OTTAWA HOUSE INSPECTION

# Specialty Checks

Sewer laterals in Ottawa, wood-burning appliances (WETT) and thermal imaging during a purchase

4 Expert Answers from Inspection IQ

ottawahouseinspection.ca/construction-brain

# Table of Contents

1. What is a WETT inspection when buying a house in Ottawa?
2. Thermal imaging with a Greely home inspection: included or extra?
3. Sewer camera scope: part of a standard home inspection in Manotick?
4. Who owns the sewer pipe under my front yard in Ottawa?

Q1

## What is a WETT inspection when buying a house in Ottawa?

When you are buying a house in Ottawa that has a wood-burning fireplace, woodstove, or other solid-fuel appliance, a WETT inspection is a separate evaluation of that appliance and its system, carried out by an individual who holds WETT Inc. certification. It is not part of a standard home inspection.

WETT Inc. describes itself as a training and education body. According to WETT Inc., only individuals are certified, never companies or the appliances themselves, and what the certified professional produces is an inspection report, not a certificate. WETT Inc. describes three levels of inspection: a Level 1 visual examination of readily accessible areas, a Level 2 technical examination of accessible areas, and a Level 3 invasive examination of concealed areas. WETT Inc. also says each insurer has different guidelines as to how long it will accept a WETT inspection.

A home inspection is a separate service. If your insurer asks for a WETT inspection, that is arranged with a WETT-certified individual. We found no Ontario law that requires a WETT inspection as a condition of purchase. For questions about cost, which level your insurer requires, and chimney-related work, ottawafireplaces.com is the right place to look.

WETT Inc. describes Level 1 as a visual inspection of readily accessible areas and says it is used for most insurance and real estate needs and describes Level 3 as an invasive inspection of concealed areas. It also says its authority does not include regulating how much WETT-certified professionals charge.

Before you book, ask the individual you are considering whether they hold current WETT Inc. certification, check the individual yourself, and ask them to confirm in writing which level of inspection they are proposing to carry out and why.

---

Q2

## Thermal imaging with a Greely home inspection: included or extra?

Ask, because it varies by inspector. We found no regulator or government guidance on thermal imaging in home inspections, and too few independent published prices to show a range for it as an add-on. Whether it is in the base fee or charged extra is a question for each inspector you call.

The useful question is what it is used for in their report. Ontario.ca describes a home inspection as "an on-site, in-person examination of a home's condition and structure" and "a visual inspection of major elements and systems",

and the federal Office of Consumer Affairs says a report is limited to the areas the inspector can see or has access to. Ask how any thermal images fit into that, and what the inspector writes beside them.

On the base fee: ontario.ca puts home inspection fees at $350 to $600, and higher depending on the size and condition of the home. Published Ottawa-area inspector pages put a detached or semi-detached house up to about 2,000 sq ft at about $450 to $640. For larger homes the price is set by size, so ask for a written quote.

Before you book:

- Ask whether thermal imaging is included in the quoted fee or priced separately, and get that in writing.
- Ask for a sample report that shows how thermal images are presented.
- Ask what the images are used to note, in the inspector's own reports.

Ontario.ca also suggests getting quotes from more than one inspector, which is the simplest way to compare what each one includes.
When you compare quotes for the Greely house, put the thermal imaging line side by side, included or extra.

---

Q3

## Sewer camera scope: part of a standard home inspection in Manotick?

A sewer camera scope is not part of a standard home inspection. Ontario.ca's list of what an inspector will examine covers plumbing and electrical systems where visible, but it does not include a camera run through the underground lateral from the house to the street.

The federal Office of Consumer Affairs describes a home inspection as a non-invasive, visual evaluation. A sewer scope requires inserting a camera into the drain line, which goes beyond that visual scope. Whether an inspector offers it is a question to ask each one. We found no licence, standard or regulator for sewer camera inspection, and too few independent published prices to show a range.

The City of Ottawa draws a clear line on responsibility: the City is responsible for the portion of the sanitary and storm sewer laterals from the property line to the street, and the homeowner is responsible for the portion from the property line to the home. If a lateral crosses the property line, there may be shared responsibility. Knowing which side of the property line a problem sits on tells you whose portion it is.

If you want a scope done before you firm up an offer, ask each inspector you contact whether they include it, whether they subcontract it, or whether they can recommend who does it. Get the scope price in writing separately from the inspection fee. For drain repair, relining or camera work as a plumbing service, ottawaplumbingpro.ca

covers that side of things.

The most useful question to put to any inspector you are considering: do you perform the sewer scope yourself, or does a separate operator come, and will their findings be in the same written report?

Q4

## Who owns the sewer pipe under my front yard in Ottawa?

The City of Ottawa splits it at the property line. The City says it is responsible for the portion of the sanitary and storm sewer laterals from the property line to the street, and the homeowner is responsible for the portion from the property line to the home. There may also be shared responsibility if a lateral requiring repair or replacement crosses the property line.

So the part of the lateral that runs under your own front yard, between your house and the property line, is the homeowner's portion. Where exactly your property line sits is a question for your survey or the City, not something to guess from where the lawn ends.

For a buyer, the question is what a home inspection tells you about that pipe. The federal Office of Consumer Affairs describes a home inspection as a non-invasive, visual evaluation, and says the report is limited to the areas the inspector can see or has access to. A buried lateral is not something a visual inspection sees. We found no government guidance that recommends a sewer camera scope at purchase, no licence or standard for that work, and too few independent published prices to show a range.

What you can do:

- Ask the inspectors who reply whether they offer a sewer scope, or who does, and get the price in writing as its own line.
- For drain repair, camera work and relining as a plumbing service, see ottawaplumbingpro.ca.
- If the lateral matters to your offer, how to deal with it in a condition is a question for your agent or lawyer.

Ontario.ca's list of what an inspector will typically examine includes drainage away from buildings, slopes and natural vegetation, which is the part of the site a visual inspection does cover.
If a scope is on your list, ask for it in writing before the inspection day so the inspector or the plumber can plan the visit.

---

**Disclaimer:** This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Ottawa House Inspection. It does not constitute professional or legal advice. A home inspection is a visual inspection with limits: it is not a pass or fail test, does not assess zoning or building codes and comes with no warranty (ontario.ca). Ask your agent or lawyer about offers and conditions, and Tarion about new-home warranties. Information is current as of November 8, 2026 and may change. Visit **ottawahouseinspection.ca** for the latest answers.