

Australian Standard<sup>®</sup>

**Inspection of buildings**

**Part 3: Timber pest inspections**



This Australian Standard® was prepared by Committee BD-085, Inspection of Buildings. It was approved on behalf of the Council of Standards Australia on 10 August 2010. This Standard was published on 20 September 2010.

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The following are represented on Committee BD-085:

- Australian Environmental Pest Managers Association
- Australian Institute of Building
- Australian Institute of Building Surveyors
- CHOICE
- Concrete Masonry Association of Australia
- Consult Australia
- Engineers Australia
- Institute of Building Inspectors
- Master Builders Australia
- Queensland Building Services Authority
- Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors

Additional Interests:

- Independent Chairperson
- 

This Standard was issued in draft form for comment as DR AS 4349.3.

Standards Australia wishes to acknowledge the participation of the expert individuals that contributed to the development of this Standard through their representation on the Committee and through the public comment period.

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**Part 3: Timber pest inspections**

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## PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Standards Australia Committee BD-085, Inspection of Buildings to supersede AS 4349.3—1998.

The objective of this Standard is to provide persons and organizations concerned with timber pest inspections of residential dwellings, commercial and industrial buildings with the basic criteria necessary in order to facilitate inspections and reports that satisfy the requirements of both the client and the inspector. This Standard is to be used for pre-purchase inspections for timber pest issues.

This Standard does not cover compliance with building regulations or assessment of a building under construction.

This Standard is part of the AS 4349 series of Standards, which covers minimum requirements for the inspection of buildings, as follows:

AS

4349	Inspection of buildings
4349.0	Part 0: General requirements
4349.1	Part 1: Pre-purchase inspections—Residential buildings
4349.3	Part 3: Timber pest inspections (this Standard)

The changes to the previous edition of this Standard comprise the following:

- (a) Modification of scope and general section:
  - (i) Clarifying scope, application, limitations.
  - (ii) Inspector to determine if any tests are to be conducted on site.
  - (iii) Inspector to determine if access is safe and reasonable.
    - Inspector to report observed potential major safety hazards. Such potential safety hazards are likely to be urgent and serious by their very nature.
    - NOTE: This is not a safety inspection nor a compliance inspection.
  - (iv) New definitions.
- (b) New section for inspection agreement.
- (c) Modification of inspection process—Clarifying areas to be inspected, inspection records, inspector to determine safe and reasonable access, some tests may be required, tests to be at the sole discretion of the inspector, reporting of observed potential major safety hazards.
- (d) Modification of inspection report section—Clarifying report content, some tests may have been conducted at the sole discretion of the inspector, further inspections, observation and reporting of potential major safety hazards with clear warnings to the client, need for timeliness and urgency in implementation of recommendations and the elimination of potential major safety hazards.
- (e) Change of order in the appendices.
- (f) New informative appendices:
  - (i) Moisture management issues.
  - (ii) Strata and company title property inspection.
- (g) Inclusion of commentary to some clauses.

Notes to the text contain information and guidance. They are not an integral part of the Standard.

The terms ‘normative’ and ‘informative’ have been used in this Standard to define the application of the appendix to which it applies. A ‘normative’ appendix is an integral part of a Standard. An ‘informative’ appendix is only for information and guidance.

This Standard incorporates commentary on some of the clauses. The commentary directly follows the relevant clause and is designated by ‘C’ preceding the clause number and is printed in italics in a panel. The commentary is for information only and does not need to be followed for compliance with this Standard.

Standards Australia acknowledges the following bodies for their permission to reproduce photographs:

- (A) CSIRO Forestry and Forest Products.
- (B) AFFS Forestry Research.
- (C) State Forests of NSW.

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## FOREWORD

Every year many buildings in Australia are damaged by fungal decay (rot), wood-boring insects, by subterranean termites (the latter are also commonly but incorrectly called ‘white ants’) or other timber pests. Persons who wish to purchase or maintain a property that includes timber structures may require advice to determine whether the pests are or have been present in the building, there is heightened risk of timber pest presence, or there is damage caused by timber pests. A uniform system of inspection will help to ensure that all inspections meet a minimum acceptable standard.

## STANDARDS AUSTRALIA

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**Australian Standard**  
**Inspection of buildings**  
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**Part 3: Timber pest inspections**  
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## SECTION 1 SCOPE AND GENERAL

**1.1 SCOPE**

This Standard provides minimum requirements for non-invasive inspection of buildings for the activity of timber pests and preparation of associated reports. The inspection is to be carried out by a suitably qualified inspector.

This Standard includes limited requirements for invasive inspection.

AS 4349.0 sets out the requirements for building inspections other than those detailed in other Parts of AS 4349.

NOTE: State or Territory legislation may include requirements beyond this Standard.

***CI.1***

*A pre-purchase timber pest inspection should be undertaken as early in the buying process as practicable. This way, the purchaser will know about the condition of the property and will be able to make a better informed decision as to whether to proceed with the purchase. A pre-purchase inspection report may be suitable for a vendor to include with the papers for the sale of a property.*

*AS 3600.2 recommends that a routine inspection for termite management purposes be carried out at least annually.*

*A timber pest inspection beyond the scope of this Standard, for example the use of invasive techniques or specialized equipment, should comply with AS 4349.0. The additional content should be distinguished as not part of the AS 4349.3 requirements.*

*The Australian Qualifications Framework includes competency units for timber pest inspection.*

The basis of this Standard is a non-invasive inspection comprising visual inspection supplemented by non-marking sounding of elements and assessment of moisture content of materials. The Inspector might decide to supplement this type of inspection with other non-destructive techniques or equipment, depending on the particular circumstances; however the use of such further equipment is beyond the minimum requirements of this Standard.

The nature of timber pest activity and non-invasive inspection is such that some residual damage is inevitable in some cases.

For the purposes of this Standard timber pests that damage timber are subterranean and damp-wood termites, borers of seasoned timber and wood decay fungi. This Standard does not require inspection and report on drywood termites or mould.

## NOTES:

- 1 Drywood termites are not included in the Standard inspection and report due to the extreme difficulty in locating the small colonies and the very rare incidence in Australia.
- 2 Chemical delignification is not a timber pest under the scope of this Standard, even though delignified timber closely resembles timber that has been decayed by a white stringy rot fungus.



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