

Risk Management Tips for Real Estate Agents

How Understanding the Home Inspector Standards of Practice (SOP) Protects You

As a real estate professional, protecting yourself and your clients means knowing what inspectors can and cannot do under the SOP. Using this knowledge helps reduce liability, manage client expectations, and avoid disputes.

Use SOP Knowledge to Your Advantage

- Rely on the Report for Documentation
- Inspection reports provide written evidence of a home's condition—use them to support negotiations and protect your records.
- Set Client Expectations Early
- Explain that inspectors follow specific SOP requirements—not every possible issue will be identified.
- Stay in Your Lane
- Avoid interpreting inspection findings beyond the inspector's report. Let licensed professionals make repairs or recommendations.
- Don't Promise Repairs
- SOP doesn't require inspectors to confirm future performance of systems. Avoid assuring clients that issues will or won't occur.
- Encourage Follow-Ups
- If an inspector recommends further evaluation, always direct clients to qualified specialists rather than downplaying the concern.

Common Pitfalls to Avoid

- Speculating Beyond the Report
- Don't suggest causes or solutions for defects outside your expertise.
- Minimizing Red Flags
- Avoid statements like "That's no big deal"—let contractors or inspectors speak for themselves.
- Assuming Coverage
- SOP defines the scope—cosmetic issues, code compliance, or future warranties are not included.



Knowledge of the SOP = Protection.

By understanding the limits of a home inspection, you protect yourself from legal risk, keep client expectations realistic, and maintain professional credibility.

