

BACKGROUNDER: HOME INSPECTION IN BC

OVERVIEW

Consumer Protection BC became responsible for licensing home inspectors and administering the [Home Inspector Licensing Regulation](#) on April 1, 2009, when BC became the first province in Canada to regulate the sector.

THE HOME INSPECTION LAW IN BC

BC's home inspection law is in place to protect consumers who are likely making the largest purchase of their lives. In 2016, BC's home inspection law was amended to strengthen protections for both consumers as well as home inspectors. Under the new rules, home inspectors have to include certain information in their contracts and post-inspection reports, hold at least \$1 million in both professional and comprehensive liability insurance and keep detailed records (including copies of contracts and post-inspection reports) for at least two years.

2018 - 2020: HOME INSPECTION BY THE NUMBERS

Licensed places, activities and occupations:

BC-licensed home inspectors	2018	2019	2020
	481	447	470

Consumer inquiries:

- 2018: There were 220 inquiries about the home inspection sector, representing 2% of all calls and emails (11,177). Topics of interest included:
 1. Licensing status (50% of home inspection sector-related inquiries)
 2. Quality of service (14%)
 3. General inquiry (12%)
- 2019: There were 127 inquiries about the home inspection sector, representing 1% of all calls and emails (11,221). Topics of interest included:
 1. General inquiries (27% of home inspection sector-related inquiries)
 2. Quality of service (27%)
 3. Licensing status (19%)
- 2020: There were 164 inquiries about the home inspection sector, representing 1% of all calls and emails (15,423). Topics of interest included:
 1. Licensing status (20% of home inspection sector-related inquiries)
 2. Quality of service (18%)
 3. General inquiry (16%)

Investigations:

- 2018: There were a total of 7 home inspection-related investigation files. Of those, 3 files concluded with an outcome and 4 files were incomplete, unfounded or referred elsewhere. Of those 3 files with an outcome, 3 enforcement actions were taken, and voluntary compliance was achieved in 0 cases.
- 2019: There were a total of 4 home inspection-related investigation files. Of those, 2 files concluded with an outcome and 2 files were incomplete, unfounded or referred elsewhere. Of those 2 files with an outcome, 1 enforcement action was taken, and voluntary compliance was achieved in 1 case.
- 2020: There were a total of 4 home inspection-related investigation files. Of those, 3 files concluded with an outcome and 1 file was incomplete, unfounded or referred elsewhere. Of those 3 files with an outcome, 1 enforcement action was taken, and voluntary compliance was achieved in 2 cases.

Contraventions when enforcement action was taken	2018	2019	2020	Total
	3	1	1	5
Failing to operate with a licence	1	0	0	1
Failing to keep records of errors and omissions insurance and liability insurance	1	1	1	3
Having a conflict of interest that results in a material gain	1	0	0	1

BUSINESS OBLIGATIONS OVERVIEW

By law, home inspectors:

- Are required to hold both professional and comprehensive liability insurance.
- Have to include specific information in their contracts and post-inspection reports, including details about what will be covered in the home inspection (such whether the inspection will look for mould or asbestos).
- Cannot exclude a garage or a carport in the inspection, regardless of whether they are attached to the home or not.
- Cannot have a conflict of interest in relation to a home inspection that results in a material gain to the inspector.

CONSUMER RIGHTS OVERVIEW

By law, consumers:

- Have the right to control who sees the contents of a home inspection report. The only times a home inspector is allowed to share a home inspection report is if the consumer gave permission, if it is required by law or if there is a serious health or safety risk.
- May ask to see the wallet-sized licence issued by Consumer Protection BC to home inspectors before signing a contract for a home inspection.
- Have the right to an inspection where the inspector does not have a conflict of interest which would allow the inspector to receive a material gain.

CONSUMER TIPS

- 1. Understand what is involved.** A home inspection is a visual inspection and there are limitations as to what an inspector is physically able to see. Read your contract carefully, as home inspectors have to state what will be included in your home inspection and whether invasive or non-invasive inspection tactics will be used.
- 2. Check licensing status.** Visit our website to [check a home inspector's licence](#).
- 3. Get a copy of your post-inspection report.** By law, home inspectors have to give you a copy of your inspection report on or before the date specified in your contract and the report has to be in writing and include specific information (including items the inspector feels you should get expert advice about and what hasn't been covered in the home inspection).

ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS

To maintain the integrity of our investigative processes, we do not share detailed information about open files. Visit the [Enforcement Actions section of our website](#) to explore our recent licensing and enforcement actions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Explore www.consumerprotectionbc.ca for more information for both consumers and regulated businesses. Additional statistical information is also available in our [annual reports](#). We also share information and consumer tips on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and in [our corporate blog](#).