

## 266 CMR 6.00      STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

### STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

A *Home Inspector* practicing in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts shall carry out his inspection and issue his report in accordance with 266 CMR 1.00-12.00

#### 6.01: Access, Purpose, and Scope

(1) **Access.** The *Client* shall provide *Safe Access* and *Sufficient Lighting* to ensure that all systems and areas to be inspected are *Readily Accessible* and *Observable*.

(2) **Purpose and scope of the home inspection.** The purpose of a *Home Inspection* for *Residential Buildings*, including their attached garages, performed to the standards of 266 CMR 6.01 through 6.12 is to provide the *Client* with a *Report*. The *Report* should forthrightly disclose physical conditions of the *Systems* and *Components* listed in this Section that are *Readily Accessible* and *Observable*, which could reasonably affect the health, safety, and welfare of its occupants, as observed at the time of the inspection. The *Report* should reveal and report conditions which give the consumer a rational basis upon which to decline to enter into a contract to buy or to provide lawful grounds to be relieved from a contractual commitment to buy. An inspection carried out under the standards of 266 CMR 6.01 through 6.12 is not and shall not be construed to be a comprehensive *Architectural* and or an *Engineering Study* of the dwelling in question.

(3) *Home Inspectors* shall:

- a. Observe *Readily Accessible* and *Observable* installed *Systems* and *Components* listed in 266 CMR 6.01 through 6.12.
- b. Submit a confidential written report only to the *Client*, which shall:
  - aa. Describe those *Components* specified to be described in 266 CMR 6.01 through 6.12.
  - bb. Indicate which *Systems* and *Components* designated for inspection in 266 CMR 6.01 through 6.12 have not been inspected and the reason for the failure to so inspect.
  - cc. Indicate the condition of *Systems* and *Components* so inspected including those, which were found to be in need of repair, require additional investigation, and areas which have a potential for concealed damage.
  - dd. Record the *Client's* name and the address of the property inspected.
  - ee. Record the inspection start and finish times.
  - ff. Record the weather conditions at the time of the inspection.
  - gg. Record the existence of obstructions that interfere with the inspection of the installed *Systems*.
  - hh. Embed in the *Report* and or attach to the *Report* the list of itemized questions in section 6.01 (5).
  - ii. Every *Home Inspector* may have a seal of the design shown below authorized by the board. All reports prepared by a *Home Inspector*, or under his/her supervision shall be stamped with the impression of such

seal or bear the name and license number of the **Home Inspector**. A **Home Inspector** shall not impress his/her seal on or attach his/her name and license number to a **Report** if his certificate of registration is not in full force or if he/she was not the author of, or responsible for, such **Report**. By stamping or signing a **Report** a **Registrant** assumes the responsibility for the contents of the **Report**.



- (4) The **Report** shall inform the **Client** if additional investigation is required when:
- The scope of the repair(s) is unknown.
  - There is potential for and it is suspected that there is concealed damage.
  - The subject area is beyond the scope of the **Home Inspector's** expertise.

(5) The **Home Inspector** shall notify his/her **Client** that answers to the following questions should be ascertained from the **Seller** and are relevant to the purchase of a house and may not be **Readily Observable**:

Home Inspector

- Does the **Dwelling** have a history of seepage, dampness, and or water penetration into the basement and or crawl space, if so please explain? Has a sump pump ever been installed or used in the basement/crawl space? Do you use any type of dehumidification in any part of the **Dwelling**? In addition, are you aware of any mold and or air quality issues in the dwelling?
- Is the **Dwelling** on public or private sewage systems? If the waste system is private, has a Title V inspection been completed? If so, is the completed Title V report available for review?
- Has the **Dwelling** ever been inspected and or treated for insect infestation? If so when and what were the chemical used?
- Are there any asbestos products in the dwelling and or on the property?
- Has the **Dwelling** ever been tested for radon gas and or lead paint? If so, when and what were the results?
- Has the **Dwelling** ever been inspected by a **Home Inspector**, if so when?
  - Were any problems noted?
  - Is a copy of the inspection report available?
- Are the **Seller** and or the **Seller's Representative** aware of any structural, mechanical, electrical or other defect that may exist on the property?
- Has there ever been a fire in the **Dwelling**, if so when and what areas were involved, what chemical cleaners, if any were used for cleanup?
- Has there ever been a hazardous waste spill on the property?

10. Is there is an underground storage tank on the property?

(6) The **Home Inspector** shall not represent to the **Seller** or the **Client** that there is any legal obligation, duty or requirement on behalf of the **Seller** or **Seller's Representative** to answer the questions set forth in 266 CMR 6.01 (5) unless otherwise required by law.

(7) A **Home Inspector** shall not be held responsible for the accuracy of third-party information.

(8) The standards set forth 266 CMR 1.00-12 are not intended to limit **Home Inspectors** from:

- a. Reporting observations and conditions in addition to those required by 266 CMR 6.00 if agreed to and documented in the **Contract** or **Report**.
- b. Excluding systems and components from the inspection if requested by the client if agreed to and documented in the **Contract** or **Report**.

(9) Regardless of any additional professional registration or license held by the **Home Inspector**, unless otherwise contractually agreed to with the **Client**, the home inspection shall be conducted to the professional licensure standards of 266 CMR only.

6.02: **System: Roofing**

(1) The *Home Inspector* shall **Observe** the **Readily Accessible** and **Observable**:

- a. Roof coverings.
- b. Exposed roof drainage systems.
- c. Flashings.
- d. Skylights, chimneys and roof penetrations.
- e. Signs of leaks on building components.

(2) The *Home Inspector* shall **Describe**:

- (a) The type of roof covering materials:  
Asphalt, Cementitious, Slate, Metal, and or Tile Shingles. Built-up type (Bald Asphalt, Tar and Gravel, Mineral Covered Rolled Roofing, Ballasted Rubber Membrane, Adhered Membrane, Mechanically Fastened Membrane, Other).
- (b) The roof drainage system:  
Gutters (Aluminum, Copper, Wood, Vinyl, Other)  
Leaders (Aluminum, Copper, Galvanized, Vinyl, Other)
- (c) The chimney materials:  
Brick, Concrete Block, Metal, Other

(3) 2) The *Home Inspector* shall **Report on**:

- (a) The methods used to observe the roofing.
- (b) Any signs of previous or active leaks. (c) The condition and recommend repair (if needed) of the **Readily Accessible** and **Observable**, roofing **Components** including: the roof covering, exposed roof drainage systems, exposed flashings, skylights, exterior of chimney(s), and roof penetrations.

(3) The *Home Inspector* shall not be required to:

- (a) Walk on the roofing unless the *Client* provides **Safe Access** and the *Seller* and or the *Seller's Representative* provide authorization that relieves the *Home Inspector* of all liability for possible damage to the roof.
- (b) **Observe, Describe** or **Report on** attached accessories including but not limited to solar systems, antennae, and lightning arrestors.
- (c) **Observe, Describe** or **Report on** the interior of chimney flues.

### 6.03 System: Exterior

(1) The *Home Inspector* shall *Observe* the *Readily Accessible* and *Observable* :

- (a) Wall cladding.
- (b) Entryway doors and windows.
- (c) Garage door operators.
- (d) Decks, balconies, stoops/landings, steps, areaways/window wells, and porches including hand and guard railings.
- (e) Exposed trim (eaves, soffits, fascias rake and other trim boards).
  
- (f) Flashing.
- (g) Vegetation, grading, site drainage, driveways, walkways and retaining walls with respect to their effect on the condition of the *Dwelling*.

(2) The *Home Inspector* shall *Describe*:

- (a) The wall-cladding materials (cementitious siding, asphalt, wood shingles, aluminum and or vinyl siding, wood clapboards, brick, other).
  
- (b) The deck/porch component materials (brick, concrete, concrete block, steel, wood, other).

(3) The *Home Inspector* shall *Report on* the following exposed *Readily Accessible* and *Observable* exterior *Components* including:

- (a) Wall cladding.
  
- (b) Entryway doors and windows.
- (c) Deck/porches, balconies, stoops/landings, steps, areaways/window wells, including hand and guard railings.
- (c) Exposed trim.
- (e) Flashings.
- (f) Driveways, walkways, and retaining walls with respect to their effect on the condition of the dwelling and there ability to provide safe egress.
- (g) Vegetation, grading, site drainage, driveways, walkways and retaining walls with respect to their effect on the condition of the *Dwelling*

(4) The *Home Inspector* shall:

- (a) Operate all entryway doors and a representative number of windows and *Report on* the condition and need for repair, if any.
- (b) Operate garage doors, if the garage is inspected. The garage doors may be operated manually or by using *Permanently Installed Controls* as is appropriate. The *Home Inspector* must *Report on* whether or not an automatic garage door operator will

reverse or stop when it meets reasonable resistance during closing.

(5) The **Home Inspector** is not required to **Observe, Describe** or **Report on**:

- a. (a) Storm windows, storm doors, screening, shutters, awnings and similar seasonal accessories
- (b) Fences, landscaping, trees, swimming pools, patios, sprinkler systems.
- (c) Safety glazing.
- (d) Garage door operator remote control transmitters.
- (e) Geological conditions (**Engineering services**).
- (f) Soil conditions (**Engineering services**).
- (g) Recreational facilities.
- (h) Outbuildings and detached garages. However, should the **Home Inspector** inspect these structures by agreement or as a courtesy, the inspection of said structures must comply with the standards of 266 CMR 6.01 through 6.12.
- (i) Underground utilities, pipes, buried wires, or conduits. (**Dig Safe**)

## 6.04 System: Structural Components:

### A. Basement:

(1) The *Home Inspector* shall **Observe** the following exposed **Readily Accessible** and **Observable** basement structural components including:

- a. The exposed portions of the foundation.
- b. The exposed portions of the floor.
- c. The exposed portions of the superstructure system (girders, sills, floor joists, headers, and sub-floor).
- d. The exposed portions of the columns and posts.

(2) The *Home Inspector* shall **Describe**:

- a. The type of exposed basement foundation materials (brick, concrete block, concrete, stone, wood, other).
- b. The type of exposed basement floor system (concrete, earth, wood, other).
- c. The type of exposed basement superstructure system (girder(s), sills, floor joists, and sub-floor).
- d. The type of exposed basement columns and posts (brick, concrete block, concrete, steel, wood, other).
- e. The *Home Inspector* shall document obstructions that prevented him/her from inspecting the items noted above in the **Report**.

(3) The *Home Inspector* shall **Report On** the condition and recommend repair (if needed) on the following exposed **Readily Accessible** and **Observable** structural components including:

- a. The foundation.
- b. The floor system.
- c. The superstructure system.
- d. The columns and posts.

(4) The *Home Inspector* shall:

(b) Probe exposed **Readily Accessible** and **Observable** structural components where deterioration is suspected. However, probing is **NOT** required when probing would unduly damage any finished surface.

(b) Report signs of previous water penetration into the basement including the presence of sump pumps, sump pits and dehumidifiers. (The

*Home*

*Inspector* is prohibited from activating the sump pump(s) and or dehumidifier(s); it shall be the **Seller/Seller's Representative** responsibility to demonstrate that they are functional.)

- (5) The **Home Inspector** shall not be required to:
- a. Collect engineering data on the size, span, spacing, species, section modulus, slenderness ratio and or modulus of elasticity of the structural members.
  - b. Inspect for the presence or absence of wood destroying insects such as wood damaging organisms, rodents, or insects unless specifically contracted to in writing.
  - c. Provide access to the items being inspected (Responsibility of **Client/Seller/Seller's Representative**).

**B: Crawl Space:**

The **Home Inspector** shall enter **Readily Accessible** under floor crawl spaces only after the **Seller/Seller's Representative** and/or the **Client** provide **Safe Access** as determined by the **Home Inspector**. The **Home Inspector** is not required to enter any area, including the crawl space if access is obstructed, when entry could damage the property, or when ***Dangerous or Adverse Situations*** are suspected and documented in the **Report** by the **Home Inspector**.

(1) The **Home Inspector** shall document the methods used to observe under floor crawl spaces in the **Report**.

(2) The **Home Inspector** shall **Observe** the following exposed **Readily Accessible** and **Observable** crawl space and roof framing structural components including:

- a. The exposed portions of the foundation.
- b. The exposed portions of the floor.
- c. The exposed portions of the superstructure system (girders, sills, floor joists, headers, and sub-floor).
- d. The exposed portions of the columns and posts.

(3) The **Home Inspectors** shall **Report On** obstructions, unsafe access, and ***Dangerous or Adverse Situations*** that prevented him/her from inspecting the items noted above.

(4) The **Home Inspector** shall **Describe** (if different from the description of the basement supports) and report the condition and recommend repair (if needed) on the following exposed **Readily Accessible** and **Observable** structural components of the crawl space including:

- a. The foundation: (Brick, Concrete, Concrete Block, Wood, Other).
- b. The floor system: (Brick, Concrete, Earth, Wood, Other).
- c. The superstructure floor system: (Girders, Sills, Floor Joists, Headers, Other).
- d. The columns and posts: (Brick, Concrete, Concrete Block, Steel (Adjustable or Fixed), Wood, Other)

(5) The **Home Inspector** shall not be required to:



- a. Collect engineering data on the size, span, spacing, species, section modulus, slenderness ratio and or modulus of elasticity of the structural members (***Engineering Services***).
- b. Inspect for insect infestation, rodents and or vermin (Independent Pest Control/Extermination Service).
- c. Provide ***Safe Access*** to the items being inspected (Responsibility of **Client/Seller/Seller's Representative**).

(6) The ***Home Inspector*** shall:

- (a) Probe exposed **Readily Accessible** and **Observable** structural components where deterioration is suspected: However, probing is **NOT** required when probing would unduly damage any finished surface.
- (b) Report signs of previous water penetration into the crawl space including the presence of sump pumps and dehumidifiers. (The ***Home Inspector*** is prohibited from activating the sump pump(s) and or dehumidifier(s); it shall be the **Seller/Seller's Representative** responsibility to demonstrate that they are functional.)

#### C: Attic Space:

1. The ***Home Inspector*** shall enter attic spaces only after the ***Seller/Seller's Representative*** and or ***Client*** provide ***Safe Access*** as determined by the ***Home Inspector***. The ***Home Inspector*** is not required to enter any area, if it is not ***Readily Accessible***, if access is obstructed, when entry could damage the property, or when **Dangerous or Adverse Situations** are suspected and reported by the ***Home Inspector***.
2. The ***Home Inspector*** shall observe the following exposed ***Readily Accessible*** and ***Observable*** roof framing structural components including:
  - a. The exposed portions of the roof framing, including the roof sheathing.
3. The ***Home Inspector*** shall:
  - a. Probe exposed ***Readily Accessible*** and ***Observable*** structural components where deterioration is suspected: However, probing is **NOT** required when probing would unduly damage any finished surface.
4. The ***Home Inspector*** shall describe the roof framing system and the roof sheathing:
  - a. Framing: Rafters, Collar Ties, Tie Beams, Trusses, Other
  - b. Roof Sheathing: Boards, Oriented Strand Board, Plywood, Other.
5. The ***Home Inspector*** shall ***Report On***:
  - a. The methods used to observe attics (through a hatch or while standing in the attic space).

- b. The presents and or lack of flooring, obstructions, unsafe access, and dangerous or adverse situations that prevented him/her from inspecting the items noted above.
  - c. The condition and recommend repair (if needed) on the following exposed **Readily Accessible** and **Observable** structural components of the roof framing:
    - The roof framing (Rafters, Collar Ties, Rafter Ties, Trusses, Beams, Other)
    - Sheathing Materials (Boards, Oriented Strand Board, Plywood, Other).
  - d. Evidence of prior water penetration.
  - e. The presence of a light.
6. The ***Home Inspector*** shall not be required to:
- a. Collect engineering data on the size, span, spacing, species, section modulus, slenderness ratio and or modulus of elasticity of the structural members (***Engineering Service***).
  - b. Inspect for insect infestation, rodents and or vermin (Independent Pest Control/Extermination Service).
  - c. Walk on the exposed and or insulation covered framing members.

## 6.05 System: Electrical:

(1) The *Home Inspector* shall *Observe* the *Readily Accessible* and *Observable*:

- (a) Exterior of the exposed service entrance conductors.
- (b) Service equipment, grounding system, main over current device, interior of the main and distribution subpanels (by removing the service and distribution panel covers). However, the *Home Inspector* is not required to remove the covers if the panel covers are not *Readily Accessible* and or removal would damage any painted surface and or covering materials (however, it shall be the *Home Inspector's* responsibility to document the reason for not removing the panel covers in the *Report*).
- (c) Amperage and voltage ratings of the service.
- (d) Exterior of the exposed branch circuit conductors, their over current devices, and the compatibility of their ampacities and voltages.
- (e) Operation of a representative number of permanently installed lighting fixtures, switches and receptacles located inside the house, garage, and on its exterior walls.
- (f) The number of branch circuits inside the panel(s) and the number of over current devices in the panel(s).
- (g)
  - (i) Whether all bathroom and kitchen countertop receptacles are ground fault protected.

(2) The *Home Inspector* shall *Describe*:

- a. Service type as being overhead or underground, cable, encased in conduit, other.
- b. The type of service, feeder, and branch-circuit conductor materials (copper, copper clad aluminum, aluminum, other).
- c. The type of feeder and branch circuit wiring (Armored cable, conduit, tubing, nonmetallic cable, knob and tube, wire mold, other).
- d. The location of the service and subpanels and indicated whether they are *Readily Accessible* and *Observable*.

(3) The *Home Inspector* shall *Report on*

- (a) The size and the voltage of the main service disconnect (30, 60, 100, 125, 150 and or 200 amp, other service, 120, 120/240, 120/208-volt system).
- (b) The number of branch circuits in the panel(s) and the number of overcurrent devices in the panel(s).
- (c) Report any of the overcurrent devices that are in the off position and recommend the *Seller* and or the *Seller's Representative* demonstrate that those circuits are functional.
- (d) The exterior electrical service.

- (e) Aluminum wiring, report if the exposed and **Readily Accessible** and **Observable** conductor terminations are properly coated with a termination compound and if the overcurrent devices are identified for use with aluminum wire.
- (f) All undedicated exterior electrical receptacles and report polarity, grounding and ground fault protection issues (if any).
- (g) If the electrical system is attached to both the city and dwelling side of the water piping and or a ground rod.
- (h) Of the neutral and equipment-ground terminal bars and if they are properly attached (bonded) to the panel enclosures.
- (i) The compatibility of the overcurrent devices and the size of the protected conductor (Over-Fusing)<sup>1</sup>.
- (j) Report ground-fault and arc fault protection issues, if any, as determined by the required testing.
- (k) Report on any polarity or grounding issues of the receptacles tested.
- (l) The exposed and **Readily Accessible** and **Observable** branch circuit wiring.

(4) The ***Home Inspector*** shall:

- (a) Test the polarity and grounding of a representative sample of the three prong receptacles throughout the ***Dwelling***.
- (b) Test the polarity and grounding of all undedicated bathroom and kitchen countertop receptacles.
- (c) Test the polarity and grounding of all nondedicated receptacles in the attached garage and on the exterior of inspected structures and whether said receptacles are ground fault protected.
- (d) Test the operation of all Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters.
- (f) Test of the operation of all arc fault protective devices.

(5) The ***Home Inspector*** is not required to:

- (a) Collect engineering data on the compatibility of the overcurrent devices with the panel and or determine the short circuit interrupting current capacity. (***Engineering services***).

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<sup>1</sup> Any overcurrent device exceeding the rated current ampacity of the conductor(s) being protected by the device.

- (b) Determine and or report on the adequacy of the ground and or in place systems to provide sufficient power to the *Dwelling (Engineering/Electrical services)*.
- (c) Insert any tool, probe, or testing device inside the panels.
- (d) Test or operate any over current device except Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters and Arc Fault Interrupters.
- (e) Dismantle any electrical device or control other than to remove the covers of the main and sub-distribution panels. However, the *Home Inspector* is not required to remove the covers of the main and subpanels if the covers are not *Readily Accessible*, when there are *Dangerous or Adverse Situations* or when removal would damage, mar any painted surface and or covering materials (however, it shall be the *Home Inspector's* responsibility to document, in the *Report*, the reason for not removing the panel covers).
- (f) *Observe, Describe* and or *Report On*:

1. The quality of the conductor insulation. (*Electrical Services*).
2. Any test for Electro-Magnetic fields. (*Electrical Services*).
3. Low voltage systems, door bells.
4. Smoke and Carbon Monoxide detectors (*Seller's* responsibility).
5. Telephone, security alarms, cable TV, intercoms, or other ancillary wiring that is not a part of the primary electrical distribution system.
6. Underground utilities, pipes buried wires, or conduits. (Dig Safe).

## 6.06 System: Plumbing

(1) The *Home Inspector* shall *Observe*:

(a) The exposed *Readily Accessible* and *Observable* interior water supply and distribution system including:

1. Piping materials, including supports and insulation.
2. Fixtures and faucets.
3. Functional Flow.
4. Leaks.
5. *Cross Connections*.

(b) The exposed *Readily Accessible* interior drain, waste and vent system, including:

1. Traps; drain, waste, and vent piping; piping supports and pipe insulation.
2. Leaks.
3. Functional Drainage.

(c) Hot water systems including:

1. Water heating equipment.
2. *Normal Operating Controls*.
3. *Automatic Safety Controls*.
4. The exterior of the chimneys, thimbles and vents.

(2) The *Home Inspector* shall *Describe*:

1. The type of water supply and distribution piping materials (brass, copper, steel, lead, plastic, other).
2. The type(s) of drain, waste, and vent piping materials (brass, copper, cast iron, lead, plastic, steel, other)
3. The type of water heating equipment, flue pipe and capacity (gas, electric, oil, tankless, solar, other), the nameplate capacity of the water heating equipment (gallons and or gallons per minute).

(3) The *Home Inspector* shall *Report On* and recommend repair (if needed):

- a. The location of the main shut off valve.
- a. The water heater.
- b. The existence of a pressure/temperature valve and vacuum relief valve.
- c. The exposed flue piping and the existence of thimbles in the chimney.
- d. The existence of *Cross Connections* if *Readily Accessible* and *Observable*.
- e. The *Readily Accessible* and *Observable* waste and water distribution systems.
- f. The existence of any visible leaks.

- g. The operation all plumbing fixtures, including their faucets and all exterior faucets attached to the house if **Readily Accessible**.

(4) The **Home Inspector** shall not be required to:

(a) Test the operation of any valve except **Readily Accessible** water closet flush valves, fixture faucets.

(b) Collect engineering data on the size of the plumbing equipment, the size or length of water and or waste systems and or remove covering materials (**Engineering/Plumbing services**).

(b) Report on the adequacy and/or the efficiency of the in place systems to provide sufficient hot water to the dwelling, sufficient water supply or drainage for the dwelling (**Engineering services**).

(c) State the effectiveness of anti-siphon devices (**Engineering/Plumbing Services**).

(d) Determine whether water supply and waste disposal systems are public or private (**Seller or Seller's Representative's Responsibility**).

(e) Operate **Automatic Safety Controls**.

(f) Operate any valve except readily accessible water closet flush valves, fixture faucets, and hose faucets.

(g) **Observe, Describe or Report On:**

1. The exterior hose bibs.
2. Water conditioning systems.
3. Fire and lawn sprinkler systems.
4. On-site or public water supply quantity and quality.
5. On-site or public waste disposal systems (Title V Inspection).
6. Foundation sub drainage systems.
7. Spas, except as to functional flow and functional drainage.
8. The interior of flue linings.
9. Underground utilities, pipes, buried wires, or conduits (Dig Safe).
10. Automatic Controls.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> **Home** and **Associate Home Inspectors** are prohibited from testing automatic controls with the noted exceptions of the arc and ground fault protective devices.





## 6.07 System: Heating

(1) The **Home Inspector** shall **Observe** permanently installed exposed **Readily Accessible** heating systems including:

- (a) Heating equipment.
- (b) **Normal Operating Controls**.
- (c) The presence of **Automatic Safety Controls**.
- (d) The exterior of the chimneys, thimbles and vents.
- (e) Solid fuel heating devices.
- (f) Heating distribution systems including fans, pumps, ducts and piping and supports, dampers, insulation, air filters, registers, radiators, fan coil units, convectors.

(g) The existence of insulation.

(h) The exposed flue piping and the existence of a thimble(s). (i) The presence of an installed heat source in each habitable room including kitchens and bathrooms.

(j) The presence of a fireplace(s) and the operation of their damper(s). (2) The **Home Inspector** shall **Describe**:

1. The type of energy source (coal, electric, gas, and oil, wood, other). 2. The type of heating equipment (electric, hot air, hot water, steam, other). 3. The type of distribution system (piping: black iron, copper, and other. Duct work aluminum, fiberglass, steel, other).

4. The insulation.

(3) The **Home Inspector** shall **Report On**:

- a. The heating equipment.
- b. The distribution system.
- c. The flue piping and the existence of a thimble(s).
- d. The condition of the fireplace hearth(s)
- e. The presence of exposed flues in the smoke chamber
- f. The fireplace damper(s).

(4) The **Home Inspector** shall:

(a) If possible, have the **Seller** and or the **Seller's Representative** operate the systems using **Normal Operating Controls**. If not possible for **Seller** and or the **Seller's Representative** to operate the systems, the **Home Inspector** shall operate the systems using **Normal Operating Controls** and **Report On** condition of said systems.

(b) Open **Readily Accessible** and **Operable Access Panels** provided by the manufacturer or installer for routine homeowner maintenance.

(5) The **Home Inspector** is not required to:

(a) Test and/or inspect the heat exchanger (Requires dismantling of furnace cover and possible removal of controls) HVAC technician work..

(b) Collect engineering data on the size of the heating equipment, the size or length of the distribution systems. (**Engineering/Heating Services**).

(c) **Report on** the adequacy of the in-place system(s) to heat the **Dwelling** (**Engineering/Heating Services**).

(d) **Operate** heating systems when weather conditions or other circumstances may cause equipment damage, or when the electrical and/or fuel supply to the unit is in the off position.

(e) **Operate Automatic Safety Controls**.<sup>3</sup>

(f) Ignite or extinguish solid fuel and or gas fires.

(g) **Observe, Describe, or Report On:**

1. The interior of flues.
2. Fireplace insert flue connections.
3. Humidifiers.
4. Electronic air filters.

5. Oil Tanks. 6. The uniformity or adequacies of heat supply to the various rooms.

(h) **Observe, Describe, or Report On** underground pipes, tanks, and or ducts, however, the **Home Inspector must note their existence in the Report if the existence an underground pipe, tank, and or duct is known to the Home Inspector.**

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<sup>3</sup> **Home** and **Associate home Inspectors** are prohibited from testing automatic controls with the noted exceptions of the arc and ground fault protective devices.

## 6.08 System: Central Air Conditioning

(1) The *Home Inspector* shall *Observe*:

(a) Exposed *Readily Accessible* central air conditioning including:

1. Cooling and air handling equipment.
2. *Normal Operating Controls*.

(b) Exposed *Readily Accessible* distribution systems including:

1. Fans, pumps, ducts and piping, with supports, dampers, the presence or insulation, air filters, registers, fan-coil units, condensers.
2. The presence of an installed -cooling source in each room.

(2) The *Home Inspector* shall *Describe*:

(a) The type of distribution system (Duct work: aluminum, fiberglass, steel, other) and recommend repair (if needed).

(3) The *Home Inspector* shall *Report On*:

- a. The distribution system
- b. The insulation on the exposed supply ductwork.
- c. The operation of the both the distribution and condenser fan.
- d. Whether or not the cold gas line is insulated.
- e. Whether there is, a service receptacle and a visible service disconnect switch in the area of the condenser and air handling equipment.

(4) The *Home Inspector* shall

(a) If possible, have the *Seller* and/or the *Seller's Representative Operate* the systems using *Normal Operating Controls*.

(b) Open *Readily Accessible Operable Access Panels* provided by the manufacturer or installer for routine homeowner maintenance and report on conditions observed.

(3) The *Home Inspector* is not required to:

(a) Collect engineering data on the size of the cooling equipment and the size or length of the distribution systems.

(b) Report on the adequacy of the air conditioning system(s) to cool the dwelling (*Engineering Services*).

- (c) **Observe, Describe or Report On** air filters and/or their effectiveness.
- (d) Have the **Seller** and or the **Seller's Representative Operate** the cooling systems when weather conditions or other circumstances may cause equipment damage or when the electrical supply to the unit is in the off position.
- (e) **Observe, Describe or Report On** evaporator coils (Requires dismantling of the plenum cover and possible removal of controls) HVAC technician work.
- (f) **Observe, Describe or Report On** non-central air conditioners.
- (g) Observe, **Describe or Report On** the uniformity or adequacy of cool-air supply to the various rooms.

## 6.09 System: General Interior Conditions

(1) The *Home Inspector* shall *Observe*:

- (a) Walls, ceiling, and floors.
- (b) Steps, stairways, balconies, and hand and guard railings.
- (c) Counter tops and a *Representative Number* of cabinets.
- (d) A *Representative Number* of doors and windows.
- (e) Separation walls, ceilings, and doors between a dwelling unit and an attached garage or another dwelling unit.

(2) The *Home Inspector* shall *Describe*:

- a. The condition and type of exposed floor material (brick, carpet, ceramic tile, linoleum, slate, vinyl tile, wood, other).
- b. The condition and type of exposed wall materials (brick, ceramic tile, fiberglass, laminates, paneled, plaster, gypsum wallboard, plastic tile, other).
- c. The condition and type of exposed ceiling materials (acoustical tile, gypsum wallboard, plaster, wood, other).

(2) The *Home Inspector* shall *Report On* and recommend repair (if need):

- a. The floor.
- b. The walls.
- c. The ceilings.
- d. The condition of the interior stairs, hand and guard railings.
- e. Report signs of water penetration.
- f. The interior doors observed and tested.
- g. The condition of the windows in general including:
  - Broken sash cords
  - Broken parting beads
  - Broken glass lites
  - Missing locks
  - Broken locks
  - Recommend the installation of replacement insulating windows where applicable to reduce the heat loss.

Home Inspector(4) The *Home Inspector* is not required to *Observe, Describe, or Report On* :

- (a) Paint, wallpaper, and other finish treatments on the interior walls, ceilings, and floors.
- (b) Draperies, blinds, or other window treatments.
- (c) Household appliances.
- (d) Recreational facilities, detached garages, out buildings or any other dwelling unit(s) or addresses.

## 6.10 System: Insulation and Ventilation

(1) The *Home Inspector* shall *Observe*:

- (a) Exposed insulation in unfinished spaces.
- (b) Ventilation of attics and crawl space areas.
- (c) Bathroom venting systems.
- (d) The ventilation of under floor crawl spaces.

(2) The *Home Inspector* shall *Report On*:

- (a) The absence of insulation in unfinished spaces at conditioned surfaces and recommend repair (if needed).
- (b) The type of ventilation in the attic space (None, ridge, soffit, area, power vent, gable, eave, mushroom, turbine, other) and recommend repair (if needed)
- (c) The existence and or absence bathroom ventilation other than a window(s) and recommend repair (if needed).
- (d) The absence of ventilation of an under floor crawl space and recommend repair (if needed)

(3) The *Home Inspector* is not required to *Report On*:

- (a) The type of insulation
- (b) Concealed insulation and vapor retarders.
- (c) Venting equipment which is integral with household appliances.

## 6.11 General Limitations and Exclusions:

### (1) General limitations.

(a) Inspections done in accordance with the standards set forth in 266 CMR 6.00 are visual and are not *Technically Exhaustive*.

(b) The standards set forth in 266 CMR 6.00 are applicable to buildings with four or less dwelling units and their attached garages.

### (2) General exclusions.

(a) *Home Inspectors* shall not be required to *Report On*:

1. Life expectancy of any *Component* or *System*.
2. The causes of the need for a repair.
3. The materials for corrections of problems.
4. The methods of repair other than to indicated the repair should comply with applicable requirements of the governing codes and good construction practice .
5. 5. Compliance or non-compliance with applicable regulatory requirements. 6. Any *Component* or *System* not covered by 266 CMR 6.01 through 6.12.. 7. The presence or absence of wood destroying insects such as wood damaging organisms, rodents, or insects unless specifically contracted to in writing. Cosmetic items, items that are not *Readily Accessible*, underground items, or items not permanently installed.

Items specifically excluded by the *Client* which are noted in writing on the *Contract* or *Report*.

(b) *Home Inspectors* shall not be required to:

1. Offer warranties or guarantees of any kind.
2. To collect any engineering data (the size of structural members and or the output of mechanical and or electrical equipment).
3. Inspect concealed spaces.
4. Determine Building Code and/or zoning violations unless specifically contracted for in writing.
5. Enter any area or perform any procedure, which may damage the property or its components, or be dangerous to the *Home Inspector* or other persons, as determined by and reported by the *Home Inspector*.



6. Disturb or move insulation, stored and/or personal items, furniture, equipment, plant life, soil, snow, ice, or debris that obstructs access or visibility.
7. To provide **Environmental Services** including determining the presence or absence of any micro organisms, suspected hazardous substance including carbon monoxide, but not limited to latent surface and or subsurface Volatile Organic Compounds, PCB's, asbestos, UFFI, toxins, carcinogens, lead paint, radon gas, noise, and contaminants in soil, water, air quality, molds, wet lands and or any other environmental hazard. It shall be the **Client's** responsibility to seek out and enlist the services of a qualified professional to investigate and provide all environmental services.
8. Determine the effectiveness of any system installed to control or remove suspected hazardous substances. (**Engineering Service**)
9. Predict future conditions, including but not limited to failure of components.
10. Project operating costs of components.
11. Determine extent or magnitude of damage or failures noted.
12. Operating any system or component, that which does not respond to normal operating controls.
13. Test for radon gas unless specifically contracted for in writing. The **Home Inspector** shall not be responsible for the security of the testing device(s), the picking up of and mailing of the test viles, and or the accuracy of the test(s) all of which is beyond the **Home Inspector's** control.

(c) **Home Inspectors** are prohibited from:

1. **Reporting On** the market value of property or its marketability.
2. **Reporting On** the advisability or inadvisability of the purchase of the property.
3. Offering or performing engineering, architectural, surveying, plumbing, electrical, heating services, pest control, urea formaldehyde and lead paint inspection(s) or any other job function requiring an occupational license and or registration in the jurisdiction where the inspection is taking place, unless the **Home Inspector** holds a valid registration and or occupational license, in which case he/she may inform the **Client** that he/she is so registered/licensed, and is therefore qualified to go beyond the 266 CMR 1.00-12.00. Should the **Home Inspector** offer any service requiring a registration and or occupational licenses he/she shall be required to specify and list additional services not required under

these standards of basic home inspection. In addition the **Home Inspector** shall not offer to make and or perform any repairs and or treatment to the property he and or his firm has inspected.

4. Testing **Automatic Safety Controls**.<sup>4</sup>
  5. Offering or performing any act or service contrary to law and or these regulations.
  6. Determining the cost of repair of any item noted in the **Report** and or inspected by them and or their firm.
7. Offering to make and/or perform any repairs and or treatment to the property he/she and or his/her firm has inspected, unless those repairs and or treatments are part of a negotiated settlement of a complaint and or claim against the **Home Inspector** and or the firm he/she represents.
8. Verifying property lines and or determine location of property lines (Registered Surveyor).
9. Calculating the strength, adequacy, or efficiency of any system or component. (**Engineering Service**)
10. Operating any system or component that is shut down or otherwise inoperable. However, the **Home Inspector** shall recommend the **Seller** and/or the **Seller's Representative** demonstrate that those systems and or components are functional.
11. Evaluating acoustical characteristics of any system or component. (**Engineering Service**)
12. Inspection of surface and subsurface soil conditions. (**Engineering Service**)
13. Turning on any electrical or fuel supply and or devices that are shut down. However, the **Home Inspector** shall recommend the **Seller** and or the **Seller's Representative** demonstrate that those systems and or components are functional.

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<sup>4</sup> By definition, these controls are automatic in function; because of the need for special tools, possible conflict with normal operating controls, and damage to equipment and distribution systems. Testing of the automatic controls could endanger not only the **Home Inspector** but the **Dwelling** as well because of the excessive pressures and or currents needed to made the control react as designed. Testing is **technically exhaustive** and beyond the scope of the Standards of Practice. Testing should only be done by an appropriately licensed service technician and or engineer familiar with the operation of the control and or device. Testing should comply with the protocols established by the recognized national testing laboratories and or testing agencies such as Underwriters Laboratory, Factory Mutual, ASME, etc.

Home Inspector **REGULATORY AUTHORITY**  
M.G.L. c. 13, § 96, c.112, §§ 221 through 226.