



NATIONAL ACADEMY OF BUILDING INSPECTION ENGINEERS
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NATIONAL ACADEMY OF BUILDING INSPECTION ENGINEERS

STANDARD OF PRACTICE

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Introduction

NABIE members have demonstrated competence involving inspection of buildings and building systems. This can include site conditions, structure, building envelope, mechanical, electrical, plumbing and other major systems. Demonstrated engineering judgment is the primary basis for work performed under these guidelines and they are applicable to any building regardless of use. This is a performance standard and not a prescriptive procedure.

Purpose

Building Inspections are undertaken for many purposes. These can include anything from determining general condition to investigating specific problems or suitability for a current or proposed use. The purpose is developed to suit the needs of each Client. Depending on circumstances, these needs vary.

Scope

This Standard of Practice guides inspection of buildings performed by Professional Engineers or Registered Architects accredited by NABIE membership. The level of inspection and limitations are to be determined by mutual consent of the Building Inspection Engineer and Client. Based upon anticipated needs, typical inspection services will be generally defined at one of the following levels:

LEVEL A – VISUAL INSPECTION

Visual inspection of specified systems and components in a representative manner from locations accessible to ordinary users.

Inspection results and conclusions shall be presented in a verbal or written summary. This may be supplemented with other documentation.

LEVEL B – FUNCTIONAL INSPECTION

Level A plus more detailed observation of specified systems or components, with documentation by written report. This may require accessing areas normally not accessible to ordinary users.

Results and conclusions shall be presented in a written report bearing the official seal of the Building Inspection Engineer. The report shall include a basic description of the building or specific components inspected, listing of apparent deficiencies and subjective opinions regarding serviceability or need for repair. Any measurements may be presented in visual or tabular formats as judged appropriate by the Building Inspection Engineer. Major items which were restricted from inspection or outside the expertise of the Building Inspection Engineer shall also be listed. The report may contain limitations and recommendations for further evaluation as judged necessary by the Building Inspection Engineer.

LEVEL C – SPECIALIZED INSPECTION

Level B plus more comprehensive evaluation of specified systems or components, using specialized equipment, historical research, functional testing, analysis or other tasks deemed necessary by the Building Inspection Engineer. This may require invasive techniques, material removal or destructive testing.

The report may include supporting calculations as well as sketches and annotated images. Standards used in developing the report shall be cited when appropriate.

LEVEL D – REMEDIAL DESIGN AND REPAIR

Level C plus design or detailed consideration of repair options or improvements generally beyond the scope of Building Inspection.

Written reports may include working drawings or detailed specification.

General

NABIE members may exceed the scope of these defined levels. The Building Inspection Engineer may estimate a range of probable costs for repair, remediation, replacement or demolition if agreed to by both parties.

Report formats and nomenclature are at the sole discretion of the Building Inspection Engineer. Any reporting shall demonstrate the proficiency of NABIE accreditation while conforming to the Code of Ethics of NSPE.

Confidentiality agreements shall not prevent notification to others when required to protect the safety, health, and welfare of the public. The Building Inspection Engineer shall exercise reasonable and ordinary measures for care but is not responsible for correcting defects which arise during inspection activity.

Glossary

ACCESSIBLE - Can be approached, entered or viewed without moving items, probing, using specialized tools, damaging property or disassembly, and without physical limitation or danger to the Building Inspection Engineer.

BUILDING - An assembly of systems constituting a structure intended for a particular use.

BUILDING INSPECTION – The application of Professional Engineering judgment to examine, measure, test or use other methods to identify defects, determine condition or otherwise evaluate buildings, materials, components, systems, and environments. The Building Inspection is performed according to the NABIE Standard of Practice.

BUILDING INSPECTION ENGINEER – A Professional Engineer or Registered Architect duly licensed and registered to practice engineering or architecture in the governmental jurisdiction and accredited by NABIE membership.

CLIENT – Individual or organization having responsibility, control, or legal access over or to the building being assessed.

COMPONENT – A portion of a building that, for the purpose of evaluation, can be isolated from the remainder of the building.

DEFICIENCY – A condition adversely and materially affecting the performance of a system or component, as judged by the Building Inspection Engineer at the time of inspection. Examples of deficiencies include but are not limited to: Inoperability, water damage, deterioration, missing parts, unsuitable installation and expired useful life.

DESTRUCTIVE TESTING – Process of observing, inspecting, and measuring the properties of materials, components or systems in a manner which may change, damage, or destroy the properties of or affect the service life of the test specimen. Destructive testing can include in-situ as well as off site testing modalities.

EVALUATION – Application of expertise and subjective judgment to determine the condition of a building, system or component.

NON-DESTRUCTIVE TESTING – Assessment of a material, component or system without altering properties or impairing future service.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD – A method of evaluation requiring the knowledge, qualifications and judgment of a Building Inspection Engineer, not limited to the elements of prescriptive procedures used by paraprofessionals or tradespersons.

SYSTEM – An assembly of components within a building that by interconnection permit delivery of a specific building function.

STANDARD – Considered by technical authority or professional peer review as a basis of comparison.

WRITTEN REPORT – Findings presented in a format judged suitable for reproduction or distribution. Where allowed, Written Reports may be delivered electronically.