



First-Time Homebuyers Property Inspection Guidelines 7/2017

The City of Wichita Falls Neighborhood Resources Division administers federally-funded housing development programs that are governed by Federal regulations. The standards that determine what is an acceptable property to qualify for the First Time Homebuyer Program (FTHB) are taken from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations, Federal Housing Quality Standards (HQS), City of Wichita Falls adopted International Building Codes, Minimum Property Standards and the City of Wichita Falls Housing Administrative Plan.

This is simply a guide, and although it covers most common issues, cannot be all-inclusive. Other issues that need attention may arise during inspections that are not addressed in these guidelines. Private home inspections, if desired and ordered by the buyer, that reveal additional deficiencies not addressed below, may also require repairs that must be corrected for the home to pass inspection and participate in the FTHB Program.

PAINT/SURFACE CONDITION - Please Note:

Paint that is **FLAKING, ALLIGATORING OR PEELING** is **NOT ACCEPTABLE** anywhere on any surface of either interior or exterior of the home, or anywhere on the property itself. As an example, this includes, but is not limited to, window woodwork, all doors, molding, trim, columns, roof eaves, fascia, garages, concrete porch or garage flooring that has been painted, storage buildings, fences, and all other accessory structures. All siding, if present, must be weather resistant and watertight without deterioration. All rotted wood must be replaced.

UTILITIES

All utilities (water, gas, electric) must be on in order to pass the final inspection and must meet the minimum housing standard requirements.

ELECTRICAL

Wiring must be properly installed, secured, and insulated. Service must be adequate, (Minimum 100 AMPS), for the expected uses. Double lugging, (having two hot wires on one breaker), and no open blank holes in breaker boxes are acceptable. (Note: Knob & Tube wiring will be evaluated on a case by case basis depending upon the condition of the wiring, insulation, modifications, etc. -- therefore some units may not qualify for the FTHB Program due to safety concerns as a result of condition or improper wiring modification.)

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

There must be at least two separate and remote electrical outlets in the kitchen, living room and bedrooms. You must have at least one outlet in all other habitable rooms. BATHROOMS must have at least one outlet. Any **NEW Additional** KITCHEN OR BATHROOM OUTLETS shall have ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection. All non-grounded outlets must be two-prong outlets. Any three-prong extension adaptors must be grounded to the outlet.

EXIT OR EXTERIOR DOORS

Hollow core doors on exit/exterior doors are not acceptable. Exit doors must be minimum 2-hour fire rated doors. Doors must be weatherproof, watertight and rodent-proof.

EXTERIOR DOOR FRAMES, ETC.

Door jambs, stops, headers and moldings must be securely attached to the structure and should not have any splitting or deterioration that would minimize the strength and security of the door in a closed position. Doors must fit well within its frame with hardware properly attached and maintained, capable of being properly opened and closed. Exterior doors should be weather-stripped to keep the outside elements out.

INTERIOR DOORS

Must fit well within its frame, with hardware properly attached and maintained, capable of being properly opened and closed. BATHROOM doors must have a door with privacy hardware.

FOUNDATION

Major foundation shifting which causes bulging or bowing of exterior walls will be cause for failure. The foundation shall not have any openings, large or small, leading under the unit. Covering method used MUST be secure. Perimeter Foundation/Cement blocks or porches with serious cracks/loose mortar must be repaired.

GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

All units shall be reasonably free from unsanitary conditions. (Cleanliness). All units shall be free of all safety related defects.

APPLIANCES

If appliances are to be inspected, they must be clean at the time of the inspection. All burners on the stove must work by the pilot light, if the unit is a gas unit. All knobs must be present. The refrigerator must be clean and have the ability to cool or freeze.

INTERIOR FLOORS, WALLS AND CEILINGS

Must be substantially rodent and weather proof. Must be kept in sound condition, good repair as needed, and shall be safe to use and capable of supporting a normal weight load. Attic openings need a secure cover.

ROOFS

If there is visible evidence of a roof leak, then the roof must be properly repaired or replaced. Roofs with multiple layers are not acceptable. Replacement roofs will require an approved building tag (bright orange in color) from the City of Wichita Falls Building Inspection Department.

HEATING & COOLING

A safe source of vented heating is a requirement before the unit can pass inspection. All gas-fired heaters shall have brass flex hoses and AGA seal of approval. Dearborn-type heaters are **not** acceptable. Electric space heaters are **not** acceptable for our climate as the primary source of heating the unit. For central HVAC, the filter must be clean and return air grills free from dust and dirt. If the unit has window air conditioning units, they must be available at the time of inspection. An adequate electrical outlet must also be available. No extension cords or prong adaptors can be used for supplying electrical service for a/c or heating. We recommend that window A/C units be on separate circuits as these units can pose a serious safety hazard if the circuit is overloaded.

PLUMBING

Plumbing pipes and fixtures should be in good condition with no leaks. Water may not be discolored. Flooring under and around sink and toilet shall be solid. Toilet shall be securely affixed to the floor. Under-sink plumbing exit openings should be covered and well insulated to prevent weather, water, or rodent problems. Fixtures must be reasonably clean and properly caulked. All replacement toilets must be code approved low flow toilets.

SMOKE DETECTORS

Smoke detectors must be in working order at all times and located in accordance with the National Fire Prevention Act of 1974. All bedrooms must be serviced. Generally if a unit has a hallway, at least one smoke detector should be located in the hallway. Note: If a remodel permit has been issued, the unit must have Code Required hard-wired with battery back up smoke detectors and arc-fault breakers installed.

WATER HEATER

Shall be properly vented through the roof and have a pressure relief valve with a 3/4 inch bleed line and meet the City Plumbing Code. Water heater must have some type of combustion air. If recently changed out, must meet current code to include combustion air, sealed door and overflow pan with drain.

WINDOWS

Every habitable room shall have at least one operable window with locks (Minimum Housing Code). The window must face directly outdoors to be used for ventilation and secondary fire egress. BATHROOMS - All Bathrooms must have either a good working window or a mechanical exhaust fan. Positive locking devices are required on all windows. Thumb locks are acceptable for metal windows. If windows are designed to open, then all windows shall open. All guillotine windows, (windows that will not stay open), must be repaired in order to pass inspection. Any (all), replacement window must be Energy Star Qualified if installed in 2009.

WINDOW CONDITION

Every window shall be weatherproof, watertight, rodent-proof and kept in working condition and good repair. Windowpanes with breaks/cracks, must be replaced.



****** This inspection is specific to The City of Wichita Falls FTHB Program. It is always advised that a home buyer have a third party purchase inspection conducted. ******

**For additional information contact:
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