



**WOOD ENERGY TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER**

**Standards of Practice: Inspections**

Revised August 3, 2021

## TABLE OF CONTENTS:

<b>A.</b> Scope of work (inspections) .....	<b>3</b>
<b>B.</b> Pre-inspection work .....	<b>3</b>
<b>C.</b> Relationships with clients .....	<b>4</b>
<b>D.</b> Competence and integrity .....	<b>4</b>
<b>E.</b> Scenarios to consider .....	<b>5</b>
<b>F.</b> Inspection process .....	<b>6</b>
<b>G.</b> Documentation and records of work completed .....	<b>6</b>
<b>H.</b> Confidentiality and privacy .....	<b>6</b>
<b>I.</b> Fees .....	<b>7</b>
<b>J.</b> Advertising and representation .....	<b>7</b>



## PREFACE

These standards of practice are a set of guidelines to assist WETT certificate holders when completing an inspection of solid-fuel-burning systems. Standards of practice are a uniform approach to completing inspections and facilitate inspection consistency.

The information contained in these materials is directed to those who have the appropriate degree of experience to use and apply its contents. Any person seeking to apply or consult these standards of practice is expected to use independent judgement and skills during the course of the inspection and seek additional information and guidance as required. The content of the standard of practice is not in any way intended to supersede nor detract from any requirements contained in municipal, provincial or federal by-laws, regulations or legislation, nor detract from any other professional standards users are required to follow.

© Wood Energy Technology Transfer Inc. 2021

## A. SCOPE OF WORK (INSPECTIONS)

All inspectors should fully understand the levels of inspections and what they entail. They should be able to clearly explain the levels and communicate to the client what they are **qualified** and **certified** to do. The levels of inspections are documented in the *WETT Reference Manual*, chapter 14. The WETT Public SITE Table can assist with a simple explanation to the client. The WETT Member SITE Table provides clear direction for members on the scope of **Visual**, **Technical** and **Invasive** Inspections, which are included below:

1. **Visual Inspection:** This inspection includes the following:
  - a. Measurements of clearances,
  - b. Opening stove doors and all ground-accessible dampers/clean-out doors
  - c. Visual inspection of the chimney from the ground
  - d. WETT report documenting all noted deficiencies and red flags that may require a more detailed inspection, including all mandatory photos in the WETT Inspection SOP.
  - e. Easily visible portions of the flue (such as first tiles of an open fireplace or top section if the inspector has accessed the roof)
2. **Technical Inspection:** This inspection includes the following:
  - a. All visual elements of the system as indicated in **Visual** Inspection
  - b. Hands-on work which may include:
    - i. Taking apart flue pipes
    - ii. Opening clean-outs
    - iii. Entering the attic to view additional system components
    - iv. Accessing the chimney on the roof
  - c. Review of condition of components removed or exposed through hands-on work and quantity of creosote noted in components and where visible in chimney sections
  - d. All observations and recommendations documented on WETT Inspection forms, including work completed and areas accessed, along with all mandatory photos.
3. **Invasive Inspection:** This inspection includes the following:
  - a. All visual elements of the system as indicated in **Visual** Inspection
  - b. All hands-on work as indicated in **Technical** Inspection
  - c. General construction work to building elements including:
    - i. Opening of walls or ceilings
    - ii. Disassembly or invasive work on masonry or prefab chimneys
    - iii. Examination of chimney liners
  - d. All observations and recommendations documented on WETT Inspection forms, including work completed and areas accessed, along with mandatory photos.

## B. PRE-INSPECTION WORK

Prior to setting out to complete a **WETT Inspection**, follow these steps:

1. Ensure that you are prepared for weather and travel conditions, including potential limitations based upon snow, rain, ice, or extreme heat.
2. Confirm that you have the proper tools and resource materials for the level of inspection that you are completing, including:
  - a. *WETT Reference Manual*
  - b. Latest version of CAN-CSA B365
  - c. Appropriate building codes and standards
  - d. WETT Inspection checklists
  - e. Copy of the WETT Public SITE Table to discuss and leave with client (if not previously provided)
3. Ensure that you are prepared to follow any workplace safety and health requirements.
4. Tools, at a minimum, for each level of inspection would include the following:
  - Visual Inspection:**
    - Measuring tape
    - Mirror
    - Flashlight
    - Camera
  - Technical Inspection:**
    - Tools for a Visual Inspection
    - Ladder
    - Hand tools including screwdrivers, wrenches and pliers

### Invasive Inspection:

- Tools for a Visual and Technical Inspection
- Specialty tools such as video scanning, or other equipment utilized by installers or chimney sweeps
- Power tools including drills, saws or other equipment based upon work required



## C. RELATIONSHIPS WITH CLIENTS

Communication with the client prior to completing the inspection should include discussions on the following:

1. Verify that you have complete customer contact information including address, phone number, email, etc.
2. Confirm that the appliance will not be operating at the time of inspection.
3. Determine if a copy of the owner's/installation manual is available for all components of the system.
4. Verify the time of the appointment and the expected duration.
5. Confirm the Level of Inspection and what it will and will not include.
6. Notify the client that you will be taking photographs.
7. When discussing the type of appliance, ask questions similar to the following:
  - a. How old is the appliance and chimney?
  - b. When was it installed?
  - c. What type of appliance is it? (freestanding, insert, prefab fireplace, pellet)
  - d. Where is the appliance installed?
  - e. Is there a label on the stove?
  - f. Are there any operational issues? (Technical or Invasive Inspections)
8. Optionally, you may request photos of the appliance, accessories and chimney be forwarded to you prior to the inspection.
9. If there is any contradiction between information obtained during the client communication and photos received, follow up with a second phone call to clarify details and expectations. It may be determined that a **Technical** or **Invasive Inspection** is required.
10. If the answers to the questions warrant caution, advise the customer that the appliance should not be operated until such time that it has been inspected by a qualified WETT-certified person.
11. If you believe that the inspection is outside your expertise or abilities (know your limitations), it is your responsibility to declare this and take appropriate measures or make appropriate recommendations.
12. Discuss when they should expect a final report.
13. Confirm when, from whom and method of payment required, along with fees agreed to.



## D. COMPETENCE AND INTEGRITY

The WETT-certified inspector should follow the conduct as outlined in the current Code of Ethics posted on the WETT website, *WETT Reference Manual* and photo ID card. It is the responsibility of each inspector to stay up to date with any changes in procedures and updates to the Code of Ethics.

Inspectors should always possess a functional knowledge of the systems that they are inspecting. Without this basic knowledge, it is impossible for there to be confidence in the evaluation of the system. At times, additional research is required prior to completing an inspection.

If you are unable to fully view or access the component noted on the form, you must mark Unable To Inspect (UTI) on the form. You must clearly communicate to the client why the term UTI is used and what it means.

To determine the correct standards to apply for each system and installation, comply with the following:

1. Confirm that there is a "Recognized in Canada" Certification Label on the Appliance, Venting System Component(s) and Accessories (where accessories are relevant to compliance of the system).
2. Confirm that the Installation Manual is consistent with the information on the Certification Label.
3. Where there is incomplete, confusing or contradictory information in the Installation Manual, determine with the client who will contact the Manufacturer or Certification Agency for official documentation in writing (email). Encourage the client to keep this documentation with the appliance.
4. If certification cannot be determined, always revert to the current version of CAN-CSA B365.

### CERTIFICATION QUESTIONS AND GREY AREAS

At times, there may be some "grey areas" for which specific direction cannot be found in the current version of the CAN-CSA B365, manufacturers' documentation, the *WETT Reference Manual*, or other Canadian codes and standards.

Where information is incomplete, confusing or contradictory, refer to the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) or manufacturer. **Do not rely on your own judgment to indicate what you feel is appropriate.** Check the WETT Forum to verify if there has been discussion and direction provided by a moderator. If still unsure of what should be done, contact WETT national office, who will direct you to the appropriate expert for assistance.

#### QUALITY OF WORK

CAN-CSA B365-17 Annex G states: "All work shall be done in a skillful and thorough manner and in accordance with applicable codes and standards. Attention shall be paid to the mechanical execution of the work, arrangement of the installation, and provisions for proper maintenance and inspections."

#### ADJUSTMENTS OR CORRECTIONS TO APPLIANCES

A WETT **Visual Inspection** does not involve making any adjustment to any system component as part of the inspection. Corrective actions or performance issues are not part of a WETT Inspection.

If qualified to complete corrective actions, a separate conversation with the client and a description of work and fees should be agreed to prior to any work commencing. Work done should be in line with the skills and certification level of the inspector.



## E. SCENARIOS TO CONSIDER

#### Q1: I've been asked to conduct a WETT Inspection using the Insurance Questionnaire. How should I proceed?

A: You are still required to complete the current WETT Inspection form. It is up to the inspector to determine if she or he will complete the Insurance Questionnaire form, or if she or he assists the client by clarifying any information needed to complete it. The inspector should not sign the Insurance Questionnaire, as the usage questions are not part of a WETT Inspection, and the client must finalize these questions.

#### Q2: I'm completing a pre-purchase home inspection but have been asked to also complete a WETT Inspection. How should I proceed?

A: Complete two separate sets of documentation. One is the Home Inspection documentation. The WETT Inspection form shall be used for the solid-fuel-burning system.

#### Q3: While completing a WETT Inspection, I've also been contracted to complete a sweep or service of the system. How should I handle these two tasks?

A: Complete two separate sets of documentation. The invoice should indicate separate charges for both the sweep and the WETT Inspection. The WETT Inspection form shall be used for the inspection portion of the work. The Sweep and/or Service report may be a separate document or included as part of the invoice.

#### Q4: The client has asked me to complete a WETT Inspection in conjunction with an installation that I am doing of the system. How should I proceed?

A: Complete a WETT Inspection form along with separate documentation for the installation. As Best Practice, installers should complete a WETT Inspection for every installation.

#### Q5: The client is aware that there are deficiencies with the system and wants these non-compliant items addressed along with a WETT Inspection. How should I complete this inspection and work?

A: Complete two separate sets of documentation. It is suggested that the invoice display separate charges for both the service and the WETT Inspection. The WETT Inspection form shall be used for the inspection portion of the work. The Sweep and/or Service report may be a separate document or included as part of the invoice.

#### Q6: I've been asked to inspect a solid-fuel-burning system, while providing consultation on issues they have noted with operation. Alternately, I've noted some evidence of performance issues that the client wants me to address while completing the inspection. How can I proceed?

A: Complete two separate sets of documentation. The invoice should indicate separate charges for both the consultation and the WETT Inspection. The WETT Inspection form shall be used for the inspection portion of the work. The results of the consultation may be recorded on a separate document or included as part of the invoice.

#### Q7: I have been asked to complete an inspection of an appliance installed by a non-certified installer. How should I proceed?

A: The level of inspection would be governed as per the parameters of the SITE Table and Guidelines, and as requested by the client. The WETT-certified member should communicate any deficiencies directly to the client but stipulate that he or she is not responsible for any conflict resolution between the client and the installer. Additionally, WETT will not engage in conflict resolution between the inspector and the party who installed the appliance, unless the installer was WETT certified. The report shall be completed on the WETT Inspection form.

#### Q8: The client cannot be present during the inspection. How should I proceed?

A: It is vital that someone who is of the age of majority is present at the time of inspection. Good communication with the client should occur on how the results will be communicated, and if the party at the site is authorized to receive the report or any detailed explanations.

#### Q9: What if during an inspection a second system is noted? How should I proceed?

A: Communicate with the client directly on the options that arise with the additional system. Agree upon a course of action and any adjustments to fees prior to proceeding. Ensure that you document these changes in the report, including a reference to any system that was not inspected.

**Q10: During an inspection, an unusual situation arises that you are not prepared for. This may mean a second visit to the site, being unable to complete the inspection, or the inspection being beyond your skill level. How should I proceed?**

**A:** Communicate with the client. Come to a mutual agreement on a course of action as well as any fee adjustments. Do not proceed further until you and the client are in agreement.



## F. INSPECTION PROCESS

Following a standard inspection process ensures that a consistent product is delivered with high quality, ensuring that nothing gets missed. The following are steps that ensure a smooth inspection process:

1. Introduce yourself
2. Show your WETT photo ID card
3. Review inspection process and what they should expect, as previously discussed when booking
4. Start your work quickly
5. Follow a standard flow to ensure that no areas are missed
6. Re-emphasize the timeline for the feedback and report
7. Be courteous and respectful at all times
8. Openly take notes and photos
9. Ensure that photos are taken of all recommendations / non-compliant items, using a measuring tape in the photo where needed to indicate distances. Be sure to consider perspective when taking photos.
10. Prior to leaving the site, review your notes to ensure that all data to complete the forms has been obtained, and verify on your camera that all necessary photos are taken and of good quality.



## G. DOCUMENTATION AND RECORDS OF WORK

Original, handwritten notes and photos taken on site can be the difference between being cleared or being found liable in a claim. Ensure that you maintain accurate, detailed and complete records of all work completed. Follow any data retention laws of the province in which you are located.

When completing your records of documentation, the following items should be included:

1. The finished report and any recommendations/non-compliant items discussed with the client
2. Original hand-written or digital notes taken while on site
3. All photographs taken on site
4. Invoice and proof of payment
5. Any additional correspondence during the set-up or post-inspection phase with the client, WETT, manufacturer, insurance companies, AHJ or other.

Consider keeping backups of all digital data in either off-site drives, on the cloud, or some other method of storage.



## H. CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

**PRIVACY:** Due to new privacy legislation, it is vital that each member be up to date on privacy legislation, including the handling of personal information. The current WETT Policies and Procedures document under the Privacy Policy section should be reviewed and followed by all members. Adjustments to each member's practices should be made promptly upon government legislation or WETT policy adjustments.

**CLIENT INFORMATION CONFIDENTIALITY:** It is vital that confidentiality be maintained between the inspector and the client. Where possible, the report should indicate the ownership of the report and data held within.

If photos or information obtained from an inspection are to be shared with anyone else, such as used in a teaching presentation, it is vital to obtain the client's permission prior to sharing.

The completed WETT Inspection form should be only shared with the client, unless authorized in writing to share with another entity or individual. If sharing a completed WETT Inspection form, personal client information should be redacted.

**CONFIDENTIALITY AMONG MEMBERS:** Any information that you receive through completion of your inspections on the quality of work completed by another individual, their customer service or practices, or other personal details should be kept confidential. The only exception to this would be in cases of another member's non-compliance or ethics issues that should be communicated in confidence to the WETT Ethics committee. This information should not be shared with other members.



## I. FEES

It is up to each individual member to determine fees for his or her area and type of inspection completed. WETT does not provide a standardized fee schedule nor resolve disputes on fees charged by a member.

Fees must be fully explained during the initial call. If unforeseen situations require an adjustment to the agreed-upon fees, this must be clearly explained and agreed upon by all parties prior to completing the work. Communication should be done as soon as the issue is discovered.

Some scenarios where an adjustment to fees may be required would be as follows:

- Unexpected type of appliance
- Multiple appliances or additional flues and chimneys
- Modified requests by client such as for consulting on appliance performance or completion of repairs or adjustments to the system.



## J. ADVERTISING AND REPRESENTATION

Policies on advertising and use of the WETT logo can be found in the current version of the WETT Policies and Procedures document. Each member should clearly understand his or her rights and the accepted use of WETT-branded logos, inspection forms, website usage, garments, advertising materials and business cards.

If a member fails to maintain membership with WETT for any reason, the right to use the logo is forfeited. If a company fails to employ any WETT-certified individuals, they forfeit the right to use the logo and shall remove it from all promotional items within 60 days.

Companies displaying the WETT logo shall have a WETT-certified person on site for the category of work performed. If it is not a WETT-certified installer or sweep, or an individual is certified only as a Basic Visual Inspector, this shall be clearly indicated on advertising and any work orders completed. Proper use of terminology in line with WETT documentation and inspection procedures should be followed. The terms "WETT-certified inspections," "WETT certificates" or that an appliance is "WETT-certified" should not be used.