Building Inspection Report

W1234 John Hills, My Town, WI 56789

Prepared For:
Jay and Carrie Newhomeowner

Inspection Date:
01/28/13

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Report Number:
2013-0128 Hills

Photo Overview

North View

East View

West View

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Report Overview

THE HOUSE IN PERSPECTIVE

This is a well built home. As with all homes, ongoing maintenance is required and improvements to the systems of the home will be needed over time. ***The improvements that are recommended in this report are not considered unusual for a home of this age and location.*** Please remember that every home will need regular maintenance and repair.

CONVENTIONS USED IN THIS REPORT

For your convenience, the following conventions have been used in this report.

Major Concern: *a system or component which is considered significantly deficient or is unsafe. Significant deficiencies need to be corrected and, except for some safety items, are likely to involve significant expense.*

Safety Issue: *denotes a condition that is unsafe and in need of prompt attention.*

Repair: *denotes a system or component which is missing or which needs corrective action to assure proper and reliable function.*

Improve: *denotes improvements which are recommended but not required.*

Monitor: *denotes a system or component needing further investigation and/or monitoring in order to determine if repairs are necessary.*

Deferred Cost: *denotes items that have reached or are reaching their normal life expectancy or show indications that they may require repair or replacement anytime during the next five (5) years.*

Please note that those observations listed under "Discretionary Improvements" are not essential repairs, but represent logical long term improvements.

IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATION HIGHLIGHTS / SUMMARY

The following is a synopsis of the potentially significant improvements that should be budgeted for over the short term. Other significant improvements, outside the scope of this inspection, may also be necessary. Please refer to the body of this report for further details on these and other recommendations.

MAJOR CONCERNS

SAFETY ISSUES

Water Heater

- **Safety Issue:** The water heater venting system shows evidence of exhaust "spillage". ***This is a serious condition that could be a health threat to the occupants of the home.*** This condition should be addressed promptly. The venting system is complex and it has many long runs and angles to vent out the roof. Recommend having a licensed plumber inspect the water heater.

REPAIR ITEMS

Furnace

- **Repair:** The humidifier has lacked maintenance. Cleaning and repairs should be undertaken. Watch out for humidifier leaks into the furnace where costly (and hidden) damage can occur.
- **Repair:** The dirty air filter should be replaced. The furnace, heat recovery unit, and the April -air unit all have filters to maintain.

Fixtures

- **Repair:** The toilet is loose in the second floor bathroom; recommend securing to the floor as needed.

Doors

- **Repair:** The door between the garage and the interior of the house should be well sealed to prevent automobile fumes from entering the house. I would recommend installing a new door seal. I felt a draft when the overhead door was open.

Kitchen Cabinets

- **Repair:** Loose or damaged cabinet door hinges in the kitchen should be repaired. To the right of the stove.

Ceiling Fan

- **Repair:** The ceiling fan in the southeast bedroom is noisy.

Windows

- **Repair:** The glazing seal of a window in the master bedroom is loose. Have this repaired by a professional.

IMPROVEMENT ITEMS

ITEMS TO MONITOR

Wall / Ceiling Finishes

- **Monitor:** Minor cracks were noted.
- **Monitor:** Typical drywall flaws were observed. Nail pops and small shrinkage cracks are very common in newly constructed homes.

Windows

- **Monitor:** The windows show evidence of condensation. This is not a Major Concern. Controlling indoor humidity levels and/or improving window efficiency (if needed) would help to control this condition. This is only a concern if the windows are left as it. They need to be scraped and repainted before wood rot begins.

DEFERRED COST ITEMS

THE SCOPE OF THE INSPECTION

All components designated for inspection in the Wisconsin State Standards of Practice are inspected, except as may be noted in the "Limitations of Inspection" sections within this report.

It is the goal of the inspection to put a home buyer in a better position to make a buying decision. Not all improvements will be identified during this inspection. Unexpected repairs should still be anticipated. The inspection should not be considered a guarantee or warranty of any kind.

This inspection is visual only. A representative sample of building components are viewed in areas that are accessible at the time of the inspection. No destructive testing or dismantling of building components is performed.

Please refer to the pre-inspection contract for a full explanation of the scope of the inspection.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

There was snow on the ground during the course of the inspection.
The estimated outside temperature was -8 degrees F.

RECENT WEATHER CONDITIONS

Winter weather conditions have been experienced in the days leading up to the inspection.

Structure

DESCRIPTION OF STRUCTURE

Foundation:	•Concrete Block •Basement Configuration •90% Of Foundation Was Not Visible
Columns:	•Not Visible
Floor Structure:	•Concrete •Not Visible
Wall Structure:	•Wood Frame
Ceiling Structure:	•Joist
Roof Structure:	•Trusses •Plywood Sheathing

STRUCTURE OBSERVATIONS

Positive Attributes

The construction of the home is high quality. The materials and workmanship, where visible, are above average. The exterior walls of the home appear to be of 2x6 wood frame construction. This exceeds common practice and provides space for extra exterior wall insulation. The visible joist spans appear to be within typical construction practices. The inspection did not discover evidence of substantial structural movement.

General Comments

No major defects were observed in the accessible structural components of the house.

LIMITATIONS OF STRUCTURE INSPECTION

As we have discussed and as described in your inspection contract, this is a visual inspection limited in scope by (but not restricted to) the following conditions:

- Structural components concealed behind finished surfaces could not be inspected.
- Only a representative sampling of visible structural components were inspected.
- Furniture and/or storage restricted access to some structural components.
- Engineering or architectural services such as calculation of structural capacities, adequacy, or integrity are not part of a home inspection.
- The roof space/attic was viewed from the access hatch only.
- There was no access to the side attic areas (behind the "knee wall").

Please also refer to the pre-inspection contract for a detailed explanation of the scope of this inspection.

Roofing

DESCRIPTION OF ROOFING

Roof Covering: •Asphalt Shingle
Roof Flashings: •Not Visible
Chimneys: •None
Roof Drainage System: •Aluminum •Downspouts discharge above grade
Skylights: •None
Method of Inspection: •Viewed with binoculars •Viewed from window

ROOFING OBSERVATIONS

Positive Attributes
The roof coverings are newer and appear to be in generally good condition. The steep pitch of the roof should result in a longer than normal life expectancy for roof coverings.

LIMITATIONS OF ROOFING INSPECTION

As we have discussed and as described in your inspection contract, this is a visual inspection limited in scope by (but not restricted to) the following conditions:

- Not all of the underside of the roof sheathing is inspected for evidence of leaks.
- Evidence of prior leaks may be disguised by interior finishes.
- Estimates of remaining roof life are approximations only and do not preclude the possibility of leakage. Leakage can develop at any time and may depend on rain intensity, wind direction, ice build up, and other factors.
- Antennae, chimney/flue interiors which are not readily accessible are not inspected and could require repair.
- Roof inspection may be limited by access, condition, weather, or other safety concerns.
- Portions of the roof were viewed from the ground using binoculars. Some sections of the roof could not be viewed.
- Snow on the roof restricted the inspection.

Please also refer to the pre-inspection contract for a detailed explanation of the scope of this inspection.

Exterior

DESCRIPTION OF EXTERIOR

Wall Covering:	•Hardboard/Composite
Eaves, Soffits, And Fascias:	•Hardboard/Composite
Exterior Doors:	•Metal
Window/Door Frames and Trim:	•Metal-Covered
Entry Driveways:	•Not visible due to snow
Entry Walkways And Patios:	•Not visible due to snow
Porches, Decks, Steps, Railings:	•Not visible due to snow
Overhead Garage Door(s):	•Steel •Automatic Opener Installed
Surface Drainage:	•Not visible due to snow
Retaining Walls:	•Stone
Fencing:	•None

EXTERIOR OBSERVATIONS

Positive Attributes

Window frames are clad, for the most part, with a low maintenance material. There is no significant wood/soil contact around the perimeter of the house, thereby reducing the risk of insect infestation or rot. The auto reverse mechanism on the overhead garage door responded properly to testing. This safety feature should be tested regularly as a door that doesn't reverse can injure someone or fall from the ceiling. Refer to the owner's manual or contact the manufacturer for more information. The garage appears to be fully insulated. The garage completely finished. Freeze resistant hose bibs (exterior faucets) have been installed.

General Comments

The exterior of the home is generally in good condition.

LIMITATIONS OF EXTERIOR INSPECTION

As we have discussed and as described in your inspection contract, this is a visual inspection limited in scope by (but not restricted to) the following conditions:

- A representative sample of exterior components was inspected rather than every occurrence of components.
- The inspection does not include an assessment of geological, geotechnical, or hydrological conditions, or environmental hazards.
- Screening, shutters, awnings, or similar seasonal accessories, fences, recreational facilities, outbuildings, seawalls, break-walls, docks, erosion control and earth stabilization measures are not inspected unless specifically agreed-upon and documented in this report.
- Snow restricted an inspection of the lot and various other aspects of the exterior of the house.

Please also refer to the pre-inspection contract for a detailed explanation of the scope of this inspection.

Electrical

DESCRIPTION OF ELECTRICAL

Size of Electrical Service:	•120/240 Volt Second Service - Service Size: 200 Amp
Service Drop:	•Underground
Service Entrance Conductors:	•Copper
Service Equipment & Main Disconnects:	•Main Service Rating 200 Amps •Breakers •Located: NE Corner of the Basement
Service Grounding:	•Copper •Water Pipe Connection •Ground Rod Connection •Ground Connection Not Visible
Service Panel & Overcurrent Protection:	•Panel Rating: 200 Amp •Breakers
Sub-Panel(s):	•Panel Rating: 100 Amp •Breakers •Located: At the Main Panel
Distribution Wiring:	•Copper
Wiring Method:	• Non-Metallic Cable "Romex"
Switches & Receptacles:	•Grounded and Ungrounded
Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters:	•Bathroom(s) •Whirlpool •Exterior •Garage •Kitchen •Electrical Panel
Smoke Detectors:	•Present

ELECTRICAL OBSERVATIONS

Positive Attributes

The size of the electrical service is sufficient for typical single family needs. Generally speaking, the electrical system is in good order. All outlets and light fixtures that were tested operated satisfactorily. The distribution of electricity within the home is good. All 3-prong outlets that were tested were appropriately grounded. Ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) devices have been provided in some areas of the home. These devices are extremely valuable, as they offer an extra level of shock protection. All GFCI's that were tested responded properly. Dedicated 220 volt circuits have been provided for all 220 volt appliances within the home. All visible wiring within the home is copper. This is a good quality electrical conductor.

General Comments

Inspection of the electrical system did not reveal the need for improvement.

LIMITATIONS OF ELECTRICAL INSPECTION

As we have discussed and as described in your inspection contract, this is a visual inspection limited in scope by (but not restricted to) the following conditions:

- Electrical components concealed behind finished surfaces are not inspected.
- Only a representative sampling of outlets and light fixtures were tested.
- Furniture and/or storage restricted access to some electrical components which may not be inspected.
- The inspection does not include remote control devices, alarm systems and components, low voltage wiring, systems, and components, ancillary wiring, systems, and other components which are not part of the primary electrical power distribution system.

Please also refer to the pre-inspection contract for a detailed explanation of the scope of this inspection.

Heating

DESCRIPTION OF HEATING

Energy Source:	•Gas
Heating System Type:	•Forced Air Furnace •Manufacturer: Lennox •Serial Number: 8403K10486
Vents, Flues, Chimneys:	•Plastic
Heat Distribution Methods:	•Ductwork
Other Components:	•Humidifier •Heat Recovery Ventilator

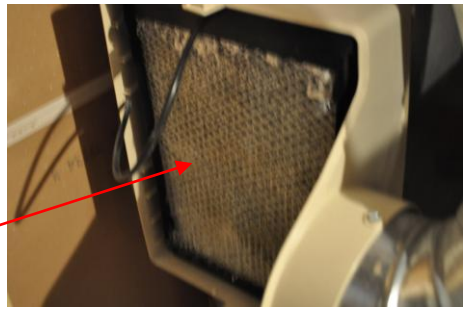
HEATING OBSERVATIONS

Positive Attributes

The heating system is in generally good condition. This is a high efficiency heating system. Adequate heating capacity is provided by the system. Heat distribution within the home is adequate. The heating system is controlled by a "set back" thermostat. This type of thermostat, if set up correctly, helps reduce heating costs. The furnace has a two speed fan, allowing for continuous circulation and cleaning of air within the home. The distribution of heat is divided into "zones," allowing for greater ease of balancing heat flow.

General Comments

The heating system shows no visible evidence of major defects. No repairs to the heating system are necessary at this time.



RECOMMENDATIONS / OBSERVATIONS

Furnace

- **Repair:** The humidifier has lacked maintenance. Cleaning and repairs should be undertaken. Watch out for humidifier leaks into the furnace where costly (and hidden) damage can occur.
- **Repair:** The dirty air filter should be replaced. The furnace, heat recovery unit, and the April -air unit all have filters to maintain.

LIMITATIONS OF HEATING INSPECTION

As we have discussed and as described in your inspection contract, this is a visual inspection limited in scope by (but not restricted to) the following conditions:

- The adequacy of heat supply or distribution balance is not inspected.
- The interior of flues or chimneys which are not readily accessible are not inspected.
- The furnace heat exchanger, humidifier, or dehumidifier, and electronic air filters are not inspected.
- Solar space heating equipment/systems are not inspected.

Please also refer to the pre-inspection contract for a detailed explanation of the scope of this inspection.

Cooling / Heat Pumps

DESCRIPTION OF COOLING / HEAT PUMPS

Energy Source: •Electricity •240 Volt Power Supply
Central System Type: •Air Cooled Central Air Conditioning •Manufacturer: Lennox
•Serial Number: 5802E32161
Other Components: •House Fan

COOLING / HEAT PUMPS OBSERVATIONS

Positive Attributes
The capacity and configuration of the system should be sufficient for the home.

RECOMMENDATIONS / OBSERVATIONS

Central Air Conditioning
- **Repair:** The dirty air filter should be replaced.

LIMITATIONS OF COOLING / HEAT PUMPS INSPECTION

As we have discussed and as described in your inspection contract, this is a visual inspection limited in scope by (but not restricted to) the following conditions:
- The cooling supply adequacy or distribution balance are not inspected.
- **The air conditioning system could not be tested as the outdoor temperature was at or below 65 degrees F.**

Please also refer to the pre-inspection contract for a detailed explanation of the scope of this inspection.

Insulation / Ventilation

DESCRIPTION OF INSULATION / VENTILATION

Attic Insulation:	•R40 Fiberglass in Main Attic •Unknown in Side Attic Areas
Exterior Wall Insulation:	•Not Visible
Basement Wall Insulation:	•None Visible
Vapor Retarders:	•None Visible
Roof Ventilation:	•Ridge Vents •Soffit Vents
Exhaust Fan/vent Locations:	•Bathroom •Kitchen •Dryer

INSULATION / VENTILATION OBSERVATIONS

Positive Attributes
This is a well insulated home.

General Comments
Despite the presence of insulation in the floor cavity, rooms above garages tend to be cooler during winter months.

RECOMMENDATIONS / ENERGY SAVING SUGGESTIONS

General Comments
Upgrading insulation levels in a home is an improvement rather than a necessary repair.

Bathroom Fan
- **Repair:** The second floor bath fan needs to be cleaned. Keeping the fan grill clean and free from debris will help remove the moisture in the room.

LIMITATIONS OF INSULATION / VENTILATION INSPECTION

As we have discussed and as described in your inspection contract, this is a visual inspection limited in scope by (but not restricted to) the following conditions:

- Insulation/ventilation type and levels in concealed areas are not inspected. Insulation and vapor barriers are not disturbed and no destructive tests (such as cutting openings in walls to look for insulation) are performed.
- Potentially hazardous materials such as Asbestos and Urea Formaldehyde Foam Insulation (UFFI) cannot be positively identified without a detailed inspection and laboratory analysis. This is beyond the scope of the inspection.
- An analysis of indoor air quality is not part of our inspection unless explicitly contracted-for and discussed in this or a separate report.
- Any estimates of insulation R values or depths are rough average values.
- The attic was viewed from the access hatch only.
- No access was gained to the wall cavities of the home.

Please also refer to the pre-inspection contract for a detailed explanation of the scope of this inspection.

Plumbing

DESCRIPTION OF PLUMBING

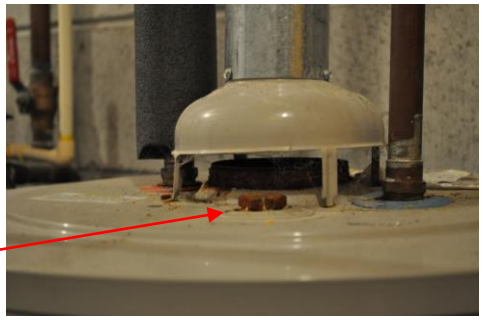
Water Supply Source:	•Private Water Supply
Service Pipe to House:	•Plastic
Main Water Valve Location:	•Beside Water Heater
Interior Supply Piping:	•Copper
Waste System:	•Private Sewage System
Drain, Waste, & Vent Piping:	•Plastic
Water Heater:	•Gas •Approximate Capacity (in gallons): 50 •Manufacturer: A.O. Smith•Serial Number: ME03-2429076-248E
Water Heater:	•Gas •Approximate Capacity (in gallons): 50 •Manufacturer: A.O. Smith•Serial Number: 1011M001724
Other Components:	•Sump Pump •Solid Waste Pump •Laundry Tub Pump •Hot Water Circulator •Backflow Preventers on Hose Bibs

PLUMBING OBSERVATIONS

Positive Attributes

The plumbing system is in generally good condition. The piping system within the home, for both supply and waste, is a good quality system. The water pressure supplied to the fixtures is above average. Only a slight drop in flow was experienced when two fixtures were operated simultaneously. The water pressure supplied to the fixtures is reasonably good. A typical drop in flow was experienced when two fixtures were operated simultaneously. The plumbing fixtures appear to have been well-maintained.

RECOMMENDATIONS / OBSERVATIONS



Fixtures

- **Repair:** The toilet is loose in the second floor bathroom; recommend securing to the floor as needed.

Water Heater

- **Safety Issue:** The water heater venting system shows evidence of exhaust "spillage". ***This is a serious condition that could be a health threat to the occupants of the home.*** This condition should be addressed promptly. The venting system is complex and it has many long runs and angles to vent out the roof. Recommend having a licensed plumber inspect the water heater.
- **Repair:** A connection to the newer water heater is leaking.

LIMITATIONS OF PLUMBING INSPECTION

As we have discussed and as described in your inspection contract, this is a visual inspection limited in scope by (but not restricted to) the following conditions:

- Portions of the plumbing system concealed by finishes and/or storage (below sinks, etc.), below the structure, or beneath the ground surface are not inspected.
- Water quantity and water quality are not tested unless explicitly contracted-for and discussed in this or a separate report.
- Clothes washing machine connections are not inspected.
- Interiors of flues or chimneys which are not readily accessible are not inspected.
- Water conditioning systems, solar water heaters, fire and lawn sprinkler systems, and private waste disposal systems are not inspected unless explicitly contracted-for and discussed in this or a separate report.

LIMITATIONS OF PLUMBING INSPECTION CONTINUED

- An inspection of the sewage system is outside the scope of this inspection.
- An inspection of the well is outside the scope of this inspection. A sample of the well water can be sent to a lab at an additional expense.
- The discharge location of the sump pump was not verified.
- The water conditioning system was not part of the inspection.
- Hose bibs that were shut off were not tested.

Please also refer to the pre-inspection contract for a detailed explanation of the scope of this inspection.

Interior

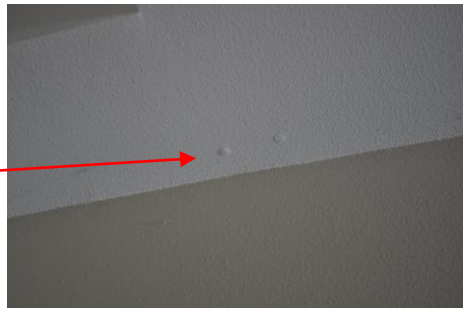
DESCRIPTION OF INTERIOR

Wall And Ceiling Materials:	•Drywall
Floor Surfaces:	•Carpet •Tile •Wood
Window Type(s) & Glazing:	•Double/Single Hung •Sliders •Fixed Pane •Double Glazed
Doors:	•Wood-Solid Core •Wood-Hollow Core

INTERIOR OBSERVATIONS

General Condition of Interior Finishes
On the whole, the interior finishes of the home are in above average condition. Typical minor flaws were observed in some areas.

General Condition of Windows and Doors
The majority of the windows are good quality.



RECOMMENDATIONS / OBSERVATIONS

Wall / Ceiling Finishes
- **Monitor:** Minor cracks were noted.
- **Monitor:** Typical drywall flaws were observed. Nail pops and small shrinkage cracks are very common in newly constructed homes.

Windows
- **Monitor:** The windows show evidence of condensation. This is not a Major Concern. Controlling indoor humidity levels and/or improving window efficiency (if needed) would help to control this condition. This is only a concern if the windows are left as it. They need to be scraped and repainted before wood rot begins.
- **Repair:** The glazing seal of a window in the master bedroom is loose. Have this repaired by a professional.

Doors
- **Repair:** The door between the garage and the interior of the house should be well sealed to prevent automobile fumes from entering the house. I would recommend installing a new door seal. I felt a draft when the overhead door was open.

Kitchen Cabinets
- **Repair:** Loose or damaged cabinet door hinges in the kitchen should be repaired. To the right of the stove.

Ceiling Fan
- **Repair:** The ceiling fan in the southeast bedroom is noisy.

INTERIOR OBSERVATIONS CONTINUED

Basement Leakage

- **Monitor:** No evidence of moisture penetration was visible in the basement at the time of the inspection. ***It should be understood that it is impossible to predict whether moisture penetration will pose a problem in the future.*** The vast majority of basement leakage problems are the result of insufficient control of storm water at the surface. The ground around the house should be sloped to encourage water to flow away from the foundation. Gutters and downspouts should act to collect roof water and drain the water at least five (5) feet from the foundation or into a functional storm sewer. Downspouts that are clogged or broken below grade level, or that discharge too close to the foundation are the most common source of basement leakage. Please refer to the Roofing and Exterior sections of the report for more information.
  In the event that basement leakage problems are experienced, lot and roof drainage improvements should be undertaken as a first step. Please beware of contractors who recommend expensive solutions. Excavation, damp-proofing and/or the installation of drainage tiles should be a last resort. In some cases, however, it is necessary. Your plans for using the basement may also influence the approach taken to curing any dampness that is experienced.

LIMITATIONS OF INTERIOR INSPECTION

As we have discussed and as described in your inspection contract, this is a visual inspection limited in scope by (but not restricted to) the following conditions

- Furniture, storage, appliances and/or wall hangings are not moved to permit inspection and may block defects.
- Carpeting, window treatments, central vacuum systems, household appliances, recreational facilities, paint, wallpaper, and other finish treatments are not inspected.
- Portions of the foundation walls were concealed from view.

Please also refer to the pre-inspection contract for a detailed explanation of the scope of this inspection.

Appliances

DESCRIPTION OF APPLIANCES

Appliances Tested:	•Electric Range •Built-in Electric Oven •Microwave Oven •Waste Disposer •Refrigerator
Laundry Facility:	•240 Volt Circuit for Dryer •Dryer Vented to Building Exterior •120 Volt Circuit for Washer •Hot and Cold Water Supply for Washer •Waste Standpipe for Washer
Other Components Tested:	•Kitchen Exhaust Hood

APPLIANCES OBSERVATIONS

Positive Attributes
The appliances appear to be in generally good condition. All appliances that were tested responded satisfactorily. The kitchen and laundry facilities are well organized.

LIMITATIONS OF APPLIANCES INSPECTION

As we have discussed and as described in your inspection contract, this is a visual inspection limited in scope by (but not restricted to) the following conditions

- Thermostats, timers and other specialized features and controls are not tested.
- The temperature calibration, functionality of timers, effectiveness, efficiency and overall performance of appliances is outside the scope of this inspection.

Please also refer to the pre-inspection contract for a detailed explanation of the scope of this inspection.

Fireplaces / Wood Stoves

DESCRIPTION OF FIREPLACES / WOOD STOVES

Fireplaces: •Zero Clearance •Gas
Vents, Flues, Chimneys: •Outside Combustion Air Provided •Metal Flue-Insulated Multi-Wall

FIREPLACES / WOOD STOVES OBSERVATIONS

General Comments
On the whole, the fireplace and its components are in above average condition.

LIMITATIONS OF FIREPLACES / WOOD STOVES INSPECTION

As we have discussed and as described in your inspection contract, this is a visual inspection limited in scope by (but not restricted to) the following conditions

- The interiors of flues or chimneys are not inspected.
- Fire screens, fireplace doors, appliance gaskets and seals, automatic fuel feed devices, mantles and fireplace surrounds, combustion make-up air devices, and heat distribution assists (gravity or fan-assisted) are not inspected.
- The inspection does not involve igniting or extinguishing fires nor the determination of draft.
- Fireplace inserts, stoves, or firebox contents are not moved.

Please also refer to the pre-inspection contract for a detailed explanation of the scope of this inspection.

Photo Summary

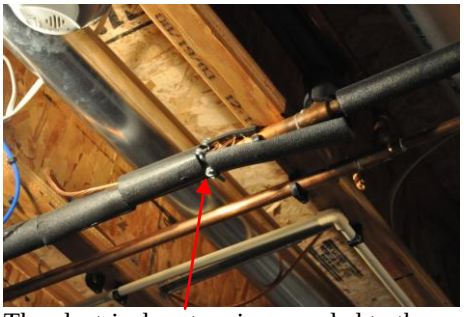
Two outlets in the garage trip the GFCI when I plugged my tester in. Recommend an electrician investigate.

Shrinkage cracks located on the garage ceiling. Common with new construction.

A little corrosion found on the bottom of the master bath shower door.

Corrosion build-up on the supply line in the lower bath. Recommend turning the valves once a year to prevent them from sticking.

The flame in the furnace is nice and blue. This means the furnace is burning clean and efficiently.



The electrical system is grounded to the plumbing. This is a good source of grounding.

Photo Summary

Remove the snow from the window sill. This will stop the acceleration of wood rot.

A low spot was observed on the SW corner of the house. Fill with black dirt so that you maintain positive grade.

The outside hose bibs are shut off inside and they all have anti-siphon devices. Very good!

The retaining wall is in good shape. The moss and mildew gives it character.

Door bell button is cracked. This is an inexpensive fix.

Maintenance Advice

UPON TAKING OWNERSHIP

After taking possession of a new home, there are some maintenance and safety issues that should be addressed immediately. The following checklist should help you undertake these improvements:

- ❑ Change the locks on all exterior entrances, for improved security.
- ❑ Check that all windows and doors are secure. Improve window hardware as necessary. Security rods can be added to sliding windows and doors. Consideration could also be given to a security system.
- ❑ Install smoke detectors on each level of the home. Ensure that there is a smoke detector outside all sleeping areas. Replace batteries on any existing smoke detectors and test them. Make a note to replace batteries again in one year.
- ❑ Create a plan of action in the event of a fire in your home. Ensure that there is an operable window or door in every room of the house. Consult with your local fire department regarding fire safety issues and what to do in the event of fire.
- ❑ Examine driveways and walkways for trip hazards. Undertake repairs where necessary.
- ❑ Examine the interior of the home for trip hazards. Loose or torn carpeting and flooring should be repaired.
- ❑ Undertake improvements to all stairways, decks, porches and landings where there is a risk of falling or stumbling.
- ❑ Review your home inspection report for any items that require immediate improvement or further investigation. Address these areas as required.
- ❑ Install rain caps and vermin screens on all chimney flues, as necessary.
- ❑ Investigate the location of the main shut-offs for the plumbing, heating and electrical systems. If you attended the home inspection, these items would have been pointed out to you.

REGULAR MAINTENANCE

EVERY MONTH

- ❑ Check that fire extinguisher(s) are fully charged. Re-charge if necessary.
- ❑ Examine heating/cooling air filters and replace or clean as necessary.
- ❑ Inspect and clean humidifiers and electronic air cleaners.
- ❑ If the house has hot water heating, bleed radiator valves.
- ❑ Clean gutters and downspouts. Ensure that downspouts are secure, and that the discharge of the downspouts is appropriate. Remove debris from window wells.
- ❑ Carefully inspect the condition of shower enclosures. Repair or replace deteriorated grout and caulk. Ensure that water is not escaping the enclosure during showering. Check below all plumbing fixtures for evidence of leakage.
- ❑ Repair or replace leaking faucets or shower heads.
- ❑ Secure loose toilets, or repair flush mechanisms that become troublesome.

SPRING AND FALL

- ❑ Examine the roof for evidence of damage to roof coverings, flashings and chimneys.
- ❑ Look in the attic (if accessible) to ensure that roof vents are not obstructed. Check for evidence of leakage, condensation or vermin activity. Level out insulation if needed.
- ❑ Trim back tree branches and shrubs to ensure that they are not in contact with the house.
- ❑ Inspect the exterior walls and foundation for evidence of damage, cracking or movement. Watch for bird nests or other vermin or insect activity.
- ❑ Survey the basement and/or crawl space walls for evidence of moisture seepage.
- ❑ Look at overhead wires coming to the house. They should be secure and clear of trees or other obstructions.

- ❑ Ensure that the grade of the land around the house encourages water to flow away from the foundation.
- ❑ Inspect all driveways, walkways, decks, porches, and landscape components for evidence of deterioration, movement or safety hazards.
- ❑ Clean windows and test their operation. Improve caulking and weather-stripping as necessary. Watch for evidence of rot in wood window frames. Paint and repair window sills and frames as necessary.
- ❑ Test all ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) devices, as identified in the inspection report.
- ❑ Shut off isolating valves for exterior hose bibs in the fall, if below freezing temperatures are anticipated.
- ❑ Test the Temperature and Pressure Relief (TPR) Valve on water heaters.
- ❑ Inspect for evidence of wood boring insect activity. Eliminate any wood/soil contact around the perimeter of the home.
- ❑ Test the overhead garage door opener, to ensure that the auto-reverse mechanism is responding properly. Clean and lubricate hinges, rollers and tracks on overhead doors.
- ❑ Replace or clean exhaust hood filters.
- ❑ Clean, inspect and/or service all appliances as per the manufacturer's recommendations.

ANNUALLY

- ❑ Replace smoke detector batteries.
- ❑ Have the heating, cooling and water heater systems cleaned and serviced.
- ❑ Have chimneys inspected and cleaned. Ensure that rain caps and vermin screens are secure.
- ❑ Examine the electrical panels, wiring and electrical components for evidence of overheating. Ensure that all components are secure. Flip the breakers on and off to ensure that they are not sticky.
- ❑ If the house utilizes a well, check and service the pump and holding tank. Have the water quality tested. If the property has a septic system, have the tank inspected (and pumped as needed).
- ❑ If your home is in an area prone to wood destroying insects (termites, carpenter ants, etc.), have the home inspected by a licensed specialist. Preventative treatments may be recommended in some cases.

PREVENTION IS THE BEST APPROACH

Although we've heard it many times, nothing could be more true than the old cliché "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Preventative maintenance is the best way to keep your house in great shape. It also reduces the risk of unexpected repairs and improves the odds of selling your house at fair market value, when the time comes.

Please feel free to contact our office should you have any questions regarding the operation or maintenance of your home. Enjoy your home!

Information about Radon

EPA RADON RISK INFORMATION

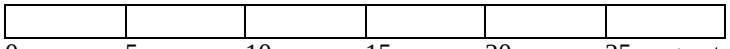
Fifty-five percent of our exposure to natural sources of radiation usually comes from radon. Radon is a colorless, tasteless, and odorless gas that comes from the decay of uranium found in nearly all soils. Levels of radon vary throughout the country. Radon is found all over the United States and scientists estimate that nearly one out of every 15 homes in this country has radon levels above recommended action levels.

Radon usually moves from the ground up and migrates into homes and other buildings through cracks and other holes in their foundations. The buildings trap radon inside, where it accumulates and may become a health hazard if the building is not properly ventilated.

When you breathe air containing a large amount of radon, the radiation can damage your lungs and eventually cause lung cancer. Scientists believe that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. It is estimated that 7,000 to 30,000 Americans die each year from radon-induced lung cancer. Only smoking causes more lung cancer deaths and smokers exposed to radon are at higher risk than nonsmokers. Testing your home is the only way to know if you and your family are at risk from radon.

Testing for Radon.

Should you have your home tested, use the chart below to compare your radon test results with the EPA guideline. The higher a home's radon level, the greater the health risk to you and your family.



Picocuries of Radon Per Liter of Air (pCi/L)

0 5 10 15 20 25 or greater

↑ **4.0 pCi/L - EPA RECOMMENDED ACTION GUIDELINE**

↑ 1.3 pCi/L - Average indoor radon concentration

↑ 0.4 pCi/L - Average outdoor radon concentration

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Surgeon General Strongly recommend taking further action when the home's radon test results are 4.0 pCi/L or greater. The concentration of radon in the home is measured in picocuries per liter of air (pCi/L). Radon levels less than 4.0 pCi/L still pose some risk and in many cases may be reduced. If the radon level in your home is between 2.0 and 4.0 pCi/L, EPA recommends that you **consider** fixing your home. The national average indoor radon level is about 1.3 pCi/L. The higher a home's radon level, the greater the health risk to you and your family. Smokers and former smokers are at especially high risk. There are straightforward ways to fix a home's radon problem that are not too costly. Even homes with very high levels can be reduced to below 4.0 pCi/L. EPA recommends that you use an EPA or State-approved contractor trained to fix radon problems.

What do radon test results mean?

If your radon level is **below 4 pCi/L**, you do not need to take action.

If you radon level is **4 pCi/L or greater**, use the following charts to determine what your test results mean. Depending upon the type of test(s) you took, you will have to either test again or fix the home.

NOTE: All tests should meet EPA technical protocols.

Chart 1: Radon Test Conducted Outside Real Estate Transaction

Type of Test(s)	If Radon Level Is **4.0 pCi/L or Greater**
Single Short-Term Test	**Test Again***
Average of Short-Term Tests	**Fix The Home**
One Long-Term Test	**Fix The Home**

* If your first short term test is several times greater that 4.0 pCi/L - for example, about 10.0 pCi/L or higher - you should take a second short-term test immediately.

Chart 1: Radon Test Conducted During a Real Estate Transaction (Buying or Selling a Home)

Type of Test(s)	If Radon Level Is **4.0 pCi/L or Greater**
Single Active Short-Term Test (this test requires a machine)	**Fix The Home**
Average of 2 Passive Short-Term Tests* (these tests do not require machines)	**Fix The Home**
One Long-Term Test	**Fix The Home**

* Use two passive short-term tests and average the results.

What should I do after testing?

If your radon level is 4.0 pCi/L or greater, you can call your State radon office to obtain more information, including a list of EPA or State-approved radon contractors who can fix or can help you develop a plan for fixing the radon problem. Reduction methods can be as simple as sealing cracks in floors and walls or as complex as installing systems that use pipes and fans to draw radon out of the building.

EPA has a National Radon Program to inform the public about radon risks, train radon mitigation contractors, provide grants for state radon programs, and develop standards for radon-resistant buildings. EPA works with health organizations, state radon programs, and other federal agencies to make the program as effective as possible.

For more information about radon, its risks and what you can do to protect yourself, call 1-800-SOS-RADON and request a free copy of EPA's *A Citizen's Guide to Radon*. You may also call the Radon Fix-It Line at 1-800-644-6999 between noon and 8pm Monday through Friday, EST/EDT, for information and assistance. This toll-free line is operated by Consumer Federation of America, a nonprofit consumer organization.