



Standard Guide for Readily Observable Moisture Affected Materials and Conditions Conducive to Elevated Moisture in Commercial Buildings: Visual Moisture Assessment Process¹

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1. Scope

1.1 *Purpose*—The purpose of this *guide*² is to define good commercial *practice* for conducting a *baseline survey* for *readily observable moisture affected materials* and conditions conducive to elevated *moisture* in a *commercial building* related to a *commercial real estate transaction* or *commercial real estate asset management* by conducting: a *walk-through survey*, document reviews, and *interviews* as outlined within this *guide*. This *guide* is intended to provide a practical means for the visual identification of *moisture affected materials* and *physical deficiencies conducive to elevated moisture* as a result of water infiltration through the *building envelope* or substructure, or generated within the *subject building* as a result of processes or mechanical systems, excluding *de minimis conditions*. This *guide* is to allow a *user* to assess general *moisture* concerns, as well as the potential need for further assessment or other actions that may be appropriate that are beyond the scope of this *guide*. For purposes of this *guide*, the initialism “VMA” or “*Visual Moisture Assessment*” is used interchangeably with this *guide*’s full title.

1.2 *Purpose Limitations*—While a VMA may be used to survey for readily identifiable *moisture affected materials* and *physical deficiencies conducive to elevated moisture*, the VMA is not designed to serve as a *comprehensive survey* for the presence of *moisture affected materials* and *physical deficiencies conducive to elevated moisture* in all or most areas in a *commercial building*. It is not intended to reduce or eliminate the risks that elevated *moisture* may pose to the *subject building* or its *occupants*.

1.3 *Considerations Beyond This Scope*—The use of this *guide* is strictly limited to the scope set forth in this section.

¹ This guide is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E50 on Environmental Assessment, Risk Management and Corrective Action and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E50.02 on Real Estate Assessment and Management.

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² Whenever terms defined in Section 3 are used in this guide, they are in *italics*.

Section 12 of this *guide* identifies, for informational purposes, certain physical conditions (not an all-inclusive list) that may exist at a *property* and certain activities or procedures (not an all-inclusive list) that are beyond the scope of this *guide* but may warrant consideration by *users*. The need to investigate any such conditions in the *provider*’s scope of services should be evaluated based upon, among other factors, the nature of the *property* and the reason for conducting the VMA. The scope of such further investigation or testing services should be agreed upon between the *user* and the *provider* as additional services, which are beyond the scope of this *guide*, prior to initiation of the VMA process. The responsibility to initiate work beyond the scope of this *guide* lies with the *user*.

1.3.1 Sampling for suspect *fungi* and other forms of *biological growth* is a non-scope consideration under this *guide*.

1.3.2 Sampling or otherwise measuring for *moisture* is a non-scope consideration under this *guide*.

1.4 *Organization of the Guide*—This *guide* has 13 sections and three appendices. Section 1 defines the Scope. Section 2 is Referenced Documents. Section 3 is Terminology. Section 4 defines the Significance and Use of this *guide*. Section 5 describes User Responsibilities. Sections 6 through 11 provide guidelines for the main body of the *report*, including the scope of the *walk-through survey* and preparation of the *report*. Section 12 and Appendix X1 identify Out of Scope Considerations. Section 13 lists keywords for Internet reference. Appendix X1 provides the *user* with additional VMA scope considerations, whereby a *user* may increase this *guide*’s *baseline* scope of *due diligence* to be exercised by the *provider*, Appendix X2 provides the *user* with a suggested Interview Checklist, and Appendix X3 provides the *user* with a suggested Field Checklist.

1.5 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*