

Anatomy of a Commercial Property Inspection Report

By Nick Gromicko

The [International Standards of Practice for Inspecting Commercial Properties](#) requires that commercial property inspection reports be in writing. The following four elements are required by the Standard:

1. The date of the report must appear on first page of report.
2. The inspection firm's name and contact information must be on first or second page of report.
3. The address of the property or a description of the real estate sufficient for identification must be on the first or second page of report.
4. The total number of pages and attachments must be on first page of report.

It is InterNACHI's opinion that the commercial inspection industry and consumer clients are best served when inspectors are free to compete through report-generation innovation. And, although the Standard does not require any one particular format, the following are items that a commercial property inspector will likely include in the report:

5. a copy of the [International Standards of Practice for Inspecting Commercial Properties](#);
6. a copy of the inspection agreement, including the [Scope of Work](#);
7. copies of any documents procured through the [Request for Documents and Person\(s\) with Knowledge letter](#);
8. a list of persons interviewed, and any significant information obtained from them;
9. names of each consultant who participated in the inspection project;
10. a brief paragraph of qualifications of each consultant who participated in the inspection project;
11. the main body of the report. This should substantially follow the Scope of Work. The Scope of Work is simply the [International Standards of Practice for Inspecting Commercial Properties](#) plus any additional or ancillary inspection work the client ordered, and less any work the client doesn't want to have done;
12. each consultant's report (even if they are sloppily written);
13. each ancillary inspection report;

14. copies of testing laboratory reports. As part of your quality control measures, never re-type laboratory reports;
15. pictures taken during the inspection;
16. a list of limitations, exceptions or exclusions particular to the inspection project. [General inspection limitations](#) are already included in the Standard;
17. your executive summary; and
18. your invoice.

As part of risk management, a commercial property inspector should stay clear of the following areas as much as possible when generating a report. They are well-known to increase inspector liability.

- problem causation;
- problem solution;
- codes;
- life expectancies; and
- repair/replacement estimates.

The aforementioned repair/replacement estimates will be of the most interest to the client. There are two best ways for commercial inspectors to handle this. The first is to have the expert consultants who helped with the inspection to produce a rough range of repair/replacement cost estimates. The other way is to charge the client to arrange for gathering repair estimates from local contractors.

In summary, a commercial property inspection report should include as much information as possible without veering from the Standard, as modified by the Scope of Work.

How to Perform a Commercial Property Inspection, visit <http://www.nachi.org/commercial-inspections.htm>