

## **PART IV.**

### **MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR CONDUCTING CERTIFIED HOME INSPECTIONS**

#### **18VAC15-40-120. Certified home inspection contract.**

- A. For the protection of both the client and the certificate holder, both parties shall sign a legible written contract clearly specifying the terms, conditions, and limitations and exclusions of the work to be performed.
  
- B. At a minimum, the written contract shall include:
  - 1. Name, business name (if applicable), business address, and telephone number of the certified home inspector.
  - 2. Certificate number and expiration date of the certified home inspector.
  - 3. Name of the clients.
  - 4. Physical address of the residential properties to be inspected.
  - 5. Cost and method of payment of the certified home inspection.
  - 6. A listing of all areas and systems to be inspected, including those inspections that are either partial or limited in scope.
  - 7. To the extent that any of the following categories are not covered by the home inspection, they shall be noted as exclusions in the inspection contract:
    - a. The condition of systems or components that are not readily accessible.
    - b. The remaining life of any system or component.
    - c. The strength, adequacy, effectiveness, or efficiency of any system or component.
    - d. The causes of any condition or deficiency.
    - e. The methods, materials, or costs of corrections.
    - f. Future conditions including, but not limited to, failure of systems and components.

- g. The suitability of the property for any specialized use.
- h. Compliance with regulatory requirements (codes, including the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, regulations, laws, ordinances, etc.).
- i. The market value of the property or its marketability.
- j. The advisability of the purchase of the property.
- k. The presence of diseases harmful to humans or potentially hazardous plants or animals including, but not limited to, wood destroying organisms and mold.
- l. The presence of any environmental hazards including, but not limited to, toxins, carcinogens, noise, asbestos, lead-based paint, mold, radon, and contaminants in soil, water, and air.
- m. The effectiveness of any system installed or methods utilized to control or remove suspected hazardous substances.
- n. The operating costs of systems or components.
- o. The acoustical properties of any system or component.
- p. The presence of components involved in manufacturer's recalls.
- q. The inspection of outbuildings.

To the extent any other items are not specifically included in the home inspection by agreement of the parties, they shall also be noted as exclusions in the inspection contract.

- 8. Expected delivery date to the client of the certified home inspection report.
- 9. Dated signatures of both the certified home inspector and the client or the client's authorized representative.

C. The certified home inspection contract shall make written disclosure that the certified home inspection report is based upon visual observation of existing conditions of the inspected property at the time of the inspection and is not intended to be, or to be construed as, a guarantee, warranty, or any form of insurance.

- D. If the certified home inspector recommends a person to the client for repairs or modifications to the inspected property, the certified home inspector shall disclose to the client all financial interests that the certified home inspector has with the recommended person. The disclosure shall be written within the certified home inspection contract.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 19, Issue 18, eff. July 1, 2003; Volume 27, Issue 11, eff. April 1, 2011.*

**18VAC15-40-130. Certified home inspection report.**

- A. Certified home inspection reports shall contain:
1. The name, business address and telephone number of the certificate holder as well as his certificate number and expiration date;
  2. The name, address, and telephone number of the client or the client's authorized representative, if available at the time of the inspection;
  3. The physical address of the residential properties inspected; and
  4. The date, time (to include both start and finish times of the inspection), and weather conditions at the time of the certified home inspection.
- B. In conducting a certified home inspection and reporting its findings, the certified home inspector, at a minimum, shall inspect the condition of and shall describe in writing the composition/characteristics of the following readily accessible components and readily observable defects, except as may be limited in the certified home inspection contract agreement:
1. Structural system.
    - a. Foundation.
    - b. Framing.
    - c. Stairs.
    - d. Crawl space, the method of inspecting the crawl space shall be noted and explained in the inspection report. If the crawl space

cannot be inspected, the certificate holder shall explain in the inspection report why this component was not inspected.

- e. Crawl space ventilation and vapor barriers.
  - f. Slab floor, when present.
  - g. Floors, ceilings, and walls.
2. Roof structure, attic, and insulation.
- a. Roof covering. The method of inspecting the roof covering shall be noted and explained in the inspection report. If the roof covering cannot be inspected, the certificate holder shall explain in the inspection report why this component was not inspected.
  - b. Roof ventilation.
  - c. Roof drainage system, to include gutters and downspouts.
  - d. Roof flashings, if readily visibly.
  - e. Skylights, chimneys, and roof penetrations, but not antennae or other roof attachments.
  - f. Roof framing and sheathing.
  - g. Attic, unless area is not readily accessible.
  - h. Attic insulation.
3. Exterior of dwelling.
- a. Wall covering, flashing, and trim.
  - b. Readily accessible doors and windows, but not the operation of associated security locks, devices, or systems.
  - c. Attached, or adjacent and on the same property, decks, balconies, stoops, steps, porches, carports, and any associated railings, but not associated screening, shutters, awnings, storm windows, garages, or storm doors.
  - d. Eaves, soffits, and fascias where readily accessible from ground level.

- e. Walkways, grade steps, patios, and driveways, but not fences or privacy walls.
  - f. Vegetation, trees, grading, drainage, and any retaining walls in contact with or adjacent to the dwelling that may affect the dwelling.
  - g. Visible exterior portions of chimneys.
4. Interior of dwelling.
- a. Readily accessible interior walls, ceilings, and floors of dwelling and any attached or adjacent garage.
  - b. Steps, stairways, railings, and balconies and associated railings.
  - c. Countertops and installed cabinets, including hardware.
  - d. Readily accessible doors and windows, but not the operation of associated security locks, devices, or systems.
  - e. Garage doors and permanently mounted and installed garage door operators. The automatic safety reverse function of garage door openers shall be tested, either by physical obstruction as specified by the manufacturer, or by breaking the beam of the electronic photo eye but only when the test can be safely performed and will not risk damage to the door, the opener, any nearby structure, or any stored items.
  - f. Fireplaces, including flues, venting systems, hearths, dampers, and fireboxes, but not mantles, fire screens and doors, seals and gaskets.
  - g. Solid fuel burning appliances if applicable.
5. Plumbing system.
- a. Interior water supply and distribution systems, including water supply lines and all fixtures and faucets, but not water conditioning systems or fire sprinkler systems.
  - b. Water drainage, waste, and vent systems, including all fixtures.
  - c. Drainage sumps, sump pumps, and related piping.

- d. Water heating equipment, including energy source and related vent systems, flues, and chimneys, but not solar water heating systems.
  - e. Fuel storage and distribution systems for visible leaks.
6. Electrical system.
- a. Service drop.
  - b. Service entrance conductors, cables, and raceways.
  - c. Service equipment and main disconnects.
  - d. Service grounding.
  - e. Interior components of service panels and sub panels, including feeders.
  - f. Conductors.
  - g. Overcurrent protection devices.
  - h. Readily accessible installed lighting fixtures, switches, and receptacles.
  - i. Ground fault circuit interrupters.
  - j. Presence or absence of smoke detectors.
  - k. Presence of solid conductor aluminum branch circuit wiring.
  - l. Arc fault interrupters shall be noted if installed but not tested if equipment is attached to them.
7. Heating system.
- a. Heating equipment, including operating controls, but not heat exchangers, gas logs, built-in gas burning appliances, grills, stoves, space heaters, solar heating devices, or heating system accessories such as humidifiers, air purifiers, motorized dampers, and heat reclaimers.
  - b. Energy source.
  - c. Heating distribution system.

- d. Vent systems, flues, and chimneys, including dampers.
8. Air conditioning system.
- a. Central and installed wall air conditioning equipment.
  - b. Operating controls, access panels, and covers.
  - c. Energy source.
  - d. Cooling distribution system.
- C. Systems in the home that are turned off, winterized, or otherwise secured so that they do not respond to normal activation using standard operating controls need not be put into operating condition. The certified home inspector shall state, in writing, the reason these systems or components were not tested.

***Historical Notes***

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 19, Issue 18, eff. July 1, 2003; Volume 27, Issue 11, eff. April 1, 2011.*