The Home Inspection Guide Book

A resource for our clients to help guide them through the stressful process of buying and owning a home.

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Welcome

We would like to thank you for choosing Inspector 34 to perform your home inspection. We realize that buying or selling a home can be a stressful event. We are honored to be able to assist you in this process. We take pride in the fact that we are not simply inspecting a house, we are helping our clients to make an informed decision regarding what may be the largest purchase of their life. We take our responsibility seriously and promise to provide you with professional service and an exceptional inspection.

With this in mind, we are providing you, our client, with this book to aid you in the home buying process. This book is not intended to take the place of the professional advice of your Realtor or contractor, and we strongly recommend that any repairs be performed by qualified professionals. This book is simply intended to serve as educational material to provide information regarding the many questions that arise when buying or selling a home. Inside this book you will find helpful information regarding the inspection process, repair and maintenance of your home, along with additional educational material.

Please remember that a lot of hard work went into the production of this book. We respectfully ask that you do not share this information with anyone else.

Please accept this book as a professional courtesy from Inspector 34, and use it as needed. As always, if you have any questions about your home inspection, please contact your inspector for additional information. Again, we thank you for your business. We realize that you have many options regarding the choice of a home inspection company, and we thank you for trusting us to guide you along the process of buying and/or selling your home.

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THE SCOPE OF THE INSPECTION

Limitations

Our Building Inspection Authorization and Agreement states that the inspection report is an opinion based on a general visual inspection of the readily accessible features of the premises. The intent of our contract is to make you aware that this inspection is not technically exhaustive. There are obviously some areas that cannot be accessed without dismantling portions of the house or its systems. Access to some areas may also be restricted due to the occupant's personal belongings, which are not disturbed during the course of a normal home inspection. Without the authority to move or dismantle items during the inspection, the inspector is often left to draw conclusions about potential problems by directly observing the current conditions.

While inspectors are trained and licensed professionals, visual clues and symptoms sometimes may not reveal the full extent of a problem. Therefore, while a home inspection is intended to help reduce the amount of risk inherent in purchasing a home, it is not a warranty or guarantee of any kind.

It is strongly recommended that when purchasing a home, the buyer also purchases a Home Warranty Service Agreement. This may include a pre-contract inspection of the major systems to be covered by the Warranty Company. Your real estate agent can assist you in procuring an effective warranty from a reputable company. Inspector 34 is not a warranty company and, in order to maintain objectivity during the inspection process, refrains from recommending any warranty companies to its customers.

For Your Information

While some minor deficiencies may be discovered and reported during the inspection, the inspector's main emphasis is on determining major deficiencies and defects that may adversely affect your decision to purchase the property.

The inspection report is not intended to supersede the information provided in a formal property disclosure. It is recommended that a property disclosure be obtained before purchasing the home. Your real estate agent can provide you with this document and will be able to assist you in determining which aspects of the disclosure may affect the sale of the property.

Please read the entire inspection report, as it may contain information that was not included in the verbal consultation with your inspector. Your inspector will attempt to explain his findings at the end of the inspection. However, if you are unable to attend the inspection, or if any other questions arise, please do not hesitate to contact your inspector for additional information.

A copy of the inspection report is provided to you as a part of a professional service and is the copyrighted intellectual property of Inspector 34. Inspector 34 hereby grants and assigns to Client the rights to utilize the Inspection Report in relation to the current real estate transaction, and not in furtherance of any other purpose, unless modified by a writing signed by both parties. The inspection report is not to be copied or disseminated to any other party without the expressed written consent of Inspector 34.

Inspector 34 thanks you for the opportunity to provide this service. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions that may arise.

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MAINTENANCE ISSUES FOR THE NEW HOME BUYER

Without a doubt, regular maintenance is the key to lessening the chance of problems with your new home. A regular maintenance schedule can not only help keep everything operating at maximum efficiency, but it can also help reduce your energy bills and repair costs and can help increase your comfort level. We have compiled this brief maintenance list for our customers. It includes items that are considered important in the daily function of a home. This is not a technically exhaustive list and is not prioritized. There certainly will be other items that will warrant your attention. We are providing this list to give you a general idea of the type of items that are necessary to keep your home functioning as well as possible. This is not meant to take the place of any recommendations listed in your home inspection report but is simply offered as an aid to the new homeowner.

PRIORITY/ MOVE IN ISSUES

1. Recommend installing smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors as required by current safety requirements, following the manufacturer's directions. Recommend installing fire extinguishers as needed.
2. Recommend that any electrical problems noted in the report be evaluated by a qualified licensed electrician and repaired or replaced as needed.
3. Recommend changing the locks on all the doors. Recommend using deadbolt locks for increased security.
4. Recommend removing any non-openable security bars from windows. They represent a major threat to your safety in the event of a fire (restricted egress). If needed, add a monitored security system to increase home security.
5. Recommend removing or repairing any trip hazards. These may include any damaged or loose driveways, sidewalks, or floor coverings.
6. Recommend repairing any unsafe areas on or around stairways, including problems with the steps, handrails, landings, or area lighting.
7. Recommend having all chimneys cleaned and evaluated by a qualified chimney sweep, and serviced as needed, before use of any related appliances.
8. Recommend correcting any detrimental soil conditions to decrease the chances of insect or moisture damage. This may include soil or ground covering that is too high at the house, or any wood to ground contact.
9. Recommend identifying and notating the shut off points for all utilities (plumbing, electrical, gas, etc.).
10. Recommend labeling all circuits in the electrical panel for safety and convenience.
11. Check all appliances and electrical equipment for recalls at www.CPSC.gov.
12. If there is a private water supply (well), recommend evaluation of the system by a qualified contractor, and establishing a regular procedure for having the water quality tested. If there is a private waste system (septic, treatment plant, etc.), recommend evaluation of the system by a qualified contractor, and establishing a regular procedure for having system service performed. Depending upon the location of the property, these two tests may be required before purchasing the home. Consult with your Realtor or mortgage broker for additional information concerning well and septic inspection requirements.

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GENERAL MAINTENANCE ISSUES

1. Recommend testing smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) and arc fault circuit interrupter (AFCI) outlets and breakers monthly, using the test buttons provided.
2. Recommend a yearly service agreement with a qualified licensed heat, vent, and air conditioning (HVAC) contractor to maintain the heater and air conditioning units.
3. Recommend a preventive termite treatment and a yearly service agreement with a qualified licensed pest control operator.
4. Recommend regular cleaning and maintenance of gutters to ensure proper drainage.
5. Recommend keeping all foliage trimmed away from the house, roof, and air conditioning system as needed.
6. Recommend regular maintenance, inspection, and cleaning of the roof and flashing.
7. Recommend insulating exposed water lines to protect them from possible freezing.
8. Recommend changing HVAC filters monthly.
9. Recommend regular evaluation and cleaning/servicing of fireplace by a qualified chimney sweep.
10. Recommend regular inspection of attic for evidence of leaks and condensation, and to ensure proper ventilation. (Recommend providing access to all attics and crawlspaces.)
11. Recommend monthly testing of the operation of automatic garage door opener auto-reverse mechanisms.
12. Recommend regular cleaning of oven exhaust hood filters.
13. Recommend regular maintenance and inspection of dryer vent pipe. (Excess lint can be a fire hazard.)
14. Recommend regular cleaning of whirlpool tubs according to manufacturer's directions.
15. Recommend regular inspection of shower and bathtub caulking, and make necessary improvements as needed.
16. Recommend regular inspection of window caulking, and make necessary improvements as needed. Also verify that drain holes at the exterior of the window frame are open, to ensure proper drainage of water.

Every home is unique, and subsequently will require unique routine maintenance. Several books on home maintenance are available at your local bookstore or library. A small investment in one of these books may provide years of valuable information, and considerable savings on home repair costs. Additional home maintenance information may be provided in the inspection report.

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REGULAR MAINTENANCE

Household chores, honey do lists, regular upkeep.... whatever you call want to call it, preventive maintenance is possibly the most important thing that homeowners can do to protect their investment. While we all wish for a perfect, maintenance-free home, the majority of us realize that there is no such thing. So, unless you can afford to buy a new house every time something breaks at your current residence, a regular preventive maintenance routine is the best alternative. While few people have extra time and money to dedicate to preventive maintenance, an effective regimen of upkeep on your property will certainly prove to be more cost-effective than waiting for something to break and then scrambling to have it repaired. An effective preventive maintenance schedule can help keep things operating more effectively and more efficiently and may even extend the useful life of some household components, saving you money on repairs and replacements.

A regular maintenance schedule will allow you to become more familiar with your home and its components. You will be able to monitor the aging of some components of your home and will be better prepared when the time comes to perform upgrades. Your roof, for example, is one of the most expensive components of your home, and unexpectedly having to replace it will undoubtedly place a strain on the budget of most homeowners. However, with regular maintenance and inspection, the average homeowner may be able to extend the life of their current roofing material, as well as develop a better understanding of its condition and life expectancy. Using this knowledge, the homeowner may be better prepared for its eventual replacement, having had adequate time to research prices and material quality, and decide upon a contractor.

It is generally recommended that most preventive maintenance be performed on a semi-annual basis. Some items do require frequent attention, and you should schedule them accordingly. A maintenance schedule may help you keep track of which tasks need to be performed. You may want to develop your own, or ready-made schedules are available on-line or at your local bookstore or library.

Many homeowners may feel overwhelmed at the number of tasks that are considered to be “routine maintenance”. Just remember that no one is perfect, and most homeowners don’t even come close to completing everything on their to-do lists. Try to make regular maintenance a part of your routine, doing small amounts of work on a regular basis, instead of trying to tackle the whole list at once. And remember that if regular maintenance is not something you feel confident enough to attempt yourself, hiring an appropriately qualified professional is always recommended.

EXTERIOR

1. **Driveways and Sidewalks:**
   - Check for cracks, damage, and deterioration.
   - Watch for signs of settling and/or raising which may produce tripping hazards.
   - Ensure that water drains away from the structure of the house.

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2. **Decks and Porches:**
    - Check for moisture stains, damage, and insect infestation.
    - Refinish (paint/stain) as needed for moisture proofing.
    - Railings and steps should be safe and secure.

3. **Fences and Gates:**
    - Check for moisture damage and insect infestation.
    - Secure all hardware to fence/gates.
    - Ensure that pool/spa areas are protected by non-climbable fences of appropriate height and gates with automatic closers, latches, and locks.

4. **Exterior Walls:**
    - Inspect masonry surfaces for cracking and separating.
    - Clean/open weep holes at bottom course of brick to allow for proper drainage.
    - Inspect wood surfaces for moisture, damage, rot, and insect infestation.
    - Check paints for proper adhesion. Bubbling paint may be a sign of moisture intrusion.
    - Check metal/vinyl siding for damage. Metal siding should be electrically bonded.

5. **Doors and Windows:**
    - Caulking and weather stripping should be checked regularly and updated as needed.
    - Inspect for broken, cracked, or loose panes of glass and replace as needed.
    - Keep drain slots open on windows to help with water control.
    - Sand and paint exposed brick lintels above doors and windows to inhibit future rust.

6. **Sprinklers:**
    - Check sprinkler alignment to ensure that water is directed away from exterior walls and building foundations.
    - Inspect for leaks, which may cause damage, and will increase the water bill.

7. **Grading and Foliage:**
    - Maintain positive slope of soil away from the structure, for water control.
    - Keep soil levels low enough to eliminate any contact with wall coverings.
    - Regularly inspect foundation areas for signs of termite entry into the structure.
    - Eliminate any wood-to-ground contact.
    - Keep foliage trimmed away from the house and roof, including trees, vines, shrubs, etc.

ROOF AREAS

1. **Sloped Roofs:**
    - Inspect for damaged, loose, or missing shingles, tiles, or panels.
    - Check for sagging at bottom edge, which may indicate moisture intrusion.
    - Check for excessive organic growth and remove as needed.

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2. **Flat Roofs:**
    - Inspect for blistering, cracking, or “alligatoring” of roofing materials.
    - Check for openings at seams.
    - Recoat surface at regular intervals, according to manufacturer’s recommendations.

3. **General Roof Concerns:**
    - Regularly check and caulk (as needed) flashing at valleys, vents, skylights, electrical masts, wall intersections, chimneys, antennae, satellite dishes, etc.
    - Keep tree branches from rubbing the roof surface.
    - Electrical service entry cables should be secure, protected, and have sufficient clearance.

4. **Chimneys:**
    - Check for any loose or deteriorating bricks, mortar, or surface coverings.
    - Check rain cap and spark screen for damage, deterioration, or leaks.
    - Check for any loose or damaged sections of the chimney or liner.
    - Check metal chimneys for rust, damage, or loose bracing.
    - Ensure that metal chimney has proper clearance from combustible materials.

5. **Gutters and Downspouts:**
    - Inspect for blockages, leaks, loose, damaged, or disconnected sections.
    - Regular cleaning is recommended for proper drainage.
    - Ensure that water is directed away from foundation.

CRAWLSPACE

1. **Structural:**
    - Check wooden components for moisture damage, deterioration, or insect infestation.
    - Inspect columns for signs of damage, deterioration, sinking, or shifting.
    - Check for signs of sagging or movement in structural members.

2. **Environmental Controls:**
    - Check for signs of excessive moisture on the structure or on the ground.
    - Install/inspect vapor barrier material on the ground as recommended.
    - Install/inspect insulation on the underside of the subfloor as recommended.
    - Ensure adequate ventilation in crawlspace (if needed.)
    - Check for signs of pest or vermin entry and remove as necessary.

STRUCTURE

1. **Foundation:**
    - Check for signs of damage, deterioration, dampness, or movement.
    - Exposed metal in the foundation should be cleaned and sealed against moisture.
    - Check openings behind corner cracks in slab for termite activity.

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2. **Wall and Ceiling Surface Cracks:**
    - Wall cracks (interior and exterior) and ceiling cracks should be monitored for any evidence of significant movement. Some cracking should be expected due to normal movement and settling of the house, however cracks that quickly appear or change appearance over a relatively short period of time may indicate some other structural problems and should be investigated.

3. **Window and Door Framing:**
    - Doors and windows that become difficult to close over a relatively short period of time may indicate some other structural problems and should be investigated.

PLUMBING

1. **Supply Plumbing:**
    - Regularly operate the main shut off valve and equipment isolation valves to ensure proper operation.
    - Insulate exposed water supply lines in unconditioned spaces to help prevent freezing in cold weather.
    - Inspect supply lines for any damage, deterioration, or leaks, including any plastic hoses.
    - Ensure that pipes suspended in crawlspace have adequate support.

2. **Waste Plumbing:**
    - Inspect for any damage, deterioration, or leaks.
    - Ensure proper flow at all interior drains, cleaning as necessary.
    - Indoor floor drains and exterior surface drains should be cleared to ensure proper drainage.
    - Plastic ABS piping exposed to sunlight should be painted to inhibit deterioration.
    - Ensure that pipes suspended in crawlspace have adequate support.

3. **Fuel System:**
    - Inspect distribution piping for damage, deterioration, and signs of leakage.
    - Test isolation valves for proper operation.
    - Ensure that fuel distribution lines are properly supported (at least 6" above the ground).
    - It is recommended that, as a safety precaution, any needed repairs on fuel system distribution lines be performed by a qualified, licensed plumbing contractor.
    - If any gas odors are detected, shut off all gas fueled equipment and contact a qualified licensed plumber. Do not use any electrical equipment or light an open flame until the problem has been rectified.

4. **Water Heaters:**
    - Inspect pipes, valves, and tank for signs of rust, corrosion, and leaks.
    - On gas heaters, inspect the burner chamber for signs of rust or deterioration.
    - Test temperature pressure relief (TPR) valve according to manufacturer's directions, paying special attention to TPR valve piping termination point. Scalding hot water will be forced from the end of this pipe and can cause severe burns. USE EXTREME CAUTION WHEN PERFORMING THIS TEST! **Please note that some manufacturers recommend that TPR valves should only be tested by qualified professionals. Please consult with a licensed plumber prior to testing the TPR valve.**

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- Drain water from tank (according to manufacturer's directions) to inspect for accumulation of debris in bottom of tank. The amount of debris expected is dependent upon water usage and water quality and cleanliness. Be certain to turn off electricity or fuel to heater before draining. As with the TPR test, scalding hot water may come from the end of test hose, and can cause severe burns. USE EXTREME CAUTION WHEN PERFORMING THIS TEST!
- Inspect vent piping on gas heaters for damage and deterioration. Ensure adequate clearance from any combustible materials.
- Attic mounted (as well as interior mounted) water heaters should have overflow drain pans installed with exterior routed drain lines. This pan should be kept clear of debris.
- Some gas heaters located in the garage shed must be mounted at least 18" above the floor. Verify these requirements with the manufacturer's instructions and adjust the installation accordingly.

5. Fixtures:

- Check all fixtures for damage, deterioration, or leaks.
- Inspect toilet for leaks from the floor seal.
- Caulking and grout at all fixtures should be inspected and renewed as needed.
- Whirlpool tubs should be regularly cleaned and maintained according to manufacturer's directions.

HEATING

1. General Heating Concerns:

- Conventional type air filters on all forced-air-heating systems should be checked on a monthly basis and replaced as needed.
- Electrostatic filters should be checked and cleaned on a regular basis according to the manufacturer's directions.
- Ensure that the air filter is facing the right direction. Check the directional arrows on the sides of the filter, which indicate airflow.
- Have any unusual noises or conditions investigated by a qualified licensed HVAC contractor.

2. Gas Fueled Furnaces:

- Should be cleaned and serviced annually by a qualified licensed HVAC contractor.
- Regularly inspect vent pipe for any loose, damaged, or corroded sections.
- Ensure proper clearance of vent pipes from combustible materials.
- Ensure proper supply of combustion air to gas fueled furnaces.
- Carbon monoxide detectors are required in any home with a gas fueled furnace and should be installed according to the manufacturer's directions.

3. Electric Heat:

- Should be inspected and serviced annually by a qualified licensed HVAC contractor.
- Regularly inspect visible components for signs of loose connections, arcing, or burning.

4. Space Heaters:

- Space heaters represent a safety concern, and should only be used with the utmost care according to the manufacturer's directions.
- Non-vented gas fueled space heaters should not be used for heating a home.

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- Non-vented gas fireplaces are intended for aesthetic purposes only and should not be used for heat. Follow manufacturer's directions for safe operation.

AIR CONDITIONING/ HEAT PUMPS

1. **General Concerns:**
   - A qualified licensed HVAC contractor should inspect the system annually to ensure proper operation and make any necessary repairs or adjustments.
   - Ensure that the power has been turned on to the system for 24 hours before initial use.
   - Maintain filters (explained in the heating section).

2. **Condensate Drain:**
   - Regularly inspect the condensate drain line for signs of leaks or blockages, and clean regularly. An HVAC contractor can advise on preferred cleaning methods.
   - AC systems located in the attic should have overflow drain pans installed with an exterior routed drain line. This pan should be kept clear of debris.
3. **Compressors:**
   - Exterior AC compressor should be level.
   - Regularly inspect refrigerant lines for damaged and loose or missing insulation.
   - Keep vegetation trimmed back at least 3 feet to ensure proper airflow at compressor.
   - Regular professional cleaning of AC compressor coils is recommended.

4. **Window Units:**
   - Regular cleaning and inspection by a qualified licensed HVAC contractor is recommended.
   - Clean air filters regularly.

ELECTRICAL

1. **Electrical Service Entry:**
   - Regularly inspect service entry area.
   - For underground service check the conduit for signs of rust, damage, or deterioration.
   - For overhead service inspect cables for proper clearance and any signs of damage or deterioration.

2. **Main Panel:**
   - Check exterior mounted panels annually for any signs of rust or moisture intrusion.
   - Breakers should be operated annually (according to manufacturer's directions) to ensure that none of them have stopped working.
   - Fuses should be tightened annually.
   - All circuits should be correctly labeled.
   - Any signs of overheating (scorched areas, melted wire insulation, warm areas, or burn odors) should be reported to a qualified licensed electrician.
   - Clear access should be maintained around the electrical panels.

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3. **Indoor Wiring Concerns:**
    - Replace any worn or damaged electrical cords, including appliance cords, extension cords, or plugs.
    - Tighten any loose outlets or switches.
    - Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) and Arc Fault Circuit Interrupter (AFCI) outlets and breakers should be tested monthly according to manufacturer's instructions.
    - Plugs or outlets that are warm to the touch may indicate loose or damaged wiring and should be investigated by a qualified licensed electrician.
    - Exposed light bulbs should have fixture covers.
    - Consider installing arc fault circuit interrupters in place of ordinary circuit breakers, especially if your home is over 40 years old. (AFCIs are newer technology designed to prevent electrical fires by sensing unseen electrical arcing, and are particularly important where wires may have degraded with age).

4. **Outdoor Wiring Concerns:**
    - All exterior outlets should have proper exterior rated covers and should be GFCI protected.
    - Exposed wiring should be protected from damage by lawn maintenance equipment.

5. **Aluminum Wiring:**
    - Learn the potential hazards posed by aluminum wiring systems. Information is provided on the Internet at www.CPSC.gov.
    - Aluminum wiring should be annually inspected by a qualified licensed electrician.
    - Wiring connections should be checked and tightened by a qualified licensed electrician.
    - Fixtures, outlets, and switches should all be rated for use with aluminum wiring.

INTERIOR

1. **General Concerns:**
    - Inspect walls and ceilings for cracks and note their size and position. Monitor any future changes in these aspects.
    - Monitor any bulges on wall and ceiling surfaces. Separating coverings, especially on ceilings, may fall and could cause injury.
    - Regularly inspect surfaces for evidence of condensation and mold growth, which may indicate high interior humidity levels or exterior water intrusion.
    - Fireplaces and chimneys should be cleaned and inspected yearly by a qualified chimney sweep.

2. **Laundry Area:**
    - Dryer vent pipes should be regularly inspected and cleaned of debris and should terminate to the exterior of the house.
    - Exterior dryer vent terminations should have a functional damper installed to inhibit pest entry.
    - Washing machine overflow drain pans are available at most home improvement stores and may prevent moisture damage from an overflowing washing machine.

3. **Attics:**
    - Inspect the underside of the roof annually for moisture stains.

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- Inspect attic area annually for evidence of high humidity levels (fungus, rot, and mold growth).
- Inspect insulation annually for even distribution and adequate depth. Keep insulation away from recessed lights as needed, following manufacturer's directions.
- Inspect vents annually to ensure that they are not blocked. Check gable end vents to ensure that screens are intact.
- Regularly inspect for evidence of pest activity (mice, squirrels, raccoons, etc.).
- Inspect attic stairs for loose hardware and tighten as needed before every use.
- Be extremely careful while walking in the attic. Only walk in the areas where secure decking is provided. Do not fall through the ceiling or step on wires. If you are not comfortable with maneuvering in the attic or are unsure about quality or attachment of the decking material, please contact a qualified, licensed professional regarding inspection of the attic area and systems.

4. Garage:

- Inspect weather-stripping and threshold of house entry door annually.
- Regularly verify the operation of garage door opener auto-reverse mechanism. Perform this test according to the manufacturer's directions.

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HOUSEHOLD PESTS

Many different types of pests thrive in the same type of conditions that humans enjoy. Consequently, we often find ourselves sharing our homes with these unwanted intruders. Pest control is a major industry, with millions of dollars spent every year, by professionals and do-it-yourselfers alike, in an attempt to eliminate household pests. Pest intrusion may often be discouraged by thorough housekeeping and regular maintenance that is intended to deter pest entry. While preventive measures often prove effective in pest control, it may become necessary to enlist the assistance of a qualified licensed pest control operator if the situation becomes too much for the average homeowner to handle.

This list is provided for your convenience, to familiarize you with some of the more common pests that you may encounter in your new home.

Termites

Termites are by far the most serious insects that can attack a home, since they consume the wood that they infest. In the United States, there are two groups of termites that are generally encountered: subterranean and drywood/damp wood termites.

Subterranean termites are so named because they generally make their home in the soil, and enter a house in search of wood, which they ingest for nutrition. They live in sophisticated social colonies, generally below ground, and travel by moving through wood, soil, or shelter tubes that they construct from earth, debris, and excreted material. Termites do not typically expose themselves to the open air, as their bodies are susceptible to rapid dehydration.

Shelter tubes are often built to allow termites to move across an open area. They are typically sandy in color and are easily broken open by hand. They may initially be as small as 1/8 inch in width but can be built upon over time and may become much larger if left undisturbed. Inspection for shelter tubes should be performed regularly, as they are often visible along the foundation of a slab on grade house, or on the piers of a raised structure.

Termite activity may go unnoticed, as they often damage the interior of wooden members without outward signs. This often raises the question of whether any structural damage has been done. If no damage is visible, it is not possible to determine if there is hidden or repaired damage without disassembling the house. If damage is suspected, further evaluation may be warranted. However, if no invasive evaluations are performed, the building should be monitored for any signs of structural sagging, changes, or weakness.

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Homeowners can take certain steps to help minimize the risk of termite infestation. Wood to soil contact should be eliminated in and around the home, as well as keeping the exterior areas clear of wood debris. Termites prefer moist conditions, therefore the soil around the house should be kept as dry as possible. This includes eliminating any standing water, controlling runoff from the roof and gutter systems, and properly ventilating crawlspaces. Soil should be kept away from exterior wall coverings, preferably leaving 2 to 4 inches of the slab visible for regular inspection.

Professional preventive termite treatments are an integral part of an effective defense against termites. A soil treatment consists of a chemical applied around the building, which provides a protective envelope for the structure that deters or kills any termites that try to enter through the chemical barrier. Baiting systems are used to monitor for any termite activity, and poison is used to kill the termites if they are discovered. Fumigation consists of covering the home with a tent and injecting a gas that is poisonous to the termites to eliminate any activity inside of the home.

Drywood/damp wood termites do not reside is the soil, and are often introduced when wood in which they already reside is brought into the home. They may be harder to identify, as they do not construct shelter tubes on exterior surfaces. They are often identified by fecal matter and other debris, which is either stored in unused chambers in the wood or expelled from small holes on the surface of the wood. Small piles of this material (called frass) may be found on windowsills or beneath other infested areas.

Drywood/damp wood termites are often controlled by removal of wood (for smaller infestations) or fumigation of the structure (for larger infestations.)

Regular inspection by a qualified licensed pest control operator is recommended to help identify potential termite activity and to further advise the homeowner on recommended methods to help deter or eliminate infestation.

Other Wood-Boring Insects

Powder post beetles, old house borer beetles, furniture beetles, carpenter ants, and carpenter bees are some other insects that can cause damage to wood in a structure.

Beetle damage often results from mature beetles laying eggs on or in the wood, and larvae feeding on the wood as they grow, emerging as adults. Damage is identified by small exit holes in the wood, 1/32 to 1/4 inch in diameter, depending upon the type of beetle. Identification and treatment are best left to a professional pest control operator.

Carpenter bees and ants do not feed on wood, but burrow into it for nesting purposes. The ants eat insects, plants, and household food. They often prefer damaged or decayed wood in which to make their

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nest. To help prevent a carpenter ant infestation, food should be stored in sealed containers, and spills should be cleaned up quickly and thoroughly. Decayed wood should be removed from in and around the home, and firewood should not be stored inside or against the house. Chemical treatment of an infestation should be performed by a qualified licensed pest control operator.

Carpenter bees are solitary insects, boring rounded holes into wood in which to nest. They prefer softer woods, with unpainted and well-weathered wood being more susceptible to attack. While carpenter bees are generally not aggressive at defending their nests, a qualified licensed pest control operator should be consulted for eradication.

Cockroaches

Cockroaches are among the most common insects and have been around for nearly 350 million years. The fact that they are highly adaptable survivors makes them one of the most difficult pests to control. They prefer dark and damp environments and can feed on a wide variety of materials that we produce, consume, shed, or excrete. Cockroaches have been known to carry disease-producing organisms, and cockroach allergens affect many people, and in some cases may be life threatening.

Proper sanitation is one of the most important methods involved in cockroach control. This includes prompt cleaning of all spills, storing food in insect proof containers, eliminating moisture sources, and eliminating harborages by sealing access points and making necessary structural repairs.

Control of cockroaches does not result from a one-time application of pesticides. It is an ongoing partnership between the homeowner, who is responsible for maintaining a household environment that discourages infestation, and the pest control operator, who will develop a long-term strategy for cockroach management.

Fleas

Fleas are small wingless insects that feed on the blood of their hosts. Several species are encountered throughout the United States, with cat fleas being the most commonly encountered. They prefer dogs and cats as hosts but may be found on a wide variety of other animals. They are known hosts of an internal parasite, a type of tapeworm that is common in dogs and cats and can infect children if a host flea is ingested. Other known species of fleas are less common, but many of them can transmit serious human diseases, and professional identification is recommended.

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Effective control of cat fleas has become much easier with the development of revolutionary new veterinary products. Consult your veterinarian for more information about these products.

Consult with your pest control professional if a flea infestation occurs, and a proper control program can be devised.

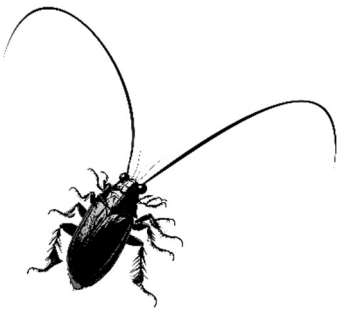
Rats and Mice

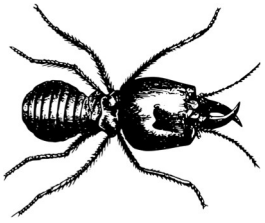
These rodents have been responsible for the spread of a large number of diseases, many of them life threatening. While modern sanitation methods have reduced this risk, it has not been eliminated. Most of these rodents are nocturnal, preferring to move and feed at night, and will eat almost anything to survive. Droppings from rats and mice are the most common sign of an infestation.

Rodents must have adequate food and shelter to survive, and proper sanitation procedures often have a tremendous impact on reducing or eliminating rodent populations. Pet owners should only put out the amount of food that will be immediately consumed, and spills should be quickly cleaned. Care should be taken with food storage, using rodent-proof containers, and storing food in areas inaccessible to rodents. Rodent-proofing a structure by sealing any potential access points, while often effective, can prove to be difficult as mice can pass through openings as small as 3/8 inch wide.

While professional pest control is recommended, homeowners often attempt to handle a rodent problem on their own. Always take extreme care when handling any poisons, place them only in areas that are not accessible to children or pets, and clearly mark them as poison when in storage.

Several other types of household pests exist, with varying degrees of effect on the household. A pest control professional should be contacted if any situation develops that cannot be safely and effectively handled by the homeowner.





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LIFE EXPECTANCY AND REPAIR ESTIMATES

Every component in a home is subject to wear and tear and will eventually need to be repaired and/or replaced. Life expectancy and repair/replacement prices are not set in stone and can vary widely, contingent on many different variables, including initial product quality, the quality of the installation process, protection from weathering and abuse, quality and frequency of maintenance, and the amount of use (and abuse) the component receives. While no one can predict the moment when a specific component will fail or the exact costs of remedy, there are many different resources available that can help by providing a range of expected product lifespans and anticipated repair and replacement costs.

The following information is being included as a service to our customers. The estimates provided by these outside sources are intended to be ballpark estimates of repair costs that may be incurred for a typical home. These estimates are based on national averages, intended to serve only as a guide, and are provided for informational purposes only. Inspector 34 does not guarantee the accuracy of these prices, as many variables affect the cost of quality repairs on your home. Please contact a qualified licensed professional for exact repair costs.

Some life expectancy estimates are provided by these sources and are based on national averages, intended to serve only as a guide, and are provided for informational purposes only. The life expectancies of equipment can vary greatly due to various factors such as regional climate, installation procedures, location, and quality and frequency of maintenance. As such, Inspector 34 does not guarantee the accuracy of these life expectancy estimates.

Inspector 34 does not perform any repairs and is prohibited from recommending any specific contractors. We recommend using qualified licensed and insured professionals to perform any needed repairs. Whenever practical, it is advisable to obtain several different contractor's estimates, check their references, and establish a contract before having repair work performed.

For general information about the average lifespan of appliance in your home, please visit
this page on The Family Handyman website.

For general information about life cycles and costs of repair, please visit
this page from the Carson-Dunlop Home Reference Book.

For general information about repair costs by region of the US, please visit
this page of the Remodeling.net website.

The Remodeling.net site allows you to choose the year and region of the country that best suits your needs. For Louisiana area estimates, chose the West South-Central region, and for Mississippi area estimates, chose the East South-Central region.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The internet offers an unlimited number of resources for the new homeowner. Information is available on any subject and is often free for the taking. We have listed a few websites that may prove to be helpful in maintaining your new home. This is not an exhaustive list, and due to the nature of the internet, we cannot guarantee the content of any websites or continued accuracy of website addresses. Please contact us if you experience trouble with any of the sites, so that we may exclude them from future publications. Thank you for your assistance.

This site includes links to areas that answer questions and provide tips about your home.

U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission (800-638-2772)

http://www.cpsc.gov

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

http://www.epa.gov

Mold information: http://www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/moldresources.html

EPA lead hotline: 1-800-424-LEAD

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/healthy_homes/healthyhomes/lead

Louisiana Poison Control Center (800-222-1222)

American Association of Poison Control Centers

http://www.aapcc.org

These sites offer various tips and information about your home.

http://www.doityourself.com

http://www.hgtv.com

http://www.homedepot.com

http://www.hometime.com

http://www.lowes.com

http://www.thisoldhouse.com

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MOLD INFORMATION FACT SHEET

According to Louisiana laws regulating home inspections (Title 46, Part XL, Chapter 3 §309.A.7.), licensed home inspectors are not required to inspect or report on the presence or absence of any suspected or actual adverse environmental condition or hazardous substance, including but not limited to mold. This is due to the fact that mold cannot be definitively identified without being properly sampled and tested by a qualified laboratory. While these services are available for an additional charge, sampling and testing are not performed as part of a routine home inspection. However, in 2014 the state legislature passed the following law:

> A licensed home inspector shall include in his written report of the home inspection the presence of suspected mold growth if during the course of inspecting the systems and components of the structure in accordance with the provisions of this Chapter and board rules and regulations, the licensed home inspector discovers visually observable evidence of suspected mold growth on the inside of the structure.

As a result of this law, this information is being provided to you during your home inspection process. This information is being provided as a general guideline, and is not to be considered complete information on mold and suspected mold growth. Please consult with your physician, appropriate mold professional and provided reference sources for additional information regarding any concerns that you may have regarding this house.

<u>According to the EPA, Mold spores are ubiquitous; they are found both indoors and outdoors. This means that mold is everywhere, and that all houses (including this one) have mold present inside of the structure.</u> Mold spores cannot be eliminated from indoor environments. Some mold spores will be found floating through the air and in settled dust; however, they will not grow if moisture is not present. Mold is not usually a problem indoors—unless mold spores land on a wet or damp spot and begin growing. As molds grow, they digest whatever they are growing on. Unchecked mold growth can damage buildings and furnishings; molds can rot wood, damage drywall, and eventually cause structural damage to buildings. Mold can cause cosmetic damage, such as stains, to furnishings. The potential human health effects of mold are also a concern. It is important, therefore, to prevent mold from growing indoors. Standards for judging what is an acceptable, tolerable or normal quantity of mold have not been established by any governmental or health organizations. There are no EPA or other federal standards for airborne mold or mold spores, so sampling cannot be used to check a building's compliance with federal mold standards, as there are none.

Mold can grow very quickly. The spores of some varieties can begin to germinate in as little as 4 to 12 hours, if the environmental conditions are favorable. It can be assumed that when building materials get wet, mold growth is likely to start immediately. In wet porous materials, mold can become extensive within 24 to 48 hours. <u>Due to this fact, the home inspector cannot be held liable for any mold growth that is discovered in the home after the home inspection has been completed.</u> If you see any suspected mold growth in the home during the inspection process, it is your responsibility to alert the home inspector of your suspicions so that the information may be included in your inspection report. A standard home inspection is not a mold inspection, and home inspectors are not inspecting the house with the express goal of discovering suspected mold growth. Any discoveries will be noted in the report, but the inspector is performing a general home inspection, not a mold inspection.

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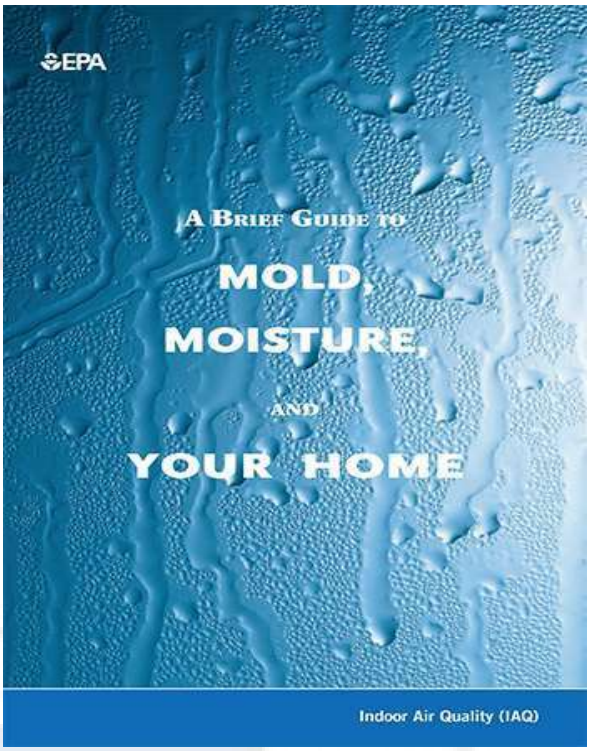
MOLD INFORMATION RESOURCE LIST

Biological Contaminants

https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/biological-pollutants-impact-indoor-air-quality

EPA Mold Homepage

http://www.epa.gov/mold



EPA Hurricane Information http://www.epa.gov/hurricanes/

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Home Page www.epa.gov/iaq

IAQ Tools for Schools

https://www.epa.gov/iaq-schools

Indoor Air Quality Building Education and Assessment Model (I-BEAM)

http://www.epa.gov/iaq/largebldgs/i- beam/index.html

IAQ in Large Buildings/Commercial Buildings

https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/indoor-air-quality-offices-and-other-large-buildings

A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture, and Your Home

https://www.epa.gov/mold/printable-version-brief-guide-mold-moisture-and-your-home

Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings https://www.epa.gov/mold/mold-remediation

Fact Sheet: Flood Cleanup – Avoiding Indoor Air Quality Problems

https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/flood-cleanup-protect-indoor-air-and-your-health

Regulating Antimicrobial Pesticides

https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/antimicrobial-pesticide-registration

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Mold

What are molds?

Molds are tiny, microscopic organisms that digest organic matter and reproduce by releasing spores. Molds are a type of fungi and there are over 100,000 species. In nature, mold helps decompose or break down leaves, wood, and other plant debris. Molds become a problem when they go where they are not wanted and digest materials such as our homes.

What makes molds grow in my home?

Mold enters your home as tiny spores. The spores need moisture to begin growing, digesting, and destroying. Molds can grow on almost any surface, such as wood, ceiling tiles, wallpaper, paints, carpet, sheet rock, and insulation. The mold grows best when there is lots of moisture from a leaky roof, high humidity, or flood. There is no way to get rid of all molds and mold spores from your home. But you can control mold growth by keeping your home dry.

Can I be exposed to mold?

When molds are disturbed, they release spores into the air. You can be exposed by breathing air containing these mold spores. You can also be exposed through touching moldy items, eating moldy food or accidental hand to mouth contact.

Do molds affect my health?

Most molds do not harm healthy people. But people who have allergies or asthma may be more sensitive to molds. Sensitive people may experience skin rash, runny nose, eye irritation, cough, nasal congestion, aggravation of asthma or difficulty breathing. People with immune suppression or underlying lung disease may be at increased risk for infections from molds. A small number of molds produce toxins called mycotoxins. When people are exposed to high levels of mold mycotoxins they may suffer toxic effects, including fatigue, nausea, headaches, and irritation to the lungs and eyes. If you or your family members have health problems that you suspect are caused by exposure to mold, you should consult with your physician.

When is mold a problem?

You know you have mold when you smell the "musty" odor or see small black or white specks along your damp bathroom or basement walls. Some mold is hidden, growing behind wall coverings or ceiling tiles. Even dry, dead mold can cause health problems, so always take precautions when you suspect mold. Mold is often found in areas where water has damaged building materials and furniture from flooding or plumbing leaks. Mold can also be found growing along walls where warm moist air condenses on cooler wall surfaces, such as inside exterior walls, behind dressers, headboards, and in closets where articles are stored against walls. Mold often grows in rooms with both high water usage and humidity, such as kitchens, bathrooms, laundry rooms, and basements. If you notice mold or know of water damaged areas in your home, it is time to take action to control its growth.

When should I sample for mold?

In most cases, you don't need to sample for mold because you can often see or smell mold. Even a clean, dry house will have some mold spores, but typically not enough to cause health problems. If you smell mold, it may be hidden behind wallpaper, in the walls or ceiling, or under the carpet. If you suspect that you have hidden mold, be very careful when you investigate; protect yourself from exposure in the same manner as you would for a clean-up.

Can I control mold growth in my home?

Yes, you can. Dry out the house and fix any moisture problems in your home:

- Stop water leaks, repair leaky roofs and plumbing. Keep water away from concrete slabs and basement walls.
- Weather permitting, open windows and doors to increase air flow in your home, especially along the inside of exterior walls. Use a fan if there are no windows available.
- Make sure that conditioned air flows into all areas of the home. Move large objects a few inches away from the inside of exterior walls to increase air circulation.
- Install and use exterior vented exhaust fans in bathrooms, kitchens, and laundry rooms.
- Ventilate and insulate attic and crawl spaces. Use heavy plastic to cover earth floors in crawl spaces.
- Clean and dry water damaged carpets, clothing, bedding, and upholstered furniture within 24 to 48 hours, or consider removing and replacing damaged furnishings.
- Vacuum and clean your home regularly to remove mold spores.
- Check around your windows for signs of condensation and water droplets. Wipe them up right away so mold can’t start to grow.

Additional information at http://www.epa.gov/mold

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WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE'S HOUSES

It is possible that over the course of living in your home, you may discover that something is wrong with your new residence. At this point, you may become angry or aggravated with your home inspector. However, it is important to remember some key facts about your home inspection.

In many cases, problems are not evident until you have spent time in the house. Some roof problems may not show themselves until certain weather conditions exist. A shower pan may not leak until someone is standing in it while water is running. Deficiencies may not be noticed until all the furniture has been taken out or floor coverings have been removed. Some problems may have existed previously, but without any outward signs of their occurrence.

Sometimes inspectors are labeled as inconsistent because they report on some of the small problems in a house, but not others. As a rule, we include in our reports most of the minor problems that we encounter during a home inspection. However, we are not inspecting the house to locate items that the new homebuyer can repair themselves for a few dollars with a trip to the local hardware store. We are looking for major deficiencies that would adversely affect someone's decision to purchase a home. In other words, we are attempting to find problems that may potentially cost a considerable amount of money to repair.

Many parts of the home inspection are evaluations based upon the past performance of the home. If there are no indications of previous problems with the house, it becomes extremely difficult to predict any future problems that may occur.

There may be some instances where it is necessary to enlist the services of a professional to evaluate, repair, or replace a component of a home. In these cases, the hired professional may have a differing opinion than that of the home inspector. For instance, we may advise that with proper repairs a roof can last for a few more years before replacement is needed, while a roofing contractor may recommend that a new roof be installed. While the home inspector's advice may be the most economical course of action, the roofer may be reluctant to make repairs for fear that if he is the last one to work on the roof before it starts leaking, then he will be held liable for any damages that occur. It is easier, more profitable, and there is less potential for future problems for the roofer that follows this line of thinking. While it may not be in the best interest of the homeowner, one can hardly blame the roofer for attempting to limit his liability.

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There may be an occasion when a contractor may evaluate a situation and respond by telling you that your home inspector should have caught this problem during his evaluation. In situations like this, there are some important points to remember.

A) There may have been some extenuating circumstances during the inspection that prevented the inspector from examining the problem in question. There may have been some of the seller's personal belongings preventing access to the problem. The inspection may have occurred during the winter, preventing proper testing of the AC unit. The seller may have denied the inspector access to some room of the house. Any number of different situations may have existed during the inspection that may not be known to the contractor.

B) The average contractor spends considerable time examining and evaluating a situation. Unfortunately, home inspectors must evaluate every system in the house in a relatively short period of time. If we were to spend an extensive amount of time on each system, the inspection would cost significantly more money and take several days to complete.

C) Home inspectors are expected to be generalists, not specialists. The plumber may indeed have more plumbing experience than your home inspector. However, we are expected to have knowledge of plumbing, heating, electrical, roofing, air conditioning, etc.

D) Some problems are hidden from view, and are not discovered until renovations begin, and wall and floor coverings are removed. Unfortunately, home inspectors are not allowed to perform any invasive or destructive tests and may not discover these situations during our evaluation.

It is important to remember that a home inspection is designed to tilt the odds in your favor when purchasing an unfamiliar property. It is not designed to eliminate all the risk involved when owning a home. Therefore, a home inspection should not be considered an insurance policy for your new home. There is no insurance company that would be able to afford to offer an insurance policy that has no deductible, no limit on liability, and an indefinite policy period.

Home inspectors are highly trained and experienced professionals that attempt to discover if there are any major deficiencies which may adversely affect your decision to purchase a home. You, our clients, hire us and our loyalties are strictly to you. We thank you for giving us the opportunity to provide this service.

Should you have any questions regarding any aspect of your inspection report or your home, please don't hesitate to contact your inspector. We are happy to assist you in any way possible.

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FINAL WALK THROUGH CHECKLIST

FINAL WALK THROUGH

The main purpose of a General Home Inspection is to discover Major Deficiencies on the date of the inspection that would adversely affect your decision to purchase the home. If you have gotten this far (final walk through), we can safely assume that either no major deficiencies were found, or that the sellers were able to correct any problems that were addressed. However, some deficiencies may not have been apparent during the Home Inspection due to personal items, floor coverings, home furnishings, foliage, etc. In addition, some damage may have occurred while the sellers were moving. The Final Walk Through is your last opportunity before the closing to discover any issues that may have become apparent. If you find something that appears to be a MAJOR DEFICIENCY, CALL YOUR HOME INSPECTOR. A return visit may be necessary. We have provided this Final Walk Through Checklist for your convenience.

EXTERIOR

Take a walk around the house. During the inspection, some deficiencies may have been hidden by the seller's belongings or landscaping. Look for any signs of rot, peeling paint, damaged siding, major cracks in brick veneer, etc. These issues may have already been noted in your Inspection Report, but it's a good idea to take another look. Remember that all houses require a certain amount of maintenance. Peeling paint and minor rot are not considered major problems in the south but are considered homeowner maintenance. Paint, caulk, and elbow grease will usually remedy these issues. Don't forget to ask the neighbors about any drainage or flooding problems that may exist. If there are problems, you may want to have an elevation survey performed. Finally, check the weep holes in the bottom row of bricks. Make sure they are not blocked with mulch or soil. Some homeowners permanently seal the weep holes to discourage pest entry. They need to be open for proper drainage (however screens can be installed to discourage pest entry.)

ATTIC

Some attics are not easily accessed. If there is a drop-down stair or closet opening, it is a good idea to take a look. This will give you a chance to evaluate storage space. Look for any apparent problems which may have been hidden by the seller's stored belongings during the Home Inspection. If you discover a major deficiency, or something that appears to be out of order, call your Home Inspector. However, be aware that most attics have no flooring, and walking between ceiling joist is extremely dangerous and may cause you to fall through the ceiling. Many attic stairs are substandard, so exercise extreme caution when climbing attic stairs and maneuvering through attics.

ELECTRICAL

Walk through the house and turn on all the lights and ceiling fans. Check for burned-out bulbs and wobbling fans. Check all switches and electrical outlets. Make sure all cover plates are in place. Some may have been damaged during the move, were concealed by furnishings during the Home Inspection, or have been removed by sellers to take to their new house. If the dwelling has two prong outlets, consider grounding the outlets,

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especially the ones that will service electronic equipment. All outlets near water or on the exterior walls should be grounded and/or upgraded to GFCIs (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters). If the water heater is electric, make sure it's on. If the circuit breaker/fuse panel box is not labeled, doing so before you fill the house with furnishings is a good idea.

HEATING / AIR CONDITIONING

With the house empty, the AC system is now cooling a larger volume of air. Don't be surprised if the house feels hotter than it did when furnished. This is typical. People are going in and out, exterior doors are open, etc. However, if the system doesn't appear to be doing the job, it may be prudent to have it serviced before the closing. Your best insurance against AC problems is a yearly maintenance contract with a qualified licensed HVAC contractor. Remember, the AC always seems to fail on the hottest day of the summer, during a long holiday weekend, when you have a house full of company. Keeping it properly maintained is the best preventive medicine. If it's wintertime, activate the furnace and check that warm air is exiting the supply registers in the ceiling. Check that the thermostat wasn't damaged during the seller's move.

KITCHEN

Test the sink fixtures and spray wand. Look below the sink for mold, stains, or moisture damage. During the Home Inspection there are usually many cleaning products below the sink, which may have hidden stains or moisture damage. If the possibility of mold is present, the area should be thoroughly cleaned with detergent and fungicide. If problems persist, contact a qualified mold specialist. Run the dishwasher through a complete cycle during your walk through. You may want to start it when you first arrive at the house but keep an eye on it in case a leak occurs. Try all the stove burners and oven. If a built in microwave oven is present, fill a cup with water, put it in the microwave, and operate the unit for one minute. Look inside all the cabinets and pantries. Dishes and other belongings may have concealed damage when the house was occupied. Check the laundry room for moisture damage, stains and mold. The washer and dryer probably concealed some areas during the Home Inspection, and if they have been removed these areas will now be visible for inspection. If the appliances are still installed, take this opportunity to run them through a complete cycle, monitoring the washer for leaks. You may wish to pull the washer and dryer away from the walls to rescue all of the socks that have fallen behind them. If you find a large amount of money behind the washer, please give me a call, as it probably fell from my pocket during the Home Inspection!

BATHROOMS

Test all the fixtures at lavatories, bathtubs, and showers. Check all the drain pop-ups. Rarely do all the pop-ups work properly. Fill the lavatories and tubs to check that they drain properly. During the move, sellers often allow debris to accumulate in the lavatory, which ends up in the drain. While the tub is full, verify that the overflow drains properly and does not leak. Overflows are not tested during the Home Inspection. This test is especially important for upstairs bathtubs since ceilings may become moisture damaged if the overflow fails. If there is a whirlpool tub, fill and test it to be certain that it works. Look inside all vanities and closets for mold or moisture damage, which is common in the high humidity environment of the bathroom. These issues may have been concealed by the seller's belongings. Verify operation of the ceiling ventilator/heating units.

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INTERIOR

Check floors for damage to floor coverings and cracks in tiles. Cracks in tiles are not usually considered a major issue. Nevertheless, seller's furnishings often conceal cracks and damage. Look for uneven areas in wood floors, such as buckling and depressions, which may have been covered by throw rugs or furniture. Cosmetic deficiencies, such as stains, may prove to be difficult to remedy. Look for cracks in walls that may have been concealed by furniture, drapes, or pictures. Common cracks are not considered a major issue. Check double pane windows for condensation, which may have been hidden behind drapes and blinds. Also look for broken glass which may not have been apparent during the Home Inspection. Before moving in your belongings, an empty house provides an excellent opportunity to lubricate all window slides and latches. Peeling paint around window frames and mullions in older homes may signal a lead paint hazard. If warranted, have this situation investigated by a qualified contractor. Open and close all doors. Most doors are operated during the Home Inspection, but doors may have been removed during the seller's move to make it easier to take out their furniture. Doors that do not latch are usually considered a minor problem, and generally can be corrected by adjustments to the hinges or latch assembly. Sliding doors often are not fully operable, and may require cleaning, adjustment, and lubrication of tracks and hardware. If there are stairs, be sure to check the handrails. They are often bumped or removed when moving furniture, and may be loose or improperly reinstalled. Make sure that they are secured. Check all smoke detectors and the security system for proper operation. Install additional smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors if appropriate. Install detectors according to the manufacturer's directions, which usually indicate one detector for each bedroom, hall, dining area, and laundry. Please note that microbial growth (mold) is outside the scope of a General Home Inspection. Mold can grow in a very short time (48 hours or less). Whenever a house is closed up, and air conditioning is not in use (such as when people have moved out), the resultant high humidity levels may encourage mold growth. Pay special attention to any discoloration on surfaces that may signal microbial growth, especially areas near water sources (baths, laundry, kitchen, etc.), and have further investigation performed by qualified contractors as needed.

Your Home Inspector does their best to note all deficiencies. However, emphasis is placed on the Major Deficiencies. The difference between major and minor deficiencies is often a matter of perspective. If you have any questions, please call. We will gladly discuss any of your concerns or questions and attempt to resolve any issues that may linger. We hope that you have been pleased with our service and will recommend us to your friends and relatives. We also hope that you will have many years of enjoyment in your new home.

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