



Changes to the WETT Paths to Certification

Earlier this year, WETT initiated a review of its certification process, prompted by elements affecting the certification program.

There is a growing concern about the need for more direction and training regarding the inspection of wood burning appliances. Inspections require knowledge of the applicable codes, the nature and types of appliances and installations, and the processes to complete an inspection.

Two concerns were identified and explored by WETT: the first being the degree and type of training necessary to properly train professionals for the inspection of wood burning appliances and the second being the clarification of what is involved in the inspection process.

These discussions resulted in several major initiatives for WETT:

- a review and update of core course materials,
- the adoption of a new inspection process,
- the development of new inspection courses, and
- the adoption of a new certification process to support these changes.

WETT AGM

The 2009 WETT Annual General Meeting will be held on May 29, 2009 in Winnipeg, Manitoba at 4 pm. Watch the WETT website for further updates.

Details about the updated course materials and the new inspection process can be found in this newsletter.

To accommodate the new inspection courses into the WETT path to certification, several changes were made:

1. All paths to certification (inspection, technician, advisor and chimney sweeping) must start with the Code Compliance course, followed by the Woodburning Systems course and then the SITE Basic Inspection course.
2. To be certified as a sweep, in addition to the courses listed above, successful completion of the Chimney Sweeping course is also necessary.

Rationale

The changes made to the WETT path system were made with three critical factors in mind: the safety of the millions of Canadian wood burners; the importance of providing proper professional training for all those involved in the inspection, sales, installation and maintenance of wood burning appliances; and the integrity of WETT as Canada's recognized training organization for the wood heat industry.

We anticipate some concerns will be raised about the need for more training. The development of this new certification path was carefully considered and is the result of six months of discussions, meetings and more meetings. Here is the list of the major changes to the WETT certification path.

Inspectors

Several years ago, after numerous concerns were brought to WETT's attention about inspectors missing key compliance issues during the inspection process, we decided

continued on page 2

to remove the Basic Inspection course from the available course list and mandated that inspectors take the Woodburning Systems course. After careful analysis and consultation, we recognized that inspectors required a better understanding of the installation process for the various types of installations. This met with some resistance but we were confident that this additional training would better equip inspectors to properly inspect appliances for code compliance. The requirement to take the Woodburning Systems course for Basic Visual Inspection certification is maintained under the new path to certification process. The SITE Basic Inspection course is a new course and is mandatory for all levels of certification. The inspection, installation and maintenance of a wood burning appliance requires some element of an inspection process, which is clearly outlined in the new SITE program. Consequently, the SITE Basic Inspection course is now an essential component of the WETT system.

Chimney sweeps

The training requirements for sweeps was strengthened to ensure that proper training is provided in all elements of system maintenance. The additional requirement of taking the Woodburning Systems course provides sweeps with a stronger base of training to assist them in their business.



New WETT course formats

Big changes are on the horizon for those taking WETT courses this fall. Earlier this year, WETT embarked on the ambitious and much overdue project of updating the core certification courses. This year, the Code Compliance, Woodburning Systems and the Chimney Sweeping courses were overhauled.

These courses were all put into an electronic presentation format using PowerPoint. This technology allows us to incorporate numerous pictures, diagrams and case studies to enhance the learning experience. Studies have shown that the majority of adults are visual learners, so the improved graphics make the courses more interesting. They also increase the students' understanding and make it easier to remember information.

The course materials were pilot-tested with instructors and students and the initial feedback from participants has been excellent. In early September, a national instructor's meeting was held. Instructors were invited to Toronto to spend three days learning, practising and providing valuable feedback.

A professional training organization spent time providing a refresher on presentation skills, followed by practice sessions with each instructor. "Investing in our instructors is an integral component of the success of WETT's training system," said Anthony Laycock, WETT's Executive Director. "As a training organization, our commitment must be to develop top notch training materials and to provide continued training and support to our instructors. The work done this year in developing new course materials and the training of our instructors has been exceptional and will assist all involved in the WETT certification program," Anthony added.

Thanks go out to the numerous people involved in the update of these course materials and special thanks are extended to Jan Herald, Don Herald and Marshall Byle, who headed the course update project.

New Inspection courses coming

SITE (System Inspection & Technical Evaluations) is the name of the new inspection process and courses that WETT will be releasing shortly. SITE is a set of standardized guidelines and procedures that will be recommended by WETT for the inspection and/or evaluation of wood-burning systems. The SITE system was developed by Master Sweep and Master Technician Brian Yanik. Brian has been working with WETT to incorporate this process into the WETT system.

The approach

The approach WETT is adopting is a levels of inspection process, where the inspection scope is defined for each level. This process has some basis in code NFPA 211 (Standard for Chimneys, Fireplaces, Vents and Solid Fuel Burning Appliances) in the U.S., which outlines levels of recommended inspection processes to help American homeowners better understand the level of work required to adequately examine a system. This new standard now classifies chimney and venting system inspections into three levels: Level I, Level II or Level III. Each level of inspection has a specific scope of work and specific criteria.

This standard has been adapted to address the Canadian marketplace. WETT has been working with the CSA (Canadian Standards Association) to have the SITE table incorporated in the next edition of the B365. The addition of the table has been approved by CSA. The next edition of the B365 is due for release in 2011.

Three levels of inspection are defined in the SITE inspection system.

Level 1—Readily Accessible

Readily Accessible can be described as quickly or easily reached for inspection. It would not require the use of special tools for opening or the removal of any panel, door or other covering; nor would it require the use of ladders. A tape measure, light, mirror, hammer, camera, magnifying glass and binoculars shall comprise the minimum tools required to perform this type of inspection.

Level 2—Accessible

Accessible can be described as being able to be reached for the purpose of inspection/evaluation, service/maintenance or repair. Access could first require the moving or removal of a panel, door or other covering; and could require the use of ladders and common tools such as a screwdriver, wrench, hammer or related service tools/equipment. Access does not require any invasive action to the building or property.

Level 3—Concealed Accessibility

Concealed Accessibility can be described as accessible only by invasive means. This may require the removal of constructed (but not structural) areas of the system or building, to gain access for the purpose of implementing a Level 3 inspection/evaluation. It may also require the use of specialty tools and equipment, such as a video scanning device or flue tile removal system.

The courses

To integrate this new approach into the WETT system, two new SITE inspection courses are being developed for release in early 2009.

The first course will be called SITE Basic Inspection. This one-day course is designed for all WETT members and is intended to provide an overview of the SITE system and the proper procedures and protocols to conduct a SITE inspection. The focus of the course will be on level 1 SITE inspections. Successful completion of this course will result in the certification SITE Basic Inspection. The prerequisites for the SITE Basic Inspection course are the Code Compliance and Woodburning Systems courses.

The second course being developed is called SITE Comprehensive Inspection. This one-day course is designed for more experienced WETT professionals and will focus on the principles and practices of level 2 and 3 SITE inspections. Successful completion of this course will result in the certification SITE Comprehensive Inspection. The prerequisites for the SITE Comprehensive Inspection course are the Code Compliance course, Woodburning Systems course, SITE Basic Inspection course and the Chimney Sweeping course.

The SITE Basic Inspection course is scheduled for release in the first quarter of 2009.

How do the new **Paths to Certification** affect me?

Q I have **Basic Visual Inspection** certification but have yet to successfully complete the **Woodburning Systems** course.

A You must complete the **Woodburning Systems** and the **SITE Basic Inspection** courses before your next course is due. If your CE credit is due in 2008, you have an extension until end of 2009 to complete the **Woodburning Systems**. You must also complete the **SITE Basic Inspection** course before the end of 2010.

Q I have **Basic Visual Inspection** certification and have successfully completed the **Woodburning Systems** course.

A You must complete the **SITE Basic Inspection** course before your next course is due. If your CE credit is due in 2008, you have an extension until the end of 2009 to complete the course.

Q I have **Technician and/or Advisor** certification and have successfully completed the **Woodburning Systems** course.

A You must complete the **SITE Basic Inspection** course before your next course is due. If your CE credit is due in 2008, you have an extension until the end of 2009 to complete the course.

Q I achieved **Technician and/or Advisor** certification before 1990 with the original three-day "A" course.

A You must complete the **SITE Basic Inspection** course before your next course is due. If your CE credit is due in 2008, you have an extension until the end of 2009 to complete the course.

Q I achieved **Technician and/or Advisor** certification between 1991 and 1998 with the four-day "A1" course.

A You must complete the **SITE Basic Inspection** course before your next course is due. If your CE credit is due in 2008, you have an extension until the end of 2009 to complete the course.

Q I have **Chimney Sweeping** certification and have already successfully completed the **Woodburning Systems** course.

A You must complete the **SITE Basic Inspection** course before your next course is due. If your CE credit is due in 2008, you have an extension until the end of 2009 to complete the course.

Q I have **Chimney Sweeping** certification but have yet to successfully complete the **Woodburning Systems** course.

A You must complete the **Woodburning Systems** and **SITE Basic Inspection** courses before your next course is due. If your CE credit is due in 2008, you have an extension until end of 2009 to complete the **Woodburning Systems** course and you must complete the **SITE Basic Inspection** course before the end of 2010.

Q I have taken the **Woodburning Systems** course but did not pass the exam.

A You must rewrite your **Woodburning Systems** exam within two years of having taken the course. Then you must successfully complete the **SITE Basic Inspection** course for certification.

Q I am a **Student member** who rewrote the **Woodburning Systems** exam but did not pass the rewrite.

A You must complete the **Woodburning Systems** and **SITE Basic Inspection** courses.

Q I have achieved **Master or Advanced** certification.

A You must complete the **SITE Basic Inspection** and **SITE Comprehensive Inspection** courses within the next five years. You must achieve 85% or higher on both of these exams and any further **WETT** course exams in order to maintain your **Master or Advanced** certification.