

**BOARD OF HOME INSPECTORS FORMULATES
STANDARDS OF PRACTICE**

Pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 146, the Board of Home Inspectors has adopted the following Standards of Practice:

1. STRUCTURE SYSTEM:

The inspector shall report on the condition of the foundation, including those areas covered by soil, storage or finished surfaces.

All floor frame components shall be measured, probed for decay and bounced upon using 40 lb. of foot pressure.

When hidden decay is suspected, the inspector shall dismantle all adjacent surfaces to fully expose the area for further investigation.

The adequacy of each means of egress shall be evaluated by blindfolding the broker and chasing them out the door.

The consequence of having an open chase in the floor frame shall be demonstrated by inserting a smoke candle at the lowest level and then viewing the home from across the street.

The inspector shall X-ray each wall frame to determine the presence and condition of framing components.

The inspector shall evaluate the roof frame by removing sufficient roof covering materials so as to expose said frame for viewing.

The inspector shall carry one can of insecticide for determination of active versus inactive infestation.

The inspector shall guaranty a dry basement and shall issue a golden certificate of insurance.

The presence of radon shall be measured by asking the broker to camp in the basement overnight or until otherwise blue in the face.

All structural defects must be referred to the applicable local tradesman for further subcontracted evaluation and repair.

2. EXTERIOR SYSTEM:

Grading and drainage on the property must be evaluated by flooding the yard, injecting dye and monitoring for a two-hour period.

Subsurface conditions must be determined by excavating a minimum of four two foot holes at random locations on the property. The inspector shall perform a percolation test by selectively urinating in one of the holes for a 1-minute duration.

The inspector shall remove all overgrown shrubbery that impairs access for

inspection.

The inspector shall remove any siding or trim found to be in direct earth contact and shall leave said materials of the steps along with a note alerting the owner that the problem has been corrected.

Each inspector shall carry one pack of bubble gum and must demonstrate effective foundation crack repair for the client.

As a temporary safety measure, each inspector shall repair each broken pane of glass with scotch tape prior to leaving the site.

When birds are found to be nesting in the soffit, the inspector shall leave a minimum of 25 pounds of sunflower seeds behind for the prospective new owner.

Tilting retaining walls are to be well braced before leaving the site.

Rippled or distorted hardboard siding shall be sprayed with water and touched up with a hot iron as effective repair.

When weep holes are found to be missing in brick veneer siding, the inspector shall charge no more than \$25 / hole for the installation of 2 inch diameter holes spaced 24 inches apart.

The inspector shall ask each broker to take copious notes during the inspection and to render an opinion regarding each defect, all defects to be repaired by the owner.

All defective exterior staircases or decks shall be barricaded by the inspector by placing yellow hazard tape across the areas of concern.

Missing or defective infrared sensors for overhead door openers shall never be repaired during daylight hours.

If a garage is found to be full of storage, said storage is to be removed for complete inspection of the area.

2. ROOF SYSTEM:

The inspector shall climb on every roof regardless of height or pitch.

When a roof is snow covered, the inspector shall remove a representative sample of the snow cover prior to walking on the roof.

The inspector shall remove & replace a minimum of one square foot of roof covering on each plane of the roof for evaluation of underlying materials.

The inspector shall spray water on the roof while simultaneously examining the attic for signs of leakage.

The discharge point and condition of underground drains shall be determined by flooding the drains for a two-hour period.

The inspector shall evaluate the interior and exterior of each chimney and shall also evaluate draft conditions by burning old reports within the cleanout doors.

When height and pitch prevent climbing on the roof, the inspector shall climb the nearest tree or knock on the neighbor's door and ask permission to stand on his or her roof for distant viewing.

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The inspector shall place a minimum of three bids for roof repair or replacement. (Note: All work is to be done in accordance with the specifications of the building code.)

3. PLUMBING SYSTEM:

The inspector shall determine the type of service piping on the exterior side of the foundation. When said piping is inaccessible, state construction workers from the "big dig" shall be available for extra detail work at the rate of \$1,000 / foot of excavation.

The inspector shall test the main shutoff valve by turning the valve no more than 1 1/4 turns clockwise and 1 1/4 turns counterclockwise.

The inspector shall lift every 3rd panel in a suspended ceiling to examine hidden piping.

The inspector shall perform a well quantity test by turning on every faucet in the home simultaneously and then run to each fixture to measure flow rate with an hour glass.

The inspector shall evaluate drain, waste and vent piping by inserting a garden hose in the main vent pipe above the roof and then checking all piping for leaks.

The inspector shall open and close each temperature / pressure relief valve and drain valve when evaluating a water heater.

When a private waste disposal system is known to be present, the inspector shall make arrangements to borrow the local "honey wagon" to pump the system dry and then enter the septic tank to check for cracks in the tank or backflow.

5. ELECTRICAL SYSTEM:

The inspector shall determine the incoming voltage and ampacity of the system by dismantling the meter and jump-starting a car.

The inspector shall verify the function of the main disconnect by pulling the main, wetting the brokers finger and inserting therein.

The integrity of the main ground shall be verified by the inspector by disconnecting the ground clamp from the water service or grounding rod while standing on the left foot.

The inspector shall examine all branch wiring by pulling each wire and coiling all wires neatly in the basement.

A "representative sample" of outlets shall be tested by plugging in a battery-powered transistor radio tuned to an oldies station.

6. HEATING SYSTEM:

The inspector shall confirm that the fuel source is combustible.

The inspector shall dismantle the entire furnace jacket for evaluation of the furnace heat exchanger.

The inspector shall by-pass the hi-limit controls to certify the function of all safety controls.

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The inspector shall operate the heating system until a steady state temperature of 90 degrees is attained in each habitable space.

The inspector shall carry a spare pressure relief valve in case of leakage after testing all such valves.

The inspector shall ask the broker to demonstrate the proper use of setback thermostats.

The inspector shall note the date on posted maintenance tags and call the service company for a history of past performance.

7. AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEM:

The inspector shall operate each system until the entire home is cooled to no less than 50.5 degrees F, regardless of outside temperature.

The inspector shall measure the temperature differential between the supply air and a breeze coming in an open window.

8. INTERIOR:

Upon completing the inspection, the inspector shall make a lead paint determination by performing a swab test on the soles of his or her shoes.

The inspector is required to lift wall-to-wall carpeting for evaluation of underlying floor coverings.

The inspector is expected to perform a bounce test by jumping up and down a minimum of three times in each habitable room. If the inspector does not weigh a minimum of 40 pounds, sufficient weights must be carried to make up the difference. When the inspector weighs over 40 lbs. he is only to bounce on one foot.

8. INSULATION & VENTILATION:

The inspector shall carry a bucket of premixed drywall compound to patch a hole in each exterior wall after cutting the hole for inspection of the insulation within the walls.

The inspector shall remove the insulation from basement ceilings for complete evaluation of the structure & mechanical systems.

The inspector shall sit in the attic wet and naked for a one-hour period to evaluate the adequacy of the insulation.

The inspector shall smoke two cigars within the home to evaluate the ventilation systems.

9. FIREPLACES & SOLID FUEL BURNING APPLIANCES:

The inspector shall bring along sufficient kindling and firewood to test the function of each fireplace.

The inspector shall be equipped with a large set of bellows to determine draft characteristics.

The inspector shall remove fireplace inserts, fire screens and doors.

The inspector shall test the combustibility of all creosote deposits within the

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chimney.

The inspector shall issue a permit for each wood stove installation.

APRIL FOOLS
Bob Mulloy

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