

Standard Work Specifications Design Document

The U.S. Department of Energy suspended the 2018 and 2019 Standard Work Specifications (SWS) redline reports to streamline the release of the FY 2020 SWS full update and create a structured approach for additions or changes to the SWS in the future. The 2020 SWS incorporates the following design principles:

SWS Intent

1. Purpose of the SWS is: Define the minimum acceptable work quality standards for weatherization or home performance measure installations to be effective, durable, and safe.
2. The SWS do NOT:
 - a. Determine which measures or tasks are appropriate for a given home
 - b. Describe best practices for installing measures or performing tasks
 - c. Dictate building analysis practices, diagnostic or assessment requirements, or outcomes of analysis.
3. SWS should avoid referencing outside standards when possible
 - a. Incorporate the desired language from the outside reference instead
4. Any additions must be cross walked with all existing SWS to:
 - a. Ensure the same language is applied to single-family-site built housing (SF), manufactured housing (MH), and multifamily housing (MF), if applicable
 - b. Prevent conflicts or duplication.
5. SWS should never specifically reference a brand name or require the installation to be so specific that only a limited number of suppliers can meet the requirements.
6. All Specifications in the Detail should be able to be inspected for completion.

When reviewing a new specification for addition to the SWS, consider the below questions. If the answer to any of these is, “No,” revisions are required, or the specification does not belong in the SWS.

Detail Level

- Does the language define the minimum acceptable work quality standards for a weatherization or home performance task to be effective, durable, and safe?
- If a work scope calls for the measure (based on Detail name), is it reasonable to expect every Specification (row) applies?
 - If no, remove unnecessary Specifications or generate a separate Detail as needed.

Specification Level

- Does the Title describe one distinct topic (or potential point of inspection) relevant to accomplishing the desired outcome of the Detail?
- Is the Specification relevant to the Title and unique within the Detail?
- Is the Objective relevant to the Specification and Title, and unique within the Detail?
- Can I conduct a quantitative/objective inspection for completion of this Specification?

Reshaping the existing specifications

1. Remove any specification from the SWS that dictates measure selection or assessment procedure.
2. Combine duplicate specs and resolve conflicting specs throughout the three housing types.
3. Remove the references to Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) as they always supersede unless the SWS is stricter.
4. Remove the majority of the references to outside standards and state the minimally compliant installation standard for the measure.
5. Remove any H&S items that do not relate to measures installed in the home.
6. Worker safety is regulated by OSHA and their state, not the SWS.
7. Occupant safety is regulated by the EPA and state entities, not the SWS.
8. Remove any specifications that involve inspection/maintenance/assessment etc. as the SWS is not intended to determine what installations or assessments are appropriate.
9. Rewrite specs using active voice and federal government “plain language guidance”.
10. Restructure and renumber the SWS to a more conventional nomenclature that matches the H&S section’s current method.
11. Group Details in more appropriate Topic.
12. Change the name of Single-Family (SF) to Single Family Site-Built (SFSB) for clarity as the term SF includes Manufactured Homes (MH) as well.
13. Remove occupant education specifications from the standard as these are process related not installation related and are often impossible to site verify. Only notifications that have associated documentation will remain.
14. Add new Details for common installations that are not currently existing in the standard (e.g. water heater tank insulation, exterior storm window installation, etc.)
15. Adjudicate all the comments received prior to Jan. 25, 2019.