



In 1994 the City of Winnipeg introduced the “New Directions” Initiative, which was essentially a reshaping of City departments to allow for “doing more with less,” while at the same time delivering the best possible service to the citizens of the City of Winnipeg at the best possible return on investment of tax dollars.

As a result of this initiative the Building Inspections Division reorganized along rational business lines to create a Housing Branch staffed with inspectors trained in all facets of house construction. This Branch employs a “multi-trade” type of inspector as opposed to a “specialist” type of inspector.

What is the Housing Inspections Program?

The Housing Inspections Program is a new approach to carrying out inspections for residential housing. In the past, inspectors have been specialized for one type of inspection, such as Plumbing/Mechanical, Building, or Electrical. As an example, when an electrical inspection was required, the electrical inspector and the homeowner/contractor would make an appointment to have that inspection performed. The same process would occur for the plumbing/mechanical inspection, and the building inspection. The Housing Inspections Program requires only one inspector, trained in all facets of residential housing, to carry out all inspections on an individual property.

What type of structures are covered by this Program?

The program pertains to residential house construction, which includes one and two family dwellings, row housing and related structures. These types of buildings are less complex than most commercial building construction, which makes them well-suited to having a multi-trade inspector perform the inspections on them.

How was the Housing Inspections Program created?

The Housing Branch is staffed with inspectors from the previously existing Electrical, Plumbing/Mechanical, and Building branches, and staff selections were made to ensure a balance of specialist backgrounds as a base for training and support. An intensive training program was developed which utilizes courses created by experts in the various fields. This has provided a firm foundation for inspectors in the program.

How does the Program work?

Each region of the city has a team of multi-trade inspectors assigned to it, with each inspector having a specialist background. The regions are divided into districts, with each district having one inspector assigned to it who is responsible for all housing inspections in his or her own district.

Why is the regional team made up of inspectors with varied specialist backgrounds?

In the event that an inspection site presents an unusual, or unique set of circumstances, requiring specialized training beyond the multi-trade inspector, the inspector will be able to call on a regional team-mate who has the specialized knowledge necessary to handle the situation.

What are the benefits from the Housing Inspections Program?

- ▶ ***It's Efficient*** — Several different systems can be checked at the same time, at different stages of construction activity. For example, while carrying out a roughed-in electrical wiring inspection, the inspector should be able to check the framing and perhaps the roughed-in plumbing.
- ▶ ***It's Convenient*** — The contractor or homeowner has only one inspector to call to arrange all necessary inspection activities, obtain information, or deal with construction problems.
- ▶ ***It's Fast*** — With only one inspector, instead of several inspectors, involved in a construction project, time is saved. It also saves time for the homeowner or contractor when making appointments for inspections, as only one appointment is necessary!
- ▶ ***It Saves Money*** — More timely inspections are possible under this program, avoiding costly errors.

Overall, the Housing Inspections Program is seen as another step forward in providing exemplary customer service to the citizens of the City of Winnipeg.



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PLANNING, PROPERTY
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The Housing Inspections Program

*A progressive step toward
exemplary customer service*