasting the failure of systems or parts of system in a property;
  - (7) The appropriateness or suitability of a property for any use other than for residential purposes;
  - (8) The compliance of a system or parts of a system in a property with past, present or future requirements which include but are not limited to codes, regulations, laws, ordinances, builder specifications, installation and maintenance instructions, care or use guides;
  - (9) The marketability or market value of the property;

- (10) The presence at the property of any animals, environmental hazards or substances that may be hazardous or harmful to any living being;
  - (11) The effectiveness or efficiency of any system installed at the property to control or remove any animals, environmental hazards or substances from the property;
  - (12) The estimated operating cost of a system or parts of a system;
  - (13) The sound quality or acoustical properties of a system or parts of a system;
  - (14) Soil conditions relating to geotechnical or hydrologic specialties;
  - (15) Determine or report on materials, conditions, systems or parts of systems subject to recall, litigation, or other adverse claims or conditions;
  - (16) The legality of any contract or contract term pertaining to the property.
- (F) A licensee shall not make a determination or offer an opinion regarding any of the items found in paragraph (D) of this rule if prohibited by law or regulation. A licensee shall clearly report in the inspection report those systems or parts of a system required to be inspected under these standards that were and were not operated or inspected and explain the reasons each was or was not operated or inspected.
- (G) A licensee is not required to offer as part of a licensee's home inspection services any of the following:
- (1) Performance of any acts or services contrary to law or government regulations;
  - (2) Performance of any other trade or professional services other than a home inspection;
  - (3) Evaluation of any other trade or professional services performed on the property by others;
  - (4) Offer any warranties or guarantees regarding the property inspected.
- (H) During the performance of a home inspection, a licensee is not required to operate any of the following:
- (1) Any systems or parts of a system that cannot be operated by normal operating controls or are inoperable, disabled, shut-off, or otherwise where conditions prohibit;
  - (2) Any devices designed to protect systems or parts of a system from unsafe condition including, but not limited to, automatic safety controls.

(I) A licensee is not required to enter during a home inspection any of the following:

- (1) An area of the property that in the licensee's judgment is likely to be dangerous to the licensee or to other persons or is likely to cause damage to the property, its systems or parts of its systems;
- (2) Any property crawl space or attic that, in the licensee's determination, is not readily accessible.

(J) A licensee is not required to inspect during a home inspection any of the following:

- (1) Any items underground on the property, including but not limited to, storage tanks, septic systems, underground piping and wells, whether abandoned or active;
- (2) Any items that are not installed in the property;
- (3) Any decorative items installed in the property;
- (4) Any detached structures on the property other than garages or carports;
- (5) Any common area property found in common areas for condominium or cooperative housing;
- (6) Every occurrence of multiple similar parts of a system;
- (7) Any outdoor cooking appliances.

(K) A licensee is not required to do any of the following:

- (1) Perform any procedures, operations or inspection at the property that is, in the licensee's judgment, likely to be dangerous to the licensee or to other persons or is likely to cause damage to the property, its systems or parts of its systems;
- (2) Move any items, including but not limited to, any personal property, including furniture, plants, soil, snow, or other debris;
- (3) Take apart or dismantle any property systems or parts of a system, except as required in this rule;
- (4) To adjust any devices, systems or parts of a property system, except as required by this rule;
- (5) To ignite or extinguish any fires, pilot lights, burners or other open flames that require manual ignition on any fuel-burning appliances;

(6) Probing any surfaces that could, in the licensee's professional opinion, be damaged or where no deterioration is visible or presumed to exist.

(L) During an exterior home inspection, a licensee shall inspect and report the licensee's findings related to all of the following, including any material defects:

(1) Describe exterior wall coverings, flashing, and trim;

(2) Exterior doors;

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

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

(5) Vegetation, grading, surface drainage, and retaining walls that are likely to adversely affect the building;

(6) Any adjacent or entryway walkways, patios, and driveways.

(M) A licensee is not required to inspect during an exterior home inspection or report in a home inspection report any of the following:

(1) Screening, shutters, awnings, or other similar seasonal accessories;

(2) Fences, boundary walls, or similar structures;

(3) Geological and soil conditions on the property;

(4) Any recreational facilities, including but not limited to, spas, saunas, steam baths, swimming pools or exercise, entertainment, playground or other similar equipment;

(5) Outbuildings, other than garages and carports;

(6) Seawalls, break-walls or docks;

(7) Erosion control and earth stabilization measures.

(N) A licensee shall inspect during a home inspection of the structural components of a property, when readily accessible and report on material defects in the home inspection report the licensee's findings related to all of the following:

(1) Crawl spaces or attics and the method the licensee used to inspect the crawl spaces or attics;

(2) Foundation;

(3) Floor structure;

(4) Wall structure;

(5) Ceiling structure;

(6) Roof structure.

(O) A licensee is not required to inspect during a home inspection of the structural components of a property or report in a home inspection report any of the following:

(1) Engineering or architectural analysis;

(2) Offer an opinion about the adequacy of structural systems or parts of the system;

(3) Enter crawl space areas that have less than twenty-four inches of vertical clearance between a property system and the ground or have a crawl space access with an opening smaller than sixteen inches by twenty-four inches;

(4) Navigate load-bearing systems or beams in the attic space of a property that are concealed by insulation or by other materials.

(P) A licensee shall inspect a property's roof during a home inspection and report on material defects in the home inspection report the licensee's findings related to all of the following:

(1) Roofing materials;

(2) Roof drainage system;

(3) Flashing;

(4) Skylights, chimneys or any roof penetrations; and

(5) The method the licensee used to inspect the roof.

(O) A licensee is not required to inspect during a home inspection or report in a home inspection report any of the following as it relates to a property's roof:

(1) Antennae;

(2) Interior vent systems, flues, or chimneys that are not readily accessible; and

(3) Any other installed accessories.

(R) A licensee shall inspect a property's plumbing during a home inspection and report on material defects in the home inspection report the licensee's findings related to all of the following:

(1) Interior water supply and distribution systems, including any fixtures or faucets;

(2) Interior drain, waste, or venting system, including fixtures;

(3) Any water heating equipment and hot water supply systems;

(4) Vent systems, flues or chimneys;

(5) Fuel storage or fuel distribution systems;

(6) Readily accessible sewage ejectors, sump pumps, or other related piping;

(7) Report in the home inspection report the energy source(s) utilized and the location of main water and fuel shut-off valves.

(S) A licensee is not required to inspect during a home inspection or report in a home inspection report any of the following as it relates to a property's plumbing:

(1) Clothes washing machine connections;

(2) Interiors of vent systems, flues or chimneys that are not readily accessible;

(3) Wells, well pumps or other water storage related equipment;

(4) Water conditioning systems;

(5) Any solar, geothermal, and other renewable energy water heating systems;

(6) Manual or automatic fire extinguishing and sprinkler systems;

(7) Landscaping irrigation systems;

(8) Concealed or otherwise inaccessible sewage ejectors, sump pumps and septic or other sewage disposal system;

(9) Sewage disposal and water supply; whether the system is public or private, the quality of the water, including supply flow, pressure or quantity or the adequacy of combustion air components.

(10) Licensees are also not required to fill shower pans or fixtures for the purpose of testing for water leaks.

(T) A licensee shall inspect a property's readily accessible components of the electrical system during a home inspection and report in the home inspection report the licensee's findings related to all of the following:

(1) Service drop;

(2) Service entrance conductors, cables and raceways;

(3) Service equipment and main disconnects;

(4) Service grounding;

(5) Interior parts or components of a service panels and subpanels;

(6) Conductors;

(7) Overcurrent protection devices;

(8) A representative sample of installed light fixtures, switches and receptacles;

(9) Ground fault circuit interrupters and arc fault circuit interrupters.

(10) Licensees shall report in the home inspection report the property's amperage rating service, the location of main disconnects and subpanels, the presence or absence of any smoke or carbon monoxide alarms and the predominant branch of circuit wiring method.

(U) A licensee is not required to inspect during a home inspection or report in a home inspection report any of the following as it relates to a property's electrical system:

(1) Remote control devices;

(2) Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, security systems and other signaling and warning devices;

(3) Low voltage wiring systems, components or parts of a system;

(4) Ancillary wiring systems, components or parts of a system that are not a part of the primary electrical power distribution system;

(5) Solar, geothermal, wind, and other renewable energy systems;

- (6) Licensees are not required to measure the amperage, voltage or impedance or determine the age or type of smoke or carbon monoxide alarm;
- (7) Test ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI) or arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCI);
- (8) Test disconnects or breakers.
- (V) A licensee shall inspect the heating system(s) and observe operation during a home inspection and report in the home inspection report the licensee's findings related to all of the following:

  - (1) Installed heating equipment;
  - (2) Vent systems, flues and chimneys;
  - (3) Distribution systems;
  - (4) Describe the energy source and heating systems.
- (W) A licensee is not required to inspect or operate during a home inspection or report in a home inspection report any of the following as it relates to a property's heating system:

  - (1) Interiors of vent or duct systems, flues and chimneys that are not readily accessible;
  - (2) Heat exchangers;
  - (3) Humidifiers, dehumidifiers and condensation pumps;
  - (4) Electric air cleaning and sanitizing devices;
  - (5) heating systems using ground-source, water-source, solar, and renewable energy technologies;
  - (6) heat-recovery and similar whole-house mechanical ventilation systems; or
  - (7) Comment or offer an opinion regarding the adequacy of the heat supply or materials, distribution balance or the adequacy of combustion air components.
- (X) A licensee shall inspect all readily accessible the air conditioning system(s) and observe operation during a home inspection and report in the home inspection report the licensee's findings related to all of the following:

(1) Central and permanently installed cooling equipment;

(2) Distribution systems;

(3) Report the energy source(s) and cooling systems.

(Y) A licensee is not required to inspect, report or operate any of the following as it relates to a property's cooling system:

(1) Electric air cleaning and sanitizing devices;

(2) Cooling units that are not permanently installed or that are installed in windows;

(3) Cooling systems using ground-source, water-source, solar, and renewable energy technologies.

(4) Adequacy of cooling supply, materials used and distribution balance.

(Z) A licensee shall inspect all readily accessible interior areas of a property during a home inspection and report in the home inspection report the licensee's findings related to all of the following:

(1) Walls, ceilings and floors;

(2) Steps, stairways and railings;

(3) Countertops and a representative sample of installed cabinets;

(4) A representative sample of doors and windows;

(5) Garage vehicle doors and garage vehicle door operations;

(6) Installed appliances, including but not limited to, ovens, ranges, surface cooking appliances, microwave ovens, dishwashing machines, and food waste grinders by using normal operating controls to activate the primary function.

(AA) A licensee is not required to inspect during a home inspection or report in a home inspection report any of the following as it relates to a property's:

(1) Paint, wallpaper, and other finish treatments;

(2) Personal floor coverings;

(3) Window treatments;

- (4) Coatings on and the hermetic seals between panes of window glass;
- (5) Central vacuum systems;
- (6) Shared or common recreational facilities;
- (7) Free-standing household appliances not listed in paragraph Z(6) of the rule;
- (8) Appliance thermostats including their calibration, adequacy of heating elements, self-cleaning oven cycles, indicator lights, door seals, timers, clocks, timing features and other specialized features of the appliance;
- (9) The operation of every control and feature of an inspected appliance.
- (BB) A licensee shall inspect insulation and ventilation in a property during a home inspection and report in the home inspection report the licensee's findings related to all of the following:

  - (1) Insulation and vapor retarders in unfinished spaces or the absence of insulation and vapor retarders in unfinished spaces at conditioned surfaces;
  - (2) Ventilation of attics and foundation areas;
  - (3) Exhaust systems found in the property, including but not limited to exhaust systems in the kitchen, bathroom or laundry room;
  - (4) Clothes dryer exhaust systems.
- (CC) The licensee is not required to disturb insulation or ventilation during a home inspection.
- (DD) A licensee shall inspect all readily accessible parts of a fireplace or fuel-burning appliances in a property during a home inspection and report in the home inspection report the licensee's findings related to all of the following:

  - (1) Fuel-burning fireplaces, stoves, and fireplace inserts;
  - (2) Any fuel-burning accessories installed in fireplaces;
  - (3) Chimneys, flues and vent systems.
- (EE) A licensee is not required to inspect during a home inspection or report in a home inspection report any of the following as it relates to a property's fireplace or fuel-burning appliances:

- (1) Fire screens and doors;
- (2) Seals and gaskets;
- (3) Automatic fuel feed devices;
- (4) Mantles and fireplace surrounds;
- (5) Combustion air components in order to determine their adequacy;
- (6) Heat distribution assistance items;
- (7) Fuel-burning fireplaces or appliances located outside the inspected structures;
- (8) Determining draft characteristics.

Effective:

Five Year Review (FYR) Dates:

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Certification

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Date

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