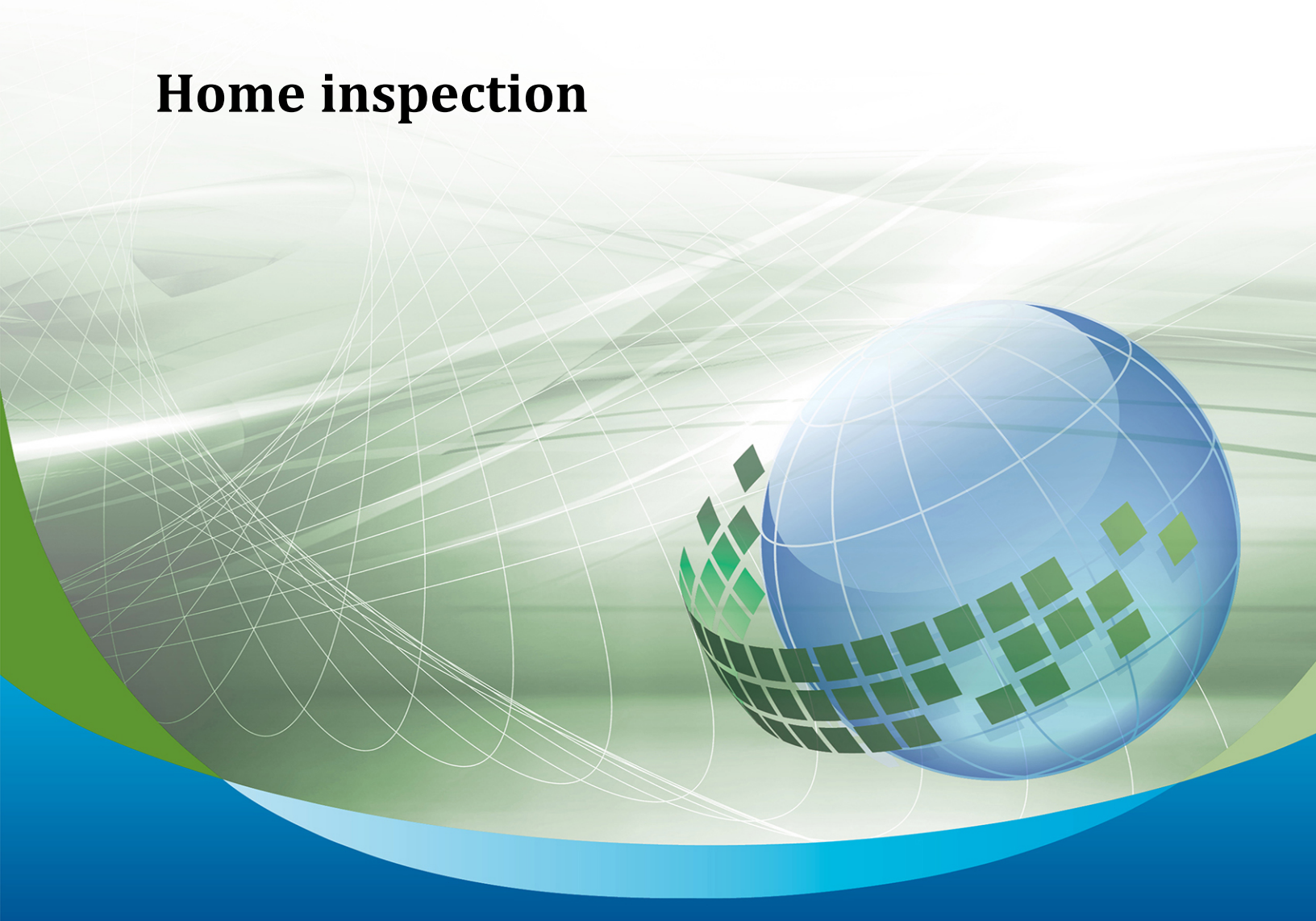




**CSA
Group**

CAN/CSA-A770-16
National Standard of Canada
(approved March 2016)

Home inspection



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*National Standard of Canada
(approved March 2016)*

CAN/CSA-A770-16
Home inspection

Prepared by



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Contents

Technical Committee on Home Inspection 4

Preface 7

0 Introduction 8

0.1 General 8

0.2 Users 8

0.3 Application 8

0.4 Home inspections 8

0.5 Guidance to users 8

1 Scope 9

1.1 General 9

1.2 Application 9

1.3 Exclusions 9

1.4 Terminology 10

2 Reference publications 10

3 Definitions and abbreviations 10

3.1 Definitions 10

3.2 Abbreviations 11

4 General inspection requirements 11

4.1 Scope of inspection 11

4.1.1 Systems and components 11

4.1.2 Detached buildings 12

4.1.3 Readily accessible items 12

4.1.4 Exclusions 12

4.2 Methods of inspection 12

4.2.1 General 12

4.2.2 Methods 12

4.2.3 Representative sample 13

4.2.4 Equipment and tools 13

4.3 Reports 13

4.3.1 General 13

4.3.2 Formats 13

4.3.3 Report contents 13

4.3.4 Summary of findings 14

4.3.5 Inherent limitations 14

5 Inspection 14

5.1 General 14

5.2 Site 15

5.2.1 Driveways, walkways, on-ground ramps, porches, patios, decks, and balconies 15

5.2.2 Fences 15

5.2.3 Exterior stairs 15

| | | |
|--------|---|----|
| 5.2.4 | Retaining walls and constructed planters | 15 |
| 5.2.5 | Site drainage and grading | 15 |
| 5.3 | Structure | 15 |
| 5.3.1 | General | 15 |
| 5.3.2 | Foundations | 15 |
| 5.3.3 | Concrete slab on ground/grade | 16 |
| 5.3.4 | Floor structure | 16 |
| 5.3.5 | Wall structure | 16 |
| 5.3.6 | Roof structure | 16 |
| 5.3.7 | Interior guards and handrails | 16 |
| 5.3.8 | Interior stairs | 16 |
| 5.4 | Building envelope | 16 |
| 5.4.1 | Exterior walls | 16 |
| 5.4.2 | Decks, balconies, pergolas, trellises, and similar structures | 17 |
| 5.4.3 | Exterior guards and handrails | 17 |
| 5.4.4 | Exterior doors | 17 |
| 5.4.5 | Garage doors and openers | 17 |
| 5.4.6 | Exterior windows and skylights | 17 |
| 5.4.7 | Roof and attic | 17 |
| 5.4.8 | Soffit, fascia, and trim | 18 |
| 5.4.9 | Gutters and downspouts | 18 |
| 5.4.10 | Insulation, air barrier, and vapour barrier | 18 |
| 5.5 | Plumbing systems | 18 |
| 5.5.1 | Potable water supply and distribution | 18 |
| 5.5.2 | Non-potable water reuse supply and distribution | 18 |
| 5.5.3 | Domestic water heaters | 18 |
| 5.5.4 | Plumbing fittings and fixtures and bath and shower enclosing surfaces | 19 |
| 5.5.5 | Interior sanitary drainage systems | 19 |
| 5.5.6 | Storm drainage systems | 19 |
| 5.5.7 | Non-potable water discharge systems | 19 |
| 5.5.8 | Automatic irrigation systems | 19 |
| 5.6 | Heating, cooling, and mechanical ventilation systems | 19 |
| 5.6.1 | Heating and cooling systems | 19 |
| 5.6.2 | Mechanical ventilation systems | 20 |
| 5.6.3 | Fireplaces and chimneys | 20 |
| 5.7 | Electrical systems | 20 |
| 5.7.1 | Electrical service, main disconnect, and earth grounding system | 20 |
| 5.7.2 | Distribution panels | 20 |
| 5.7.3 | Distribution wiring and circuitry | 20 |
| 5.7.4 | Lighting, switches, receptacles, and junction boxes | 20 |
| 5.7.5 | Auxiliary and other electrical systems | 21 |
| 5.8 | Life safety systems | 21 |
| 5.8.1 | Carbon monoxide detection | 21 |
| 5.8.2 | Smoke and heat detection | 21 |
| 5.8.3 | Fire separation and egress | 21 |
| 5.9 | Interior finishes and built-in or attached furnishings | 22 |
| 5.9.1 | Floors, walls, ceilings, interior doors, glazing, and trim | 22 |
| 5.9.2 | Attached cabinetry and countertops and built-in or attached furnishings | 22 |
| 5.10 | Swimming pool areas | 22 |

5.11 Accessibility equipment 22

Annex A (informative) — Commentary 23

Technical Committee on Home Inspection

| | | |
|-------------------|---|-------------------|
| G. Yates | Ministry of Service Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta <i>Category: Regulatory Authority</i> | <i>Chair</i> |
| R. Guinn | Oro-Medonte, Ontario <i>Category: User Interest</i> | <i>Vice-Chair</i> |
| D. Aylward | Nunavut Department of Community and Government Services, Iqaluit, Nunavut <i>Category: Regulatory Authority</i> | |
| D. Babott | Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT), Calgary, Alberta <i>Category: General Interest</i> | |
| M. Barnes | Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, Ottawa, Ontario <i>Category: Regulatory Authority</i> | |
| R. Brady | Consumer Advisory Council for Technical Standards & Safety Authority (TSSA), Mississauga, Ontario <i>Category: User Interest</i> | |
| A. Carson | Carson Dunlop & Associates Ltd., Toronto, Ontario <i>Category: Home Inspection</i> | |
| G. Clarke | Clarke Engineering, Ajax, Ontario <i>Category: Home Inspection</i> | |
| J. Eakes | Interface Productions, Longueuil, Québec <i>Category: General Interest</i> | |
| G.R. Genge | GRG Building Consultants, Newmarket, Ontario <i>Category: General Interest</i> | |

| | | |
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| R. Hanberg | Yukon Housing Corporation, Whitehorse, Yukon <i>Category: Regulatory Authority</i> | |
| N. Hanna | Electrical Safety Authority (ESA), Mississauga, Ontario <i>Category: Regulatory Authority</i> | |
| S. Hood | Ministry of Service Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta | <i>Associate</i> |
| J.A. Huzar | Consumers Council of Canada, Victoria, British Columbia <i>Category: User Interest</i> | |
| R. Jobin | First Nations National Building Officers Association (FNNBOA), Legal, Alberta <i>Category: General Interest</i> | |
| D. Kendall | Professional Home & Property Inspectors of Canada (PHPIC), Kanata, Ontario <i>Category: Home Inspection</i> | |
| G.R. Larin | International Association of Certified Home Inspectors (InterNACHI) Québec, St-Hubert, Québec <i>Category: Home Inspection</i> | |
| L. Leyser | Re/max a-b Realty Ltd., Stratford, Ontario <i>Category: General Interest</i> | |
| M. Lio | Homeowner Protection Centre, Toronto, Ontario <i>Category: User Interest</i> | |
| J. Londerville | University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario <i>Category: User Interest</i> | |
| D. Mah | Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT), Edmonton, Alberta <i>Category: General Interest</i> | |

| | | |
|-------------------------|--|------------------------|
| J. Mills | John Mills & Associates, Airdrie, Alberta <i>Category: Home Inspection</i> | |
| B. Mullen | National Home Inspection Certification Council (NHICC), Sarnia, Ontario | <i>Associate</i> |
| P. Sayne | Know Your Home Inspections Inc., Minden, Ontario <i>Category: Home Inspection</i> | |
| K. Smith | HUB International Ontario Limited, Oakville, Ontario <i>Category: General Interest</i> | |
| B. Swan | Canadian Association of Home and Property Inspectors (CAHPI), Truro, Nova Scotia | <i>Associate</i> |
| J. Urquhart | National Research Council Canada, Ottawa, Ontario | <i>Associate</i> |
| T. Welby-Solomon | Pillar To Post Inc., Toronto, Ontario <i>Category: Home Inspection</i> | |
| M. Wellsch | Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice, Regina, Saskatchewan <i>Category: Regulatory Authority</i> | |
| J. Wright | Canadian National Association of Certified Home Inspectors, Inc. (CanNACHI), Innisfil, Ontario <i>Category: Home Inspection</i> | |
| P. Gulletson | CSA Group, Toronto, Ontario | <i>Project Manager</i> |

Preface

This is the first edition of CAN/CSA-CSA A770, *Home inspection*.

This Standard specifies minimum requirements for a home inspection and provides information for performing an inspection on dwellings. These inspections are typically carried out on single family homes of any building configuration, often, although not necessarily, as part of a real estate transaction. This Standard provides important and practical requirements on what items are to be inspected as part of a home inspection. This Standard is not intended to provide comprehensive requirements for the methods to be used to perform a home inspection or specific conditions to look for in a home. This information would typically be available through a recognized home inspection training program.

This Standard has been developed through the collaboration of home inspectors, regulators, consumer agencies, and various technical specialists.

CSA Group acknowledges that the development of this Standard was made possible, in part, by the financial support of Service Alberta, British Columbia Office of Housing and Construction Standards, Manitoba Securities Commission, Ontario Ministry of Government and Consumer Services, and Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan.

This Standard was prepared by the Technical Committee on Home Inspection under the jurisdiction of the Strategic Steering Committee on Construction and Civil Infrastructure, and has been formally approved by the Technical Committee. This Standard has been approved as a National Standard of Canada by the Standards Council of Canada.

Notes:

- 1) *Use of the singular does not exclude the plural (and vice versa) when the sense allows.*
- 2) *Although the intended primary application of this Standard is stated in its Scope, it is important to note that it remains the responsibility of the users of the Standard to judge its suitability for their particular purpose.*
- 3) *This Standard was developed by consensus, which is defined by CSA Policy governing standardization — Code of good practice for standardization as “substantial agreement. Consensus implies much more than a simple majority, but not necessarily unanimity”. It is consistent with this definition that a member may be included in the Technical Committee list and yet not be in full agreement with all clauses of this Standard.*
- 4) *To submit a request for interpretation of this Standard, please send the following information to inquiries@csagroup.org and include “Request for interpretation” in the subject line:*
 - a) *define the problem, making reference to the specific clause, and, where appropriate, include an illustrative sketch;*
 - b) *provide an explanation of circumstances surrounding the actual field condition; and*
 - c) *where possible, phrase the request in such a way that a specific “yes” or “no” answer will address the issue.*

Committee interpretations are processed in accordance with the CSA Directives and guidelines governing standardization and are available on the Current Standards Activities page at standardsactivities.csa.ca.

- 5) *This Standard is subject to review five years from the date of publication. Suggestions for its improvement will be referred to the appropriate committee. To submit a proposal for change, please send the following information to inquiries@csagroup.org and include “Proposal for change” in the subject line:*
 - a) *Standard designation (number);*
 - b) *relevant clause, table, and/or figure number;*
 - c) *wording of the proposed change; and*
 - d) *rationale for the change.*

CAN/CSA-A770-16

Home inspection

0 Introduction

0.1 General

The intent of this Standard is to establish the requirements for the physical inspection of dwellings. This Standard is intended to provide a basis for the expectations of parties who have a stake in the home inspection. Some clients might wish to obtain an enhanced level of assessment of the home and property beyond the scope of this Standard.

0.2 Users

This Standard is intended to be used by home inspectors who are performing inspections, typically conducted as part of a real estate transaction. It may also be used by other individuals and organizations to better understand the scope of work covered by a home inspection conducted in accordance with this Standard.

0.3 Application

This Standard is primarily used to establish minimum requirements for a home inspection for

- a) clients who are purchasing or selling a home; and
- b) other purposes for which the inspector or client chooses to apply this Standard.

0.4 Home inspections

A home inspection is intended to be a non-invasive evaluation of the condition and performance of systems and components of a home. The primary objective is to identify and report any items that do not perform their intended function. The focus of a home inspection is typically on significant issues that are readily visible to the inspector as opposed to minor building deficiencies. Inspection of cosmetic, maintenance, and other non-critical items are typically not part of a home inspection. Home inspections in accordance with this Standard are not intended to verify a home's compliance to codes and regulations (e.g., building codes).

Home inspectors might wish to provide additional services beyond the requirements of this Standard if they are qualified and competent to do so. Any additional service to be provided that is beyond the scope and requirements of this Standard should be made clear to the client, e.g., through a contractual agreement.

0.5 Guidance to users

This Standard is organized into two main parts: the main body of the standard, which contains the mandatory requirements for home inspections, and Annex A, which contains non-mandatory commentary for the user.

Clause 4 contains the general requirements that apply to all home inspections. This Clause is intended to frame the inspection for the user as it specifies the general requirements for the scope of the inspection, methods of inspection, and reporting. Particular attention should be given to Clause 4.3.3.2 as this Clause states the general conditions to be examined for during inspection of any given system or component that is covered in Clause 5.

Clause 5 covers the systems and components that are to be inspected at minimum. Specific inspection requirements, including key conditions that are to be examined for, are given throughout Clause 5 where these are considered critical to a minimum inspection. It is important to note that, aside from any specific inspection requirements given in Clause 5, the user must bear in mind the overall reporting objectives of Clause 4.3, and especially the conditions to be identified in Clause 4.3.3.2, while carrying out inspection of a given system or component.

Annex A is informative (i.e., non-mandatory). It is intended to provide the user with additional information and commentary that might be useful for understanding the requirements of this Standard and conducting a home inspection.

1 Scope

1.1 General

This Standard specifies requirements for the physical inspection of dwellings, including

- a) the systems and components in and around a home that are to be inspected as part of a home inspection;
- b) the minimum extent to which a home is required to be inspected;
- c) general methods to be used for
 - i) the examination and assessment of building components and systems at the time of the inspection; and
 - ii) non-invasive inspection and testing; and
- d) minimum reporting requirements.

1.2 Application

This Standard applies to both site-built and factory-built (i.e., prefabricated) dwellings including, but not limited to, all or part of

- a) detached and semi-detached dwellings;
- b) townhouses; and
- c) duplexes, triplexes, and other dwellings in multi-unit buildings.

Notes:

- 1) *Dwellings in multi-unit buildings can be owned (e.g., as in a freehold, condominium unit, strata unit, or co-op) or rented by the occupants.*
- 2) *In this Standard, a condominium unit, strata unit, or co-op does not include portions of the building owned in common with other owners. These items may also be included in an inspection and employ this Standard by contractual agreement (see Annex A).*
- 3) *Although this Standard is for the inspection of the dwelling and associated property, some properties can include one or more ancillary buildings or structures. These may also be included in an inspection and employ this Standard by contractual agreement.*

1.3 Exclusions

This Standard does not apply to

- a) qualification, competency, or certification of individuals conducting a home inspection;
- b) inspection of industrial, commercial, or institutional buildings; or
- c) common elements in condominiums, strata plans, etc.

Note: *Common elements in condominiums, strata plans etc., may be included in an inspection by contractual agreement and employ this Standard (see Annex A).*

1.4 Terminology

1.4.1

In this Standard, “shall” is used to express a requirement, i.e., a provision that the user is obliged to satisfy in order to comply with the Standard; “should” is used to express a recommendation or that which is advised but not required; and “may” is used to express an option or that which is permissible within the limits of the Standard.

Notes accompanying clauses do not include requirements or alternative requirements; the purpose of a note accompanying a clause is to separate from the text explanatory or informative material.

Notes to tables and figures are considered part of the table or figure and may be written as requirements.

Annexes are designated normative (mandatory) or informative (non-mandatory) to define their application.

1.4.2

In this Standard, the terms “as/where appropriate” and “where/if/as applicable” are used. When a requirement is qualified by one of these terms, it is deemed to be appropriate or applicable, as the case might be, unless the organization or individual can document a justification otherwise.

2 Reference publications

This Standard refers to the following publication, and where such reference is made, it shall be to the edition listed below.

CSA Group
Z240 MH Series-16
Manufactured homes

3 Definitions and abbreviations

3.1 Definitions

The following definitions shall apply in this Standard:

Accessible — available for unobstructed viewing, touching, examination, or operation through normal user operated controls without the need to dismantle, climb, move objects, or any other action that could result in damage to property or injury to people.

Component — a physical part that comprises part of a home’s system (e.g., a floor beam is a component of the overall floor system).

Condominium unit — an individually registered property that is subject to articles of incorporation or bylaws as well as provincial or territorial laws or local bylaws that define the unit boundaries and the components of the property that are the sole responsibility of a unit owner.

Note: *Also referred to as a strata unit.*

Guard — a protective barrier, with or without openings through it, that is around openings in floors or at the open sides of stairs, landings, balconies, mezzanines, galleries, raised walkways, or other locations to prevent accidental falls from one level to another.

Home inspector — a consultant who is a generalist with broad skills and knowledge of the residential built environment and engaged to determine the condition of the systems and components of a home at the time of the inspection in accordance with this Standard, and to provide recommendations to the client for further action, remediation, or improvement, where appropriate.

Non-invasive — not causing disturbance or damage upon inspection.

Normal operating control — the operation of a system or component in the same manner that a homeowner would be expected to (e.g., adjusting a thermostat or turning on a light switch).

Operation — use of normal operating controls.

Permanently installed — items that are fixtures and not intended to be moved to another location, and items that are considered essential for a home to function.

Probing — inspection of an item by hand or by using a tool to determine condition and performance.

Representative sample — an unbiased subset that accurately reflects the whole.

System — an overall set of material components used together to perform a particular function in a home.

Townhouse — an individually owned dwelling with its own entrance and exit that is similar to several adjacent dwellings in a multi-unit structure whose units are connected by common walls.

Notes:

- 1) *Townhouses often have multiple floors and comprise a continuous foundation and roof across the structure, but can also have individual facades, staggered setbacks, and variations in height and yard size.*
- 2) *Also known as a row house or town home.*

Weathertightness — proof against wind and rain.

3.2 Abbreviations

The following abbreviations shall apply in this Standard:

PCB — polychlorinated biphenyl

HVAC — heating, ventilation, air conditioning

4 General inspection requirements

4.1 Scope of inspection

4.1.1 Systems and components

Inspection shall be conducted on all permanently installed systems and components of the home as given in Clause 5.

4.1.2 Detached buildings

Where inspection of detached buildings is required by the authority having jurisdiction or included by contractual agreement, the detached buildings shall be inspected to the same requirements as the primary structure in accordance with this Standard.

4.1.3 Readily accessible items

Inspections are not required on systems and components that are blocked (e.g., by furniture, carpeting, stored items, or other items) or are otherwise not readily accessible to a visual inspection, except as explicitly required in this Standard.

4.1.4 Exclusions

The following activities are not required for a home inspection as given in this Standard:

- a) predicting the probability of failure or remaining service life of any system or component;
- b) determining the causes of conditions identified;
- c) determining the method for remediation of conditions identified;
- d) estimating costs or providing quotes for remediation of conditions identified;
- e) advising on the suitability of the building, component, or system for a particular use;
- f) advising on purchase or suitability for the client;
- g) predicting operating costs associated with a system, component, or the building;
- h) identifying hidden or not visually apparent infestations of vermin, including wood destroying organisms;
- i) identifying hidden or not visually apparent hazardous items (e.g., asbestos, mould, PCB);
- j) identifying underground components (e.g., oil tanks, septic fields, underground drainage systems);
- k) making judgements about the aesthetics or quality of finishes, cosmetic items, or decorative items;
- l) inspecting household appliances; and
- m) inspecting onsite water supply or sewage systems.

Note: *Identification of, commenting on, or reporting on Items a) to m) are solely at the discretion of the inspector. See also Annex A.*

4.2 Methods of inspection

4.2.1 General

Inspection of systems and components shall be conducted using methodologies and techniques appropriate for identifying the conditions specified in Clause 4.3.3.2. Sufficient information shall be obtained, evaluated, and presented to support the inspector's conclusions.

4.2.2 Methods

As appropriate, inspection methods shall be non-destructive and non-invasive. One or more of the following inspection methods shall be used, as appropriate, for each system or component and as required in Clause 5:

- a) visual inspection, including with the use of viewing tools (e.g., binoculars, magnifying photography, borescope);
- b) use of measuring tools (e.g., tape measure, laser measure, digital thermometer, electrical circuit analyzer, voltage detector, spirit level, moisture meter);
- c) use of photography;
- d) operating the item under normal operating control;
- e) testing or probing;
- f) touching or moving the item being assessed; or

g) use of sense of smell or hearing.

Note: *The inspector should perform inspections in a safe manner and in accordance with all local regulations.*

4.2.3 Representative sample

Where appropriate (e.g., where there are multiple similar components), inspection of components may be carried out on a representative sample.

4.2.4 Equipment and tools

The home inspector shall provide all equipment and tools required to conduct the home inspection.

4.3 Reports

4.3.1 General

Inspections shall be accompanied by a documented report that details all findings of the inspection. The report shall include a description of significant issues that are deemed to require attention and include information regarding potential implications if the issues are not addressed. The report shall be provided to the client within a specified time frame, e.g., in accordance with the inspection agreement.

4.3.2 Formats

Reports shall be in a format that is understandable and accessible to the client. Reports shall be printed or in electronic format, or a combination of both, and legible.

4.3.3 Report contents

4.3.3.1 Administrative information

The report shall make reference to this Standard and include the following:

- a) an inspection agreement;
- b) the name of the inspection company and provincial license numbers, if applicable;
- c) the name of the inspector(s) and provincial license numbers, if applicable;
- d) the client's name;
- e) the address of the property;
- f) the date and time of the inspection;
- g) the date and time of the re-inspection, if applicable;
- h) the general weather conditions at the time of the inspection; and
- i) an explanation of any ratings, phraseology, abbreviations, and technical terminology used in the report.

4.3.3.2 Inspection results and reported conditions

The results of the inspection shall be reported with the objective of identifying the following:

- a) items with defects, deficiencies, damage, missing components, decay, water issues, or other concerns that can impair the intended function of the item;
- b) items with inadequate performance, that have failed, or are nearing or past their intended life expectancy;
- c) items with health or safety concerns;
- d) items that are being used for other than their intended purpose, including a rationale for this determination;
- e) the current function of components in terms of overall soundness and whether or not the component is operative, installed correctly, and performing adequately;

- f) visual evidence of vermin or infestations, including wood destroying organisms;
- g) visually apparent potentially hazardous items (e.g., asbestos, mould);
- h) items that are suspected to require further investigation or analysis by a qualified person, as applicable (e.g., structural sufficiency, knob and tube wiring, buried oil tanks, asbestos, inner wall mould, pyrite, onsite water supply or sewage systems, solid fuel burning appliances, auxiliary electrical systems, accessibility equipment); and
- i) items that are missing.

The report shall provide recommendations to address the reported conditions given in this Clause.

4.3.3.3 Supporting images

Wherever possible, reports should include supporting images (e.g., photographs, sketches). Where supporting images are used, they shall be individually identified with the item name, location, any identified concerns, as well as the date taken if different from the date of the original inspection.

4.3.4 Summary of findings

The report should include a summary of the findings that the inspector deems to be a significant or immediate concern.

4.3.5 Inherent limitations

4.3.5.1 General

Inspectors shall ensure that their conclusions reflect any limitations encountered and any opinions expressed in reports shall be well supported by the findings.

Note: *Work completed in conformance with the requirements of this Standard has inherent limitations. The findings of the inspection of the home and property are based solely on the extent of observations and information gathered during the inspection.*

4.3.5.2 Systems and components not inspected

4.3.5.2.1 General

Systems or components that are not inspected in accordance with this Standard, including items covered under Clause 4.1.3, shall be reported along with the reason why the item was not inspected.

Note: *The report may also note the results of any activity performed that is outside the scope of a home inspection in accordance with Clause 4.1.4.*

4.3.5.2.2 Representative sample

Items for which a representative sample was inspected shall be reported.

5 Inspection

5.1 General

The condition and performance of the building systems and components and associated property given in Clauses 5.2 to 5.11 shall be inspected in consideration of the conditions specified in Clause 4.3.3.2. The results of the inspection shall be reported in accordance with the requirements of Clause 4.3.

5.2 Site

5.2.1 Driveways, walkways, on-ground ramps, porches, patios, decks, and balconies

Driveways, walkways, on-ground ramps, porches, patios, decks, and balconies shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) rot;
- b) damage;
- c) movement; and
- d) deficiencies in support or attachment.

5.2.2 Fences

Fences and associated components (e.g., posts, rails, panels, pickets) shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) rot;
- b) damage; and
- c) instability.

5.2.3 Exterior stairs

Exterior stair systems shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for trip or fall hazards.

5.2.4 Retaining walls and constructed planters

Retaining walls and constructed planters shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to,

- a) an examination of framing and structural support components for
 - i) rot;
 - ii) damage;
 - iii) movement; and
 - iv) structural instability; and
- b) an examination for evidence of water ingress to the building.

5.2.5 Site drainage and grading

Site drainage and grading shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination of the drainage characteristics of the grounds associated with the home for evidence of water issues.

5.3 Structure

5.3.1 General

Inspection of the structural components shall cover all areas of the primary occupancy including, but not limited to, attached garages and storage areas, and enclosed porches, verandas, foundations, and sunrooms.

5.3.2 Foundations

Foundations shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) damage;
- b) movement; and
- c) evidence of water issues.

5.3.3 Concrete slab on ground/grade

Concrete slab on ground/grade shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) damage;
- b) movement; and
- c) evidence of water issues.

5.3.4 Floor structure

Floor structures shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination of the interior floor system for

- a) abnormal deflection;
- b) sponginess; and
- c) trip or fall hazards.

5.3.5 Wall structure

Wall structures shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) weathertightness; and
- b) abnormal deflection.

5.3.6 Roof structure

Roof structures shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) weathertightness; and
- b) abnormal deflection.

5.3.7 Interior guards and handrails

Interior guards and handrails shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to,

- a) an assessment as to whether
 - i) guards and handrails are absent where needed; and
 - ii) the height and configuration of guards and handrails is appropriate; and
- b) an examination for
 - i) deficiencies in stability; and
 - ii) deficiencies in the security of connections.

5.3.8 Interior stairs

Interior stair systems shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for trip or fall hazards.

5.4 Building envelope

5.4.1 Exterior walls

Exterior walls shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination of the exterior cladding system for

- a) rot;
- b) damage;
- c) deficiencies in securement; and
- d) weathertightness.

5.4.2 Decks, balconies, pergolas, trellises, and similar structures

Decks, balconies, pergolas, trellises, and other similar structures that are adjacent or attached to the primary occupancy shall be inspected, including the roof protection system, if applicable. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to,

- a) an examination of the structural elements and connections, including the attachment to the building if applicable, for
 - i) rot;
 - ii) damage;
 - iii) movement; and
 - iv) deficiencies in support; and
- b) an examination for improper drainage.

5.4.3 Exterior guards and handrails

Exterior guards and handrails shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to,

- a) an assessment as to whether
 - i) guards and handrails are absent where needed; and
 - ii) the height and configuration of guards and handrails is appropriate; and
- b) an examination for
 - i) deficiencies in stability; and
 - ii) deficiencies in the security of connections.

5.4.4 Exterior doors

Exterior doors shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) weathertightness;
- b) security issues; and
- c) improper operation.

5.4.5 Garage doors and openers

Garage doors and openers shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) safety issues; and
- b) improper operation.

5.4.6 Exterior windows and skylights

Exterior windows and skylights shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) weathertightness;
- b) security issues; and
- c) improper operation.

5.4.7 Roof and attic

Roofing, roof penetrations, roof flashings, and attic ventilation shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) ventilation deficiencies;
- b) weathertightness; and
- c) improper termination of the ducting and venting for appliances and plumbing systems that pass through the attic space.

5.4.8 Soffit, fascia, and trim

Soffit, fascia, and trim shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) rot;
- b) damage; and
- c) deficiencies in attachment.

5.4.9 Gutters and downspouts

Gutters and downspouts, including extensions, shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) improper water control and discharge;
- b) rust;
- c) damage; and
- d) deficiencies in support or attachment.

5.4.10 Insulation, air barrier, and vapour barrier

Insulation, air barrier, and vapour barrier shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) deficiencies in the amount and location of insulation; and
- b) deficiencies in the location of the air barrier and vapour barrier, or identification of the absence of these items.

Note: *Inspection of insulation, air barrier, vapour barrier, and other similar components should only be carried out where these items are visible and readily accessible.*

5.5 Plumbing systems

5.5.1 Potable water supply and distribution

Potable water supply and distribution systems shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) evidence of leaks;
- b) deficiencies in flow;
- c) deficiencies in pressure; and
- d) deficiencies in piping materials.

5.5.2 Non-potable water reuse supply and distribution

Non-potable water reuse supply and distribution systems shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) evidence of leaks;
- b) deficiencies in flow;
- c) deficiencies in pressure; and
- d) deficiencies in piping materials.

Note: *Non-potable water systems are also known as grey water systems.*

5.5.3 Domestic water heaters

Domestic water heaters shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) evidence of leaks;
- b) improper function; and

- c) safety issues.

Note: *Units in a condominium style building might have a common hot water supply. The inspector might not necessarily have access to the domestic hot water supply equipment or storage tank in a condominium unit whether owned in common or considered part of the unit.*

5.5.4 Plumbing fittings and fixtures and bath and shower enclosing surfaces

Plumbing fittings and fixtures and bath and shower enclosing surfaces shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) evidence of leaks;
- b) improper function;
- c) damage; and
- d) deficiencies in the security of connections.

5.5.5 Interior sanitary drainage systems

Interior sanitary drainage systems shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) evidence of leaks;
- b) improper function; and
- c) deficiencies in materials.

5.5.6 Storm drainage systems

Storm drainage systems, including sump pumps, shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) evidence of leaks;
- b) improper function; and
- c) deficiencies in materials.

5.5.7 Non-potable water discharge systems

Non-potable water discharge systems shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) evidence of leaks;
- b) improper function; and
- c) deficiencies in materials.

Note: *Non-potable water systems are also known as grey water systems.*

5.5.8 Automatic irrigation systems

Automatic irrigation systems shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for the absence of a water cross-connection control device (e.g., a backflow preventer).

5.6 Heating, cooling, and mechanical ventilation systems

5.6.1 Heating and cooling systems

Heating and cooling systems shall be inspected. The inspection shall cover the fuel system, heat transfer system, venting system, and distribution system. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) improper function; and

- b) safety issues.

Notes:

- 1) *Inspectors should note in the report that the inspection of heating equipment as required by this Standard is not a comprehensive examination of the system and does not replace review and maintenance by a licensed professional HVAC practitioner.*
- 2) *Inspection of supplementary systems, including solar hot water and ground- and water-source heat pumps, etc., might require special training. Inspectors should identify where a supplementary system is present.*
- 3) *Operation of heating and cooling equipment should only be done if damage to the equipment can be avoided. For example, there could be a risk of damage to the compressor if cooling systems are tested when the exterior temperature is less than 16 °C.*

5.6.2 Mechanical ventilation systems

Mechanical ventilation systems shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) improper function; and
- b) inappropriate location of equipment.

5.6.3 Fireplaces and chimneys

Fireplaces and chimneys shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) damage;
- b) improper function; and
- c) safety issues.

Note: *Due to limitations of the inspection, it is not typically possible to inspect the flue.*

5.7 Electrical systems

5.7.1 Electrical service, main disconnect, and earth grounding system

The electrical service, main disconnect, and earth grounding system shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) improper location of equipment;
- b) inadequate service capacity; and
- c) safety issues.

5.7.2 Distribution panels

Distribution panels shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) improper location of equipment; and
- b) safety issues.

5.7.3 Distribution wiring and circuitry

Distribution wiring and circuitry shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for safety issues, including improper wire type.

5.7.4 Lighting, switches, receptacles, and junction boxes

Lighting, switches, receptacles, and junction boxes, including in each room, attached garage, and the exterior, shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) improper location;

- b) improper function;
- c) the absence of necessary equipment;
- d) non-functional lighting, ceiling fans, and switches;
- e) inappropriate switch locations; and
- f) safety issues.

5.7.5 Auxiliary and other electrical systems

Where auxiliary electrical systems are present (e.g., solar power, wind power, battery power, generators, pool or spa electrical systems), they should be reported. A recommendation should be made that this equipment be examined by a qualified person.

5.8 Life safety systems

5.8.1 Carbon monoxide detection

Carbon monoxide detectors shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) improper location;
- b) the rated life of detectors (e.g., by identifying date markings); and
- c) the absence of detectors where they are needed.

Notes:

- 1) *Inspectors should note that carbon monoxide (CO) detectors are typically removable equipment and that the manufacturer's recommendations should be followed for the installation and use of detectors (e.g., in regards to installed location, testing procedures, and replacement).*
- 2) *For monitored life safety systems, the inspector should make a recommendation to contact the monitoring company regarding inspection of the system.*

5.8.2 Smoke and heat detection

Smoke and heat detectors shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) improper location;
- b) the rated life of detectors (e.g., by identifying date markings); and
- c) the absence of detectors where they are needed.

Notes:

- 1) *Inspectors should note that smoke and heat detectors are typically removable equipment and that the manufacturer's recommendations should be followed for the installation and use of detectors (e.g., in regards to installed location, testing procedures, and replacement).*
- 2) *For monitored life safety systems, the inspector should make a recommendation to contact the monitoring company regarding inspection of the system.*

5.8.3 Fire separation and egress

5.8.3.1 Fire separation in attached garages or other attached buildings or dwellings

Fire separation in attached garages or other attached buildings or dwellings shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) improper location;
- b) improper type;
- c) improper function; and
- d) the absence of separations where needed.

5.8.3.2 Fire egress from bedrooms

Fire egress from bedrooms shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) improper function;
- b) inappropriate size; and
- c) the absence of egress where needed.

5.9 Interior finishes and built-in or attached furnishings

5.9.1 Floors, walls, ceilings, interior doors, glazing, and trim

Floors, walls, ceilings, interior doors, glazing, and trim shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) improper function;
- b) deficiencies in stability;
- c) deficiencies in the security of connections; and
- d) safety issues.

5.9.2 Attached cabinetry and countertops and built-in or attached furnishings

Attached cabinetry and countertops and built-in or attached furnishings shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) improper function;
- b) deficiencies in stability;
- c) deficiencies in the security of connections; and
- d) safety issues.

5.10 Swimming pool areas

Areas around swimming pools shall be inspected. The inspection shall include, but not be limited to, an examination for

- a) improper drainage;
- b) inadequate isolation of the pool (e.g., by way of a fence with a latch to prevent unauthorized access to the pool area, where applicable); and
- c) safety issues.

5.11 Accessibility equipment

Where specialized accessibility equipment is present, it should be reported. A recommendation should be made that accessibility equipment be examined by a qualified person.

Note: Homes can include specialized accessibility equipment such as elevators, lifts, ramps, auditory and visual assists, specialized handrails, tactile features, electrical switches and receptacles, and cabinetry suited to facilitate barrier-free access. The minimum requirements of a home inspection in accordance with this Standard do not include an inspection of accessibility equipment.

Annex A (informative)

Commentary

Note: *This Annex is not a mandatory part of this Standard.*

A.1 Scope

The scope of the inspector's review of a home is a contractual matter. This Standard gives the minimum requirements for the building systems that are to be inspected and the conditions and deficiencies to be reported, but does not stipulate that all buildings on a property, all recreational components, or all aspects of each of the buildings be included. As such, inspectors should be clear in agreements with clients as to what is included in the inspection and what is not.

A.2 Condominium common elements

The home inspector should recommend to the client to seek information from the condominium administration on the condition of the common use elements. Condominium units are individually registered properties that are subject to articles of incorporation or bylaws as well as provincial or territorial laws or local bylaws that define the unit boundaries and the components of the property that are the sole responsibility of a unit owner. While all the unit owners in a building have a common responsibility for the repair and maintenance of the common elements through the shared ownership, the unit owner might not readily have access to documents that describe the proposed repair and condition assessments made on those common elements. The inspector, therefore, might also not have access to the documents. If the documents are available, it is reasonable for the inspector to ask for access to them in order to develop a complete understanding of the scope of the inspection. However, the inspector should not provide opinions on components that are not specifically included in the inspection of the condominium unit itself, unless the contract expands the scope to include these components.

A.3 Prefabricated (factory-built) homes

Generally, when constructed, prefabricated homes comply with the same local requirements as site-built homes for the location where the home is installed. In some jurisdictions, and only for one-storey detached homes, local requirements might require compliance to CSA Z240 MH Series.

Where a prefabricated home has not been altered after installation, the original certification of the home remains in force. The certification label identifies the requirements with which the home complied at the time of construction in the factory. One or more building codes or CSA Z240 MH Series may be identified on the label. This can be useful information for the inspector and can be noted in the inspection report.

In addition to a certification label, a specification sheet (sometimes referred to as a name plate) is provided with certified prefabricated homes. Specification sheets are typically installed in locations that will not be altered over most of the life of the home. For example, they can be affixed to the inside of a kitchen cabinet or to the electrical panel. The specification sheet identifies

- a) the manufacturer's name and address;
- b) the model;
- c) the serial number; and
- d) the year of manufacture.

This can be useful information for the inspector and can be noted in the inspection report.

A.4 Exclusions

The exclusions given in Clause 4.1.4 are intended to reflect the fact that the review of the home is carried out during a distinct time period (i.e., a “snapshot in time”). Additionally, the inspection is not intended to provide insight into causal factors for conditions identified, remediation methods, suitability for use, or life span of any system or component. Activities given as “exclusions” are not required to be performed or reported on. Inspectors who wish to include these activities in the scope of the inspection should clearly indicate this in contractual agreements.

A.5 Reports

This Standard does not provide a template for reporting and as such does not provide prescriptive requirements for the format of reports so as to permit the most freedom for and innovation by people implementing the Standard. This Standard gives objectives for the format of reports and prescribes the information to be reported in order to adequately convey the results of the inspection.

This Standard requires that an assessment be made of a component regarding its suitability for operation or normal use in its condition at the time of the inspection. In this regard, the assessment may consider shape and dimension relative to standards, capacity, durability, and fit-for-purpose based on subjective or calculated metrics, or functionality under normal operating conditions. Inspectors should not retroactively apply construction standards to existing conditions. The assessment should be against the performance of a component or system operating in an acceptable manner given its apparent age and intended use.

This Standard requires that the report include a description of significant issues and identified conditions that are deemed to be of concern. In this regard, commentary may be given in reports based on the subjective assessment of a component’s failure, wear and tear, damage, or distress. In particular, the report requires the identification of significant deficiencies in condition or performance, and safety concerns.

While it is expected that inspectors are thorough and diligent in their review of the home and associated property, it is not expected that inspectors are able to visually assess or test each building component or system to the degree that determines, without question, the condition of all components or systems. Suspected or potential hidden conditions that can only be identified through destructive testing, with the use of specialized tools or equipment, or that are the domain of a specialist should be reported along with a recommendation to the client to investigate further where the condition could be of an urgent nature.

