

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

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The Arizona Pool and Spa Standards are adopted from the American Society of Home Inspectors Standards of Professional Practice for Residential Swimming Pool and Spa Inspections, with Arizona made modifications and amendments authorized by the Board of Directors of the Arizona Chapter of the American Society of Home Inspectors, when adopted by this Chapter on March 11, 2011.

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STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

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NOTE: *Italicized* words are defined in the Glossary

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 These Standards define the practice of Swimming Pool & Spa Inspections in the State of Arizona.

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 swimming pool & spa conditions, as observed at the time of the inspection.

A. These Standards apply only to swimming pools and spas installed at a property with a single family residential structure.

B. Swimming pool/spa is defined as a contained body of water that is eighteen inches or more in depth at any point and this is intended for swimming or immersion.

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. Observe and Describe systems and components identified in section 3 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 further 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. SWIMMING POOL & SPA

3.1 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 and valves.
- D. water supply systems for *cross connections*.
- E. external bonding of the pump motors, blowers, and heaters.
- F. conduit, visible electrical components, and the operation of underwater lighting, ground fault circuit interrupters, and timer assemblies.
- G. permanently installed handrails and ladders.
- H. for the presence of child safe barrier provisions.
- I. for the presence of *entrapment prevention components*.

3.2 The *inspector shall*:

- A. *describe*:
 - 1. type of pool or spa.
 - 2. primary interior finish material.
 - 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 open able access panels* provided by the manufacturer or installer for routine homeowner maintenance.

4. GENERAL LIMITATIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

4.1 General limitations:

- A. Inspections performed in accordance with these Standards are visual, are not technically exhaustive and will not identify concealed conditions or latent defects.

4.2 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, or the enclosures for systems, components, of equipment.
5. the condition of components that are not visible and/or readily accessible.
6. compliance or non-compliance with applicable regulatory requirements, building codes, or manufacturer instructions, drawings, and specifications.
7. any component or system which was not observed.
8. the presence or absence of pests such as wood damaging organisms, rodents, or insects.
9. external bonding of equipment or components other than pump motors, blowers and heaters.
10. cosmetic items, underground items, or items not permanently installed.
11. the safety of use of any pool or spa component.
12. the adequacy of operation, maintenance, and use of the pool/spa and of any component.
13. whether any item, material, condition or component is subject to recall, controversy, litigation, product liability or other adverse claim or condition.
14. the structural integrity of any system or component.
15. the adequacy of system and component design, and of filters and heaters.
16. the adequacy of child safe barriers and of entrapment prevention components, nor the conformity of these barriers or components with local codes and ordinances.
17. equipment/component compatibility.
18. flow rates and high or low pressure conditions.
19. leaks in the shell or underground components.
20. geological and soil conditions.
21. the strength, adequacy, efficiency or safety of any system or component.

- B. Inspectors are NOT required to:

1. observe component interiors that are not readily accessible.
2. offer warranties or guarantees of any kind.
3. calculate the strength, adequacy, efficiency or safety of any system or component.
4. enter any area or perform any procedure which may damage the property or its components or be dangerous to the inspector or other persons.
5. operate any system or component which is shut down or otherwise inoperable.
6. operate any system or component which does not respond to normal operating controls.
7. move personal items, equipment, plant life, soil, snow, ice, or debris which obstructs access or visibility.
8. determine the presence or absence of any suspected hazardous substance or irritants, including but not limited to noise, toxins, molds, algae, allergens, organisms, carcinogens, electromagnetic radiation, radioactive substances, combustibles, corrosive or reactive chemicals or contaminants, or the adequacy of their storage facilities.
9. determine the safety of use of any pool or spa component.
10. dismantle any system or component.
11. predict future conditions, including but not limited to failure of components.
12. project operating costs of components.
13. perform any act or service contrary to law or regulation.
14. perform architectural, engineering, or surveying services, or to confirm or evaluate such services performed by others.
15. perform any trade or professional service other than as required in these Standards.
16. operate systems when weather conditions or other circumstances may cause equipment damage.
17. test or operate valves and automatic safety controls.
18. come into contact with pool or spa water to examine the systems, structure, or components.
19. test, operate, or evaluate electric resistance heaters.
20. determine the temperature, temperature fluctuation, rate of temperature rise, or the time needed to obtain hot water, of any pool or spa heater.
21. test, operate, or evaluate water features, fountains, diving and jump boards, slides, and similar play equipment, or evaluate the suitability of the pool or spa for the use of such equipment, or for activities such as diving.
22. test, operate, or evaluate timers, low voltage or electronic controls, stray voltage, thermostats, heating elements, solar and other alternative energy heating systems.
23. evaluate water chemistry or clarity, or presence or absence of bacteria/algae.
24. operate systems including backwash, aerators, automatic cleaners, automatic water fills, water treatment or chemical dispenser systems.
25. evaluate the interior of components and filters including filter cartridges, and related components and accessories, or back-flow prevention devices.
26. evaluate the condition of manual, or the condition and operation of automatic, pool or spa covers.
27. observe underground items and items not permanently installed.
28. determine the differential between original construction and subsequent additions or modifications, or evaluate out-of-level conditions.

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.

Child Safe Barrier:

A component, such as a fence or a door or a window alarm, that helps restrict access to a swimming pool/spa.

Client:

A customer who contracts with an inspector for a swimming pool and/or spa inspection.

Component:

A readily accessible and observable part of a system.

Coping:

The top sections around a swimming pool or spa perimeter, capping the structural walls of the pool/spa.

Cosmetic Items:

Defects that are superficial and that do not significantly affect a component's ability to function properly.

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, low voltage or solid state equipment operation management devices.

Entrapment Prevention Components:

A *component*, such as a suction cover, installed within the swimming pool/spa water circulation system that helps prevent a person from being held underwater at a suction outlet.

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

Evaluate by Appropriate Persons:

Examination and analysis by a qualified professional, tradesman, or service technician using techniques and/or expertise that are beyond the scope of inspection performed in accordance with these Standards.

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:

Devices, such as thermostats and switches, intended to be operated by the homeowner.

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 the removal of personal property, *dismantling*, destructive measures, or any action which will likely involve risk to persons or property.

Readily Open able Access Panel:

A panel provided for homeowner inspection and maintenance that is *readily accessible*, within normal reach, can be removed by one person, and is not sealed in place.

Shut Down:

A state in which a *system* or *component* cannot be operated by *normal operating controls*.

Structural Component:

A component that supports non-variable forces or weights (dead loads) and variable forces or weights (live loads).

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, or improper installation.