



Committee Input No. 9-NFPA 211-2024 [Chapter 15]

See attached Document for proposed changes regarding inspection of chimneys, vents, and heat-producing appliances

Chapter 15 Inspection of Existing Chimneys

15.1* General.

Inspections shall be conducted by a qualified agency.

15.1.1*

Observations that are incidental to a chimney maintenance or repair task not shown in Table 15.2.1 shall not be required to comply with the minimum levels of inspection set forth in this chapter.

15.1.2

Defects that are observed during the course of such work shall be reported to the property owner, occupant, or responsible party.

15.2 Type of Inspection.

The scope of the inspection, the areas of the chimney examined, and the degree of invasiveness of the inspection shall be appropriate for the conditions giving rise to the inspection.

15.2.1

The type of inspection shall be determined in accordance with Table 15.2.1.

Table 15.2.1 Selection of Inspection Type

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Inspection Types</u>		
	<u>Level I</u>	<u>Level II</u>	<u>Level III</u>
Scope	Readily accessible areas of chimney, structure, and flue; lack of obstruction or combustible deposits in flue; basic appliance installation and connection	All subjects of a Level I inspection; proper construction and condition of accessible portions of the chimney structure and all enclosed flues; proper clearances from combustibles in accessible locations; size and suitability of flues for connected appliances	All subjects of Level I and Level II inspections; proper construction and condition of concealed portions of chimney structure and enclosed flues; proper clearances from combustibles
Degree of access required	Readily accessible portions of chimney exterior and interior; accessible portions of appliance and chimney connection	All accessible portions of the chimney exterior and interior, including areas within accessible attics, crawl spaces, and basements, and accessible portions of the appliance and chimney connection; includes inspection by video scanning or other means	External and internal portions of chimney structure, including concealed areas of the building or chimney; includes removal of components of building or chimney where necessary, but only as necessary to gain access to areas that are the subject of the inspection
Circumstances	Annual inspection as required by Section 14.2; during routine cleaning of chimney flue; upon direct replacement of connected appliance with one of similar type, input rating, and efficiency	Upon addition or removal of one or more connected appliances or replacement of appliance with one of dissimilar type, input rating, or efficiency; prior to relining or replacement of flue lining; upon sale or transfer of the property; after operating malfunction or external event likely to have caused damage to the chimney	Where necessary for the investigation of an incident that has caused damage to the chimney or building; where a hazard detected or suspected as the result of a Level I or II inspection cannot be fully evaluated without access to concealed areas
Indications	For verification of suitability of the chimney for continued service, under the same conditions and with the same appliance or appliances	For verification of suitability of the chimney for new or changed conditions of service; Level I inspection not sufficient to determine serviceability of the chimney	When construction of all or part of chimney is deemed critical to its renewed or continued use; required only for those areas that cannot be properly evaluated by a Level I or Level II inspection

Note: The inspection is not required when the last connected appliance is removed and chimney use is discontinued.

15.2.2

The type of inspection performed shall be based on the circumstances that give rise to the inspection.

15.2.3

For situations shown in the Circumstances row of Table 15.2.1, the minimum level of inspection shall be that indicated by the column in which the situation is found.

15.2.4

For situations not shown in the Circumstances row, the type of inspection shall be based on the descriptions in the Indications row.

15.2.5

The following shall apply to examination of the chimney at a level higher than that indicated by Table 15.2.1:

- (1) Nothing shall prevent the examination of all or part of the chimney at a higher level than the minimum indicated by Table 15.2.1.
- (2) Partial examination of the chimney at a higher level shall not require that the entire inspection be conducted at that higher level.

15.2.6

Where inspections are indicated or requested at a specific level of inspection but circumstances prevent the completion of that level, the inspector shall do the following:

- (1) Indicate the level of inspection completed
- (2) Document the reasons the higher level inspection was not completed

15.3* Level I Inspections.

A Level I inspection shall be utilized when verification of the suitability of the chimney or flue for continued service, under the same conditions and with the same or similar appliance or appliances, is needed.

15.3.1 Circumstances.

A Level I inspection shall be conducted under the following circumstances:

- (1) During annual inspections in accordance with Section 14.2
- (2) During routine cleaning of a flue or flues within the chimney
- (3) At the time of replacement of one or more connected appliances with an equal number of appliances of similar type, input rating, and efficiency, in accordance with Section 14.4
- (4) At other times as indicated in Section 15.3

15.3.2 Scope and Access.

Level I inspections shall include examination of readily accessible portions of the chimney and accessible portions of the connected appliance and chimney connection.

15.3.2.1

The following shall apply to the inspection of locations with panels, doors, or coverings:

- (1) The chimney exterior and surroundings shall be inspected at locations that can be accessed without removal of panels, doors, or coverings.
- (2) Where panels, doors, or coverings are opened as part of the performance of another task, such as chimney cleaning, such locations shall be examined as part of a Level I inspection.

15.3.2.2

Readily accessible areas of the chimney flue that can be observed through existing openings, such as a thimble, cleanout opening, or flue termination, shall be examined for the presence of a continuous flue liner, proper installation, and no damage or deterioration.

15.3.2.3

The following shall apply to inspection of flues:

- (1) Where an inspection is conducted in accordance with Section 14.2, the inspection shall include all flues within the chimney and connected appliances.
- (2) An inspection conducted during cleaning or appliance replacement shall include the flue or flues being cleaned and the appliance or appliances connected to each.

15.3.2.4

The inspection shall include verification that the flue or flues being inspected are free of combustible deposits and blockage or obstruction.

15.3.2.5

The connected appliance or appliances, their chimney connectors, and surroundings shall be examined for proper clearances, protection, damage or deterioration, and observable evidence of operating malfunction.

15.3.2.6

Chimney connector inspection shall meet the following criteria:

- (1) Connectors shall be examined for proper support and fastening of joints, pitch, and securement to the chimney.
- (2) Connectors shall be examined for damage, deterioration, internal blockage or obstruction, and freedom from combustible deposits.

15.3.2.7

Internal surfaces of fireplaces and smoke chambers shall be examined for damage and deterioration, combustible deposits, and evidence of operating malfunction.

15.3.2.7.1

Fireplace inserts, stoves, or accessories shall be removed from the fireplace as necessary to permit such examination.

15.3.2.7.2

The means of connecting a fireplace insert or stove to the chimney flue shall be examined for compliance with 13.4.5.

15.3.2.7.3*

Fireplace inserts, stoves, or accessories shall not be required to be removed when the venting system can be thoroughly cleaned without such removal.

15.4* Level II Inspections.

A Level II inspection is indicated when verification of the suitability of the chimney for new or changed conditions of service is needed or when a Level I inspection is not sufficient to determine the serviceability of the chimney.

15.4.1 Circumstances.

A Level II inspection shall be conducted under the following circumstances:

- (1) * Upon addition or removal of one or more connected appliances or upon replacement of an appliance with one or more of dissimilar type, input rating, or efficiency, unless the last connected appliance is removed and chimney use will be discontinued
- (2) Prior to relining of a flue or replacement of flue lining, in accordance with 7.1.10
- (3) Upon sale or transfer of the property
- (4) After a building or chimney fire, weather or seismic event, or other incident likely to have caused damage to the chimney
- (5) At other times as indicated in Section 15.3

15.4.2 Scope and Access.

Level II inspections shall include all accessible portions of the chimney exterior and interior, including the following:

- (1) Areas within accessible attics, crawl spaces, and basements
- (2) Accessible portions of the appliance and chimney connection

15.4.2.1

The inspection shall include examination of all areas covered in 15.3.2 for Level I inspections.

15.4.2.2

All areas of the chimney and its surroundings that can be accessed without the removal or destruction of permanently attached portions of the chimney or building structure shall be inspected, including examination of the following:

- (1) Locations within attics
- (2) Crawl spaces
- (3) Basements that can be accessed through doors, hatches, or other openings that do not require removal of permanently attached parts of the building

15.4.2.3

The inspection shall include examination of accessible areas of all chimney flues and the internal surfaces of all flue liners incorporated within the chimney with image scanning equipment or more advanced technological viewing systems used as necessary to observe those areas.

15.4.2.4

The requirement to inspect all chimney flues and all flue liners in 15.4.2.3 shall be limited to the chimney flues and flue liners requested to be inspected.

15.4.2.5

Where multiple factory built fireplaces or chimneys are installed in a common structure or chase, the inspector shall not be required to inspect more than the system(s) requested to be inspected by the inspector's client.

15.4.2.6

The inspection shall include verification of proper clearances from the chimney to combustibles at all locations that can be accessed as described in 15.3.2.2.

15.4.2.7

The inspection shall include evaluation of the proper type of flue lining material and flue sizing for the type and input rating of the connected appliances.

15.4.2.7.1

Sizing of flues for solid fuel-burning and pellet fuel-burning equipment shall be in accordance with this standard.

15.4.2.7.2

Sizing of flues for gas appliances shall be in accordance with NFPA 54.

15.4.2.7.3

Sizing of flues for liquid fuel appliances shall be in accordance with NFPA 31.

15.5* Level III Inspections.

A Level III inspection shall be utilized for concealed areas.

15.5.1 Areas Required.

A Level III inspection shall be required only for those areas suspected of malfunction or damage that cannot be properly evaluated by a Level I or Level II inspection.

15.5.2 Circumstances.

A Level III inspection shall be conducted under the following circumstances:

- (1) Where necessary for the investigation of a building or chimney fire, weather or seismic event, or other incident known to have caused damage to the chimney or building
- (2) Where a hazard detected or suspected as the result of Level I or II inspection cannot be fully evaluated without access to concealed areas
- (3) At other times as indicated in Section 15.5

15.5.3 Scope and Access.

A Level III inspection shall include examination of concealed areas of the chimney suspected of damage or malfunction.

15.5.3.1

The inspection shall include examination of all areas covered in 15.3.2 for Level I inspections and in 15.4.2 for Level II inspections.

15.5.3.2

Examination of the chimney shall include concealed areas that can be accessed only by removal or destruction of permanently attached portions of the chimney or building structure, as necessary to determine compliance with this standard.

Supplemental Information

<u>File Name</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Approved</u>
2024_Edition_Rewrite_08-26-24_Draft_.docx	See attached Word Document for proposed changes to chapter 15	

Submitter Information Verification

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Committee Statement

Committee Statement: The technical committee is looking at revising chapter 15 in accordance with the attached document to refine inspection requirements and better specify the applicability of the chapter. A task group has been formed to work on the topic (See First Draft Minutes for further detail).

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