

STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE FOR THE INSPECTION OF SWIMMING POOLS & SPAS For Arizona Home Inspectors

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STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

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[Glossary](#)

NOTE: *Italicized* words are defined in the Glossary

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 These Standards define the practice of inspection of Swimming Pools & Spas by Home Inspectors.

1.2 These Standards of Practice

- A. provide inspection guidelines.
- B. make public the services provided by private fee-paid [inspectors](#).

2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

2.1 Inspections performed to these Standards shall provide the client with a better understanding of the above and/or below ground swimming pool & spa conditions, as observed at the time of the inspection.

2.2 **Inspectors shall:**

- A. Observe readily accessible installed systems and components listed in these Standards.
- B. submit a written report to the client which shall:
 - 1. Describe systems and components identified in section 4 of these Standards.
 - 2. state which systems and components designated for inspection in these Standards have been inspected and any systems and components designated for inspection in these Standards which were present at the time of the inspection and were not inspected and a reason why they were not inspected.
 - 3. state any systems and components so inspected which were found to be in need of immediate major repair and any recommendations to correct, monitor or evaluate by appropriate persons.

2.3 **These Standards are not intended to limit inspectors from:**

- A. reporting observations and conditions in addition to those required in Section 2.2.
- B. excluding systems and components from the inspection if requested by the client.

3. GENERAL LIMITATIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

3.1 General limitations:

- A. Inspections done in accordance with these Standards are visual, not technically exhaustive and will not identify concealed conditions or latent defects.
- B. These Standards are applicable to swimming pools & spas installed for use with buildings having four or less dwelling units. A swimming pool/spa is defined as a contained body of water that contains water eighteen inches or more in depth at any point and is intended for swimming or immersion.

3.2 General exclusions:

- A. Inspectors are NOT required to report on:
 - 1. life expectancy of any component or system.
 - 2. the causes of the need for a major repair.
 - 3. the methods, materials and costs of corrections.
 - 4. the suitability of the facilities for any specialized use.
 - 5. compliance or non-compliance with applicable regulatory requirements.
 - 6. any component or system which was not observed.
 - 7. the presence or absence of pests such as wood damaging organisms, rodents, or insects.
 - 8. cosmetic items, underground items, or items not permanently installed.
 - 9. the safety of use of any pool or spa component.
- B. Inspectors are NOT required to:
 - 1. offer warranties or guarantees of any kind.
 - 2. calculate the strength, adequacy, efficiency or safety of any system or component.
 - 3. enter any area or perform any procedure which may damage the property or its components or be dangerous to the inspector or other persons.
 - 4. operate any system or component which is shut down or otherwise inoperable.
 - 5. operate any system or component which does not respond to normal operating controls.
 - 6. move personal items, equipment, plant life, soil, snow, ice, or debris which obstructs access or visibility.
 - 7. determine the presence or absence of any suspected hazardous substance or irritants including but not limited to toxins, organisms, carcinogens, noise, chemicals or contaminants.
 - 8. determine the safety of use of any pool or spa component.
 - 9. dismantle any system or component.
 - 10. predict future conditions, including but not limited to failure of components.
 - 11. project operating costs of components.

3.3 Limitations and exclusions specific to individual systems are listed in following section.

4.0 SWIMMING POOL & SPA

The *inspector* shall *observe*:

- A. interior finish materials.
- B. decks, steps and [coping](#).
- C. pumps, motors, blowers, skimmer, filter, drains, heaters, automatic safety controls, gauges, visible piping & valves.
- D. water supply system for [cross connections](#).
- E. external bonding of the pump motors, blowers, heaters and other equipment.
- F. the operation of underwater lighting, ground fault circuit interrupters, conduit, visible electrical components and timer assemblies.
- G. any permanently installed handrails and ladders.
- H. child safe barrier provisions.

The *inspector* shall:

- A. [describe](#):
 - 1. type of pool or spa.
 - 2. interior finish materials.
 - 3. type of filter.
 - 4. type of child safe barrier provision.
 - 5. type of cleaning system (if present).
 - 6. energy source for heater (if present).
- B. operate the [systems](#) using [normal operating controls](#).
- C. open [readily openable access panels](#) provided by the manufacturer or installer for routine homeowner maintenance.

The *inspector* is NOT required to:

- A. operate [systems](#) when weather conditions or other circumstances may cause equipment damage.
- B. operate [automatic safety controls](#) or valves.
- C. come into contact with pool or spa water to examine the system, structure or components.
- D. verify function of electric resistance heaters.
- E. determine structural integrity.
- F. evaluate any equipment not responding to normal operating controls, including that which may be due to the absence of a required energy source such as electricity or gas.

The *inspector* is NOT required to:

G. **observe:**

1. low voltage or [electronic controls](#), water chemistry or clarity, out-of-level conditions, presence or absence of bacteria/algae, operation of backwash, aerators, automatic cleaning systems, automatic water fill systems, water treatment systems, chemical dispensers, thermostats, heating elements, solar heating systems, water features, diving or jump boards, slides and related components, covers and related components, play equipment, accessories.
2. adequacy of system or component design, equipment/component compatibility, flow rates, high or low pressure conditions, adequacy of filters or heaters.
3. leaks in shell or underground components.
4. geological conditions, soil conditions or [structural components](#).
5. child safe barrier adequacy or conformance with local codes and ordinances.

GLOSSARY

Automatic Safety Controls:

Devices designated and [installed](#) to protect [systems](#) and [components](#) from high or low pressures and temperatures, electrical current, loss of water, loss of ignition, fuel leaks, fire, freezing, or other [unsafe](#) conditions.

Client:

A customer who contracts with a home [inspector](#) for a swimming pool and/or spa inspection.

Component:

A [readily accessible](#) and observable aspect of a [system](#), such as heating or filtration.

Coping:

The top decorative sections around a swimming pool or spa perimeter, usually located just above the tile.

Cross Connection:

Any physical connection or arrangement between potable water and any source of contamination.

Dangerous or Adverse Situations:

Situations which pose a threat of injury to the [inspector](#), and those situations that require the use of special protective clothing or safety equipment.

Describe:

Report in writing a [system](#) or [component](#) by its type, or other [observed](#) characteristics, to distinguish it from other [components](#) used for the same purpose.

Dismantle:

To take apart or remove any [component](#), device or piece of equipment that is bolted, screwed, or fastened by other means and that would not be taken apart or removed by a homeowner in the course of normal household maintenance.

Electronic Controls:

Digital, computerized or solid state equipment operation management devices.

Engineering:

Any professional service or creative work requiring education, training, and experience and the application of special knowledge of the mathematical, physical and [engineering](#) sciences

Evaluation by Appropriate Persons:

Examination and analysis by a qualified professional, tradesman, or service technician beyond that provided by the home [inspector](#).

Immediate Major Repair:

A [major defect](#), which if not quickly addressed, will be likely to do any of the following:

1. worsen appreciably
2. cause further damage
3. be a serious hazard to health and/or personal safety

Inspector:

A person certified as a home [Inspector](#) by the Arizona Board of Technical Registration

Installed:

Attached or connected such that the [installed](#) item requires tools for removal.

Major Defect:

A system or component that is [unsafe](#) or not functioning

Normal Operating Controls:

Homeowner operated devices such as a thermostat, timer or switch.

Observe:

The act of making a visual examination of a [system](#) or [component](#) and reporting on its condition.

Readily Accessible

Available for visual inspection without requiring moving of personal property, [dismantling](#), destructive measures, or any action which will likely involve risk to persons or property.

Readily Openable Access Panel:

A panel provided for homeowner inspection and maintenance that has removable or operable fasteners or latch devices in order to be lifted off, swung open, or otherwise removed by one person, and its edges and fasteners are not painted in place. Limited to those panels within normal reach or from a 4-foot stepladder, and which are not blocked by stored items, furniture, or building [components](#).

Shut Down:

A piece of equipment whose safety switch or circuit breaker is in the "off" position, or its fuse is missing or blown, or a [system](#) that cannot be operated by the device or control that a home owner should normally use to operate it.

Structural Component:

A [component](#) that supports non-variable forces or weights (dead loads) and variable forces or weights (live loads). For purposes of this definition, a dead load is the fixed weight of a structure or piece of equipment, such as a roof structure on bearing walls, and a live load is a moving variable weight added to the dead load or intrinsic weight of a structure.

System:

A combination of interacting or interdependent [components](#), assembled to carry out one or more functions.

Technically Exhaustive:

An inspection is *technically exhaustive* when it involves the use of measurements, instruments, testing, calculations, and other means to develop scientific or [engineering](#) findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

Unsafe:

A condition in a readily accessible, installed [system](#) or [component](#) which is judged to be a significant risk of personal injury during normal, day to day use. The risk may be due to damage, deterioration, improper installation or a change in adopted residential construction standards.