ANSI/IICRC S500-2015

STANDARD AND REFERENCE GUIDE FOR PROFESSIONAL WATER DAMAGE RESTORATION

Fourth Edition
Disclaimer

This Standard and Reference Guide (S500) is intended to provide information about the restoration of water-damaged structures and contents and to assist individuals and entities working in the water damage restoration industry in establishing and maintaining their professional competence. Users of this document must keep abreast of the rapid developments in the field of water damage restoration, implement changes in technology and procedures as appropriate, and follow applicable federal, state, provincial and local laws and regulations. Restorers should use their professional judgment throughout each and every project. However, the use of professional judgment is not a license to not comply with this Standard. A project might have unique circumstances that may infrequently allow for a deviation from the standard. Furthermore, this Standard and Reference Guide is not intended to be either exhaustive or inclusive of all pertinent requirements, methods or procedures that might be appropriate on a particular water damage restoration project. The information upon which this Standard and Reference Guide is based is subject to change, which may invalidate any or all of the information contained herein.

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# Table of Contents

**ANSI/IICRC S500 Standard Sections**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important Definitions</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section A</td>
<td>Scope, Purpose, and Application</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section B</td>
<td>Definitions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 1</td>
<td>Principles of Water Damage Restoration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2</td>
<td>Microbiology of Water Damage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3</td>
<td>Health Effects from Exposure to Microbial Contamination in Water-Damaged Buildings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4</td>
<td>Building and Material Science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5</td>
<td>Psychrometry and Drying Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 6</td>
<td>Equipment, Instruments, and Tools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 7</td>
<td>Antimicrobial (biocide) Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 8</td>
<td>Safety and Health</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 9</td>
<td>Administrative Procedures, Project Documentation and Risk Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 10</td>
<td>Inspections, Preliminary Determination, and Pre-Restoration Evaluations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 11</td>
<td>Limitations, Complexities, Complications and Conflicts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 12</td>
<td>Specialized Experts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 13</td>
<td>Structural Restoration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 14</td>
<td>Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning Restoration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 15</td>
<td>Contents Evaluation and Restoration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 16</td>
<td>Large or Catastrophic Restoration Projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 17</td>
<td>Materials and Assemblies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Table of Contents

**ANSI/IICRC S500 Reference Guide Chapters**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Principles of Water Damage Restoration</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Microbiology of Water Damage</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Health Effects from Exposure to Microbial Contamination in Water-Damaged Buildings</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Building and Material Science</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Psychrometry and Drying Technology</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Equipment, Instruments, and Tools</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Antimicrobial (biocide) Technology</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Safety and Health</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Administrative Procedures, Project Documentation and Risk Management</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Inspections, Preliminary Determination, and Pre-Restoration Evaluations</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Limitations, Complexities, Complications and Conflicts</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Specialized Experts</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Structural Restoration</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning Restoration</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Contents Evaluation and Restoration</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Large or Catastrophic Restoration Projects</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Materials and Assemblies</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acknowledgments

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The development and publication of this document was made possible through the generous contributions of a dedicated group of volunteers. The IICRC Board of Directors and the Standards Committee genuinely appreciate the time and effort contributed by these individuals. They exhibit the true volunteer spirit that has been the driving force behind the IICRC since its inception. At the time of approval of this fourth edition of the S500 Standard and Reference Guide for Professional Water Damage Restoration, the IICRC S500 Water Damage Restoration Consensus Body Standard Committee consisted of the members listed below. Other contributors to this document and their respective roles are also listed below.

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Important Definitions

Throughout this document the terms “shall,” “should,” and “recommend” are used to compare and contrast the different levels of importance attached to certain practices and procedures.

shall: when the term shall is used in this document, it means that the practice or procedure is mandatory due to natural law or regulatory requirement, including occupational, public health and other relevant laws, rules or regulations, and is therefore a component of the accepted “standard of care” to be followed.

should: when the term should is used in this document, it means that the practice or procedure is a component of the accepted “standard of care” to be followed, while not mandatory by regulatory requirements.

recommend(ed): when the term recommend(ed) is used in this document, it means that the practice or procedure is advised or suggested, but is not a component of the accepted “standard of care” to be followed.

In addition, the terms “may” and “can” are also available to describe referenced practices or procedures, and are defined as follows:

may: when the term may is used in this document, it signifies permission expressed by the document, and means that a referenced practice or procedure is permissible within the limits of this document, but is not a component of the accepted “standard of care” to be followed.

can: when the term can is used in this document, it signifies an ability or possibility open to a user of the document, and it means that a referenced practice or procedure is possible or capable of application, but is not a component of the accepted “standard of care” to be followed.

For the practical purposes of this document, it was deemed appropriate to highlight and distinguish the critical restoration methods and procedures from the less critical, by characterizing the former as the “standard of care.” The IICRC S500 consensus body standard committee interprets the “standard of care” to be: practices that are common to reasonably prudent members of the trade who are recognized in the industry as qualified and competent. Notwithstanding the foregoing, this Standard and Reference Guide is not intended to be either exhaustive or inclusive of all pertinent requirements, methods or procedures that might be appropriate on a particular water damage restoration project.
A Scope, Purpose and Application

A.1 Scope

This Standard describes the procedures to be followed and the precautions to be taken when performing water damage restoration in residential, commercial and institutional buildings, and the systems and personal property contained within those structures.

This Standard assumes that the determination and correction of the underlying source or cause of the water intrusion leading to the water damage is the responsibility of the property owner and not the restorer, although the property owner may contract with the restorer or other specialized experts to perform these services.

Water damage restoration consists of the following components for which procedures are described in this Standard:

- Principles of Water Damage Restoration
- Microbiology of Water Damage
- Health Effects from Exposure to Microbial Contamination in Water-Damaged Buildings
- Building and Material Science
- Psychrometry and Drying Technology
- Equipment, Instruments, and Tools
- Antimicrobial (biocide) Technology
- Safety and Health
- Administrative Procedures, Project Documentation and Risk Management
- Inspections, Preliminary Determinations and Pre-Restoration Evaluations
- Limitations, Complications, Complexities and Conflicts
- Specialized Experts
- Structural Restoration
- Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Restoration
- Contents Evaluation, Restoration and Remediation
- Large or Catastrophic Restoration Projects
- Materials and Assemblies

A.2 Purpose

It is the purpose of this Standard to define criteria and methodology used by the restorer for inspecting and investigating water damage and associated contamination, and for establishing water damage restoration work plans and procedures.

This Standard and Reference Guide is not intended to be either exhaustive or inclusive of all pertinent requirements, methods or procedures that might be appropriate on a particular water damage restoration project. Restorers should use professional judgment throughout each and every project. However, the use of professional judgment is not a license to not comply with this standard. A project might have unique circumstances that may infrequently allow for a deviation from the standard. Prior to deviation from the standard of care (i.e., “shall” or “should”) the restorer should document the circumstances that led to such a decision, notify the materially interested parties, and in the absence of a timely objection, document the communication before proceeding.

This Standard does not specifically address the protocols and procedures for restoration when potentially hazardous, regulated materials are present or likely to be present in water-damaged structures, systems and contents. Such potentially hazardous, regulated materials include, but are not limited to: asbestos, lead, arsenic, mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), pesticides, fuels, solvents, radiological residues, and other chemical and certain biological contaminants.