

SUGGESTED EXPECTATIONS FOR YOUR HOME INSPECTION

Your expectations regarding a home inspection should be reasonable and realistic; therefore, the following are some basic points that are standard within the home inspection industry through out the United States. Please keep these points in mind as time goes on after the inspection.

- **INSPECTORS CAN ONLY INSPECT WHAT IS VISIBLE:** For example, Inspectors can not see inside pipes, walls, equipment machinery, above ceiling tiles, behind insulation or storage materials, etc. Some times, termites are active inside walls without any outward appearance of their presence until some one starts construction, removes the wall then they become visible. In addition, sometimes there is no access to certain parts of the home, or certain components or systems to the home. Perhaps the garage front was filled with boxes, access to the crawl space was blocked, or to low for entry. Perhaps there was a freezer in front of a main electrical panel, or there was paneling over the electrical panel and could not be removed. It is impossible to observe the conditions of these components during the inspection. Please don't blame the inspector for things that were not visible during the inspection.
- **INSPECTORS OBSERVE AND REPORT ON CONDITIONS EFFECTIVE ON THE DATE OF THE INSPECTION.** Because building systems and components are in a constant state of "wearing out" and things change as time goes by, Inspectors can only observe conditions as of the date of the inspection. Not a week or a month or year later. As an example, the roof might develop a leak, there is no particular date or time for this to happen, tree branches may blow on the roof and cause this or a small fault might finally open and cause a leak. Hopefully you understand that you should expect that the components might be ready to fail with out any outward or visible sign, and things change over time.
- **INSPECTORS CHECK TO SEE IF A COMPONENT IS DOING ITS MAJOR FUNCTION, NOT MINOR FUNCTIONS.** For example, a heating unit operates and puts out heat during the inspection, but one of the radiators does not function correctly, or perhaps the thermostat operates but is not reliable, these items may not be discovered during the inspection. It is reasonable for you to expect that certain malfunctions were not detected during the inspection.
- **THIS IS NOT A CODE COMPLIANCE INSPECTION.** It is almost impossible for an inspector to accurately state whether an item is within code or not. For example a house built in 1920 may have been built without any codes in effect therefore it is "Grandfathered". Grandfathering means code modifications after the date of the construction are not applicable. In addition, different municipalities adopt different state and federal codes at different times. For example, there may be 10 different codes, measurements and/or requirements applicable to a staircase. The only way to see if something is "within code" is to have it checked by the municipal code inspector. Even the municipal code inspector may not take into consideration elements of the code.
- **HOME INSPECTIONS DO NOT IMPLY ANY KIND OF WARRANTY OR GUARANTEE OF THE STRUCTURE OR COMPONENTS.** For all of the reasons described above, Home Inspectors can not guarantee the condition of the structures they inspect.
- **IF YOU THINK THE INSPECTOR MADE AN ERROR, CONTACT THE INSPECTOR AND DISCUSS THE SITUATION.** The inspector will likely want to visit the property to see and understand the situation directly. Usually, things can be explained and put into proper perspective.
- **It is easy to "Monday morning quarterback".** Sometimes a contractor is called in to make repairs or overview certain conditions. Often, these contractors will say your inspector should have seen this: he must have been blind! Keep in mind, your inspector observed conditions as of a particular date, and looked at hundreds of components in the property in a limited time frame from a generalists perspective. It is guaranteed that certain things will not be detected or reported on during the inspection for reasons explained above. So beware of Monday morning quarterbacking by a contractor who is looking to impress you.