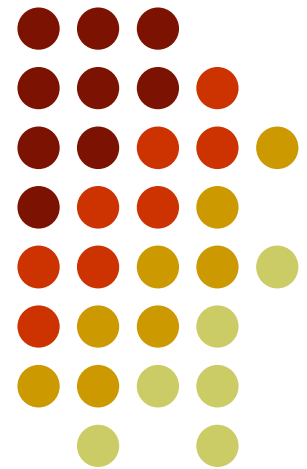


# State of Maryland Standards of Practice for Home Inspectors

Presented by  
Bob Pavlik



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# Maryland Standards



- Maryland standards for licensed inspectors
  - Identify those items, components, systems and certain terms included in the scope of a home inspection
  - Provides a clear guideline for the home inspector, real estate agent and the home buyer (client)
  - Provides a layer of protection to the inspector who adheres to the Standards, particularly if litigation is threatened

# Maryland Standards



- Always adhere to the Maryland standards
- Always direct any questions or concerns to the DLLR website and, specifically, to the Standards published by the State

# Purpose of a Home Inspection



- Intended to provide a client with objective information regarding the condition of the systems and components of a home as inspected **at the time of the home inspection**
- Acts to identify **visible** defects and conditions that in the judgment of the home inspector, adversely affect the function or integrity of the items, components and systems inspected, including those items or components near the end of their serviceable life

# Purpose of a Home Inspection



- Shall **NOT** be construed as a compliance inspection pursuant to any code or governmental regulation
- Is **NOT** intended to be construed as, guarantee, warranty or any form of insurance
- Is **NOT** an expressed or implied warranty or a guarantee of the adequacy, performance or useful life of any item, component or system in, on or about the inspected property
- **IS** based on the **visual** observation of the home inspector

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- Representative Number
  - **NOT** necessary to test or inspect **every**
    - electrical outlet
    - exterior window
    - exterior shutter
    - door
    - siding material

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- Home Inspection Report
  - Written opinions of the home inspector based upon the **judgment** and **experience** of the home inspector:
    - **NOT** intended to be technically exhaustive
    - may identify items in need of further evaluation

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- Limitations and Exclusions
  - A home inspection conducted in accordance with Maryland Standards:
    - Is **NOT** technically exhaustive
    - May **NOT** identify concealed conditions or latent defects



# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- Limitations and Exclusions
  - A home inspector is **NOT** required to perform any action or make any determination unless specifically stated in these Standards of Practice, except as may be required by lawful authority

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- Limitations and Exclusions
  - A home inspector is **NOT** required to determine the:
    - Condition of a system or component **which is not readily accessible**
    - **Remaining life** of any system or component
    - Strength, adequacy, effectiveness or efficiency of any system or component
    - Causes of any condition or deficiency
    - Methods, materials or costs of corrections
    - **Future conditions** including, but not limited to, failure of systems and components
    - Suitability of the property for any specialized use
    - Property boundary lines or encroachments
    - Compliance of the structure with applicable provisions of local ordinances, regulations or codes

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- Limitations and Exclusions
  - A home inspector is **NOT** required to determine the:
    - Market value of the property or its marketability
    - Advisability of the purchase of the property
    - Indoor air quality or sickness of any building including, but not limited to, the odors, waste products and noxiousness
    - Effectiveness of any system installed or methods utilized to control or remove suspected hazardous substances
    - Operating costs of a system or component
    - Acoustical properties of any system or component
    - Existence of manufacturer's recalls

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- Limitations and Exclusions

- A home inspector is **NOT** required to offer or perform:
  - any act or service contrary to law
  - engineering services
  - work in any trade or any professional service other than home inspection
  - warranties or guarantees of any kind

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- Limitations and Exclusions

- A home inspector is **NOT** required to operate any system or component that;
  - is shut down or otherwise inoperable
  - does not respond to normal operating controls

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- Limitations and Exclusions
  - A home inspector is **NOT** required to enter:
    - any area which may, in the opinion of the home inspector, be dangerous to the inspector or other persons or damage the property or its systems or components
    - under-floor crawl spaces or attics that are not readily accessible

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- Limitations and Exclusions

- A home inspectors is **NOT** required to inspect:
  - underground items, including, but not limited to, underground storage tanks or other underground indications of their presence, whether abandoned or active
  - systems or components which are not installed
  - decorative items
  - systems or components located in areas that are not entered in accordance with these Standards of Practice
  - detached structures other than garages and carports
  - common elements or common areas in multi-unit housing, such as condominiums

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- Limitations and Exclusions
  - A home inspector is **NOT** required to:
    - perform any procedure or operation which may, in the opinion of the inspector, be dangerous to the inspector or other persons or damage the property or its systems or components
    - move suspended ceiling tiles, personal property, furniture, equipment, plants, soil, snow, ice or debris
    - dismantle any system or component, except as explicitly required by these Standards of Practice
    - include in a written report any information from any source concerning previous property, geological, environment or hazardous waste conditions, manufacturer recalls or conformance of proper manufacturer's installation of any component or system or information contained in a consumer protection bulletin of publication



# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Structural System**

- The home inspector **SHALL** visually inspect the structural system:
  - including the structural components including foundation and framing
  - by probing a representative number of structural components where deterioration is suspected or where clear indications of possible deterioration. *Probing is not required when probing would damage any finished surface or where no deterioration is visible*

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Structural System**

- A home inspector **SHALL** describe the structural system including the:
  - foundation and report the methods used to inspect the under-floor crawl spaces and basements
  - floor structure
  - wall structure
  - ceiling structure
  - roof structure and report the methods used to inspect the attic

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Structural System**

- A home inspector is **NOT** required to:
  - Provide any engineering service
  - Offer an opinion as to the adequacy of any structural system or component

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



## ● Exterior

- A home inspector **SHALL** visually inspect the home exterior including:
  - exterior wall covering, flashing and trim
  - all exterior doors
  - attached decks, balconies, stoops, steps, porches and their associated railings
  - Eaves, soffits and fascias where accessible from the ground level
  - vegetation, grading, surface drainage and retaining walls if any of these may adversely affect the building
  - walkways, patios and driveways leading to dwelling entrances

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Exterior**
  - A home inspector **SHALL** describe the exterior wall covering

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Exterior**

- A home inspector is **NOT** required to inspect:
  - Screening, shutters, awnings and similar seasonal accessories
  - Fences
  - Geological, geotechnical or hydrological conditions
  - Recreational facilities
  - Outbuildings
  - Seawalls, break-walls and docks
  - Erosion control and earth stabilization measures

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Roof System**

- A home inspector **SHALL** visually inspect a roof system including:
  - the roof covering
  - roof drainage systems
  - flashings
  - skylights, chimneys, exterior and roof penetrations

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Roof System**

- A home inspector **SHALL** describe the roof covering and report the methods used to inspect the roof



# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Roof System**

- A home inspector is **NOT** required to:
  - **inspect** antennae; interiors of flues or chimneys which are not readily accessible; or other installed accessories
  - **walk on or access** a roof where it could damage the roof or roofing material or be unsafe for the home inspector
  - **remove** snow, ice, debris or other conditions that prohibit the observation of the roof surfaces
  - **determine remaining life expectancy** of roof coverings, the presence or absence of hail damage, manufacturers' defects, exceptions, installation methods or number of layers of roofing material

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Plumbing System**

- A home inspector **SHALL** visually inspect the plumbing system including:
  - interior water supply and distribution systems including all fixtures and faucets
  - drain, waste and vent systems including all fixtures
  - water heating equipment
  - vent systems, flues and chimneys
  - fuel storage and fuel distribution systems
  - the drainage sumps, sump pumps and related piping
  - the functional flow of all fixtures and faucets
  - the functional drainage of all fixtures

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Plumbing System**

- A home inspector **SHALL** describe the plumbing system including:
  - water supply, drain, waste and vent piping materials
  - water heating equipment including the energy source
  - the location of main water and main fuel shut-off valves
  - the presence of CSST with the recommendation that the bonding of the CSST be reviewed by a licensed master electrician.

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Plumbing System**

- A home inspector is **NOT** required to:
  - inspect:
    - the clothes washing machine connections
    - the interiors of flues or chimneys which are not readily accessible
    - wells, well pumps or water storage related equipment
    - water conditioning systems
    - solar water heating systems
    - fire and lawn sprinkler systems
    - private waste disposal systems

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Plumbing System**

- A home inspector is **NOT** required to:
  - determine:
    - whether water supply and waste disposal systems are public or private
    - the Quantity or Quality of the water supply
    - operate safety valves or shut-off valves

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Electrical Systems**

- A home inspector **SHALL** visual inspect an electrical system including:
  - the service drop
  - service entrance conductors, cables and raceways
  - service equipment and main disconnects
  - service grounding
  - Interior components of service panels and sub panels
  - conductors
  - over-current protection devices
  - a representative number of installed lighting fixtures, switches and receptacles
  - ground fault and arc fault circuit interrupters
  - the general condition of visible branch circuit conductors that may constitute a hazard to the occupant or the structure by reason of improper use or installation of electrical components

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Electrical Systems**

- A home inspector **SHALL** describe the electrical system including the:
  - amperage and voltage rating of the service
  - location of main disconnect and sub panels
  - wiring methods

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Electrical Systems**

- If applicable, a home inspector **SHALL** include in a written report the:
  - presence of solid conductor aluminum branch circuit wiring
  - absence of smoke detectors
  - presence of CSST gas piping with the recommendation that the bonding of the CSST be reviewed by a licensed master electrician.



# Specific Provisions of the Standards



## ● Electrical Systems

- A home inspector is **NOT** required to:
  - **inspect:**
    - remote control devices unless the device is the only control device
    - alarm systems and components
    - low voltage wiring, systems and components
    - ancillary wiring systems and components that are not a part of the primary electrical power distribution system
    - the existing bonding method for CSST
  - **measure** amperage, voltage or impedance

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Heating System**

- A home inspector **SHALL** visually inspect:
  - installed heating equipment
  - vent systems, flues and chimneys
  - heating distribution

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Heating System**

- A home inspector **SHALL** describe:
  - energy sources
  - heating methods by distinguishing characteristics and means of distribution

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Heating System**

- A home inspector is **NOT** required to:
  - **inspect:**
    - flue or chimney interiors that are not readily accessible
    - heat exchangers
    - humidifiers or dehumidifiers
    - electronic air filters
    - solar space heating systems
  - **determine** the adequacy of the heat system or the distribution balance

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Air-conditioning System**
  - A home inspector **SHALL** inspect the installed central and through-wall cooling equipment
  - A home inspector **SHALL** describe:
    - energy sources
    - cooling methods by distinguishing characteristics and means of distribution
  - A home inspector is **NOT** required to:
    - inspect electronic air filters
    - determine the adequacy of the cooling system or the distribution balance

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



## ● Interior

- A home inspector **SHALL** visually inspect:
  - walls, ceilings and floors
  - Steps, stairways and railings
  - countertops and a representative number of installed cabinets
  - a representative number of doors and windows
  - garage doors and garage door operators

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Interior**

- A home inspector is **NOT** required to inspect:
  - Paint, wallpaper and other finish treatments
  - carpeting
  - window treatments
  - central vacuum systems
  - household appliances
  - recreational facilities

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Insulation and Ventilation**
  - A home inspector **SHALL** visually inspect:
    - insulation and vapor retarders in unfinished spaces
    - ventilation of attics and foundation areas
    - mechanical ventilation systems



# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Insulation and Ventilation**
  - A home inspector **SHALL** describe:
    - insulation and vapor retarders in unfinished spaces
    - if applicable, the absence of insulation in unfinished spaces at conditioned surfaces

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Insulation and Ventilation**
  - A home inspector is **NOT** required to:
    - disturb insulation or vapor retarders
    - determine indoor air quality

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Fireplaces and Solid Fuel Burning Appliances**
  - A home inspector **SHALL** visually inspect:
    - system components of fireplaces and solid fuel burning appliances
    - vent systems, flues and chimneys

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Fireplaces and Solid Fuel Burning Appliances**
  - A home inspector **SHALL** describe:
    - fireplaces and solid fuel burning appliances
    - chimneys

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Fireplaces and Solid Fuel Burning Appliances**
  - A home inspector is **NOT** required to inspect any of the following:
    - interiors of flues or chimneys
    - fire screens and doors
    - seals and gaskets
    - automatic fuel feed devices
    - mantles and fireplace surrounds
    - combustion make-up air devices
    - gravity controlled and fan assisted heat distribution assists

# Specific Provisions of the Standards



- **Fireplaces and Solid Fuel Burning Appliances**
  - A home inspector is **NOT** required to:
    - ignite or extinguish fires
    - determine draft characteristics
    - move fireplace inserts or stoves or firebox contents

# Maryland Standards of Practice



- Located on the DLLR website:
  - [http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/SubtitleSearch.aspx?search=09.36.\\*](http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/SubtitleSearch.aspx?search=09.36.*)