



First-Time Homebuyers Program

Property Inspection Guidelines (Aug. 2022)

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 list is simply a guide, and although it covers most common issues, it is not 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 qualify for 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. (Minimum housing standard requirements for utilities is defined as utilities being on, and in complete working condition to the City of Wichita Falls adopted codes. All utilities must be maintained inside the boundaries of the property lines, and can NOT cross property lines. This means that no utilities from neighboring properties can supply any form of utilities to the dwelling(s) on the prospective property.)

ELECTRICAL

Wiring must be properly installed, secured, and insulated. Capacity of the electrical service must be adequate for the expected uses (Minimum 100 AMPS). Double lugging (having two hot wires on one breaker), and open blank holes in breaker boxes are not 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.) (Note: If the meter socket is an old, round, 60-amp meter, by city code, it is required to be upgraded. Only electrical contractors registered with the City of Wichita Falls can do the repairs.) All repairs must meet the City of Wichita Falls electrical code. If repairs require a permit, a signed off orange inspection card must be turned into the City of Wichita Falls Neighborhood Resources department.

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. All new/additional outlets must be Building-Code approved with a signed off orange inspection card. The signed off orange inspection card must be turned into the City of Wichita Falls Neighborhood Resources department. Only electrical contractors registered with the City of Wichita Falls can do the repairs.

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 DOORS & FRAMES

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 their frame, with hardware properly attached and functioning, and capable of being easily opened and closed. Exterior doors should be weather-stripped to keep the outside elements out.

INTERIOR DOORS

Must fit well within its frame, hardware must be properly attached and functioning, as well as capable of being easily opened and closed. Bathroom doors must have privacy hardware enabling them to lock.

FOUNDATION

Major foundation shifting which causes bulging or bowing of exterior walls will be cause for the inspection to fail. The foundation shall not have any openings (large or small) leading under the unit(s). Any covering method used must be secure. Perimeter of the concrete slab/cement blocks (pier and beam) foundation with serious cracks/loose mortar must be repaired. (This is for all units/dwellings as well attached structures. Example: Porches)

GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

All units must be reasonably clean and free from unsanitary conditions. All units shall be free of ALL safety- related defects or hazards.

APPLIANCES

Any appliances that will remain in the home must be clean and functioning properly. 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 in sound condition and good repair with no cracks in walls or ceilings. Floors shall be safe, secure and capable of supporting a normal weight load. Attic openings need a secure cover.

ROOF

If there is visible evidence of a roof leak, then the roof must be properly repaired or replaced. A roof with multiple layers is NOT acceptable. If a roof is replaced or the repair is greater than 500 square feet(unless decking is required), a roofing permit must be acquired. After work is completed a signed/approved orange card must be turned into the Neighborhood Resources department. Only contractors registered with the City of Wichita Falls can do the repairs.

HEATING & COOLING

The unit must have a safe source of vented heat 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 as the primary source of heat for the unit. For central HVAC, the filter must be clean and return air grills free from dust and dirt. Any window air conditioning units must be accessible and properly functioning at the time of inspection. An electrical outlet must be available as the direct source of power for the unit - 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 electrical circuits, because 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 Building 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 protected by a smoke detector either in the room or adjacent hallway. 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 hard-wired smoke detectors with battery back-up and arc-fault breakers installed, as required by the Building Code.

WATER HEATER

Must meet the City's Plumbing Code. The water heater must be properly vented through the roof and have a pressure relief valve with a 3/4-inch bleed line. Water heater must have some type of combustion air. If the water heater has been recently installed, it must meet current Code requirements that include a source of combustion air, a sealed door and an overflow pan with drain. (Note: If the water heater has been recently installed, there should be a filed permit with the City of Wichita Falls Building Inspections department) If a new water heater must be installed to pass inspection, only a plumbing contractor registered with the City of Wichita Falls can do the installment. A signed/approved orange card must be turned into the Neighborhood Resources department.

WINDOWS

Every habitable room shall have at least one operable window with secure and functioning locks. 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 must open. All guillotine windows, (windows that will not stay open), must be repaired in order to pass inspection. Any replacement windows installed must be Energy Star Qualified. If NEW windows are required a registered contractor with the City of Wichita Falls must file a permit. A signed/approved orange card must be turned into the Neighborhood Resources department.

WINDOW CONDITION

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

NOTES:

For additional information contact:

Neighborhood Resources Division

Neighborhood Resources Division
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