

WHAT TO EXPECT

WHAT DOES A HOME INSPECTION INCLUDE?

Inspectors typically do not provide warranties or guarantees with their inspections and reports. Buyers should therefore not rely on the inspection as any form of insurance policy against any latent, hidden, concealed or future defects and deficiencies.

The standard home inspector's report will review the condition of the home's heating system, central air conditioning system (temperature permitting), interior plumbing and electrical systems; the roof, attic, and visible insulation; walls, ceilings, floors, windows and doors; the foundation, basement, and visible structure.

The following are also some key items that buyers should remember and consider when reviewing their inspection reports:

- Inspections are not code-compliance evaluations.
- Inspection reports are not structural engineering reports.
- Systems and components that are off during the inspection are not tested or reactivated.
- Buyers should consult with and ask questions of owners and their representatives.
- Roof inspections and their components are typically done from street level with binoculars.
- Reports are confidential and are meant exclusively for buyers, and not brokers or owners.
- Inspectors typically will not find each and every defect in a building; hence buyers should anticipate future typical defects and deficiencies.
- Further evaluation by specialists is recommended for any areas showing defects/deficiencies.
- A final walk-through inspection should be carried out the day before passing by the new owners to double-check the condition of the building.

WHY DO I NEED A HOME INSPECTION?

The purchase of a home is probably the largest single investment you will ever make. You should learn as much as you can about the condition of the property

and the need for any major repairs before you buy, so that you can minimize unpleasant surprises and difficulties afterwards.

Of course, a home inspection also points out the positive aspects of a home, as well as the maintenance that will be necessary to keep it in good shape. After the inspection, you will have a much clearer understanding of the property you are about to purchase.

If you are already a homeowner, a home inspection may be used to identify problems in the making, and to learn preventive measures that might avoid costly future repairs. If you are planning to sell your home, you may wish to have an inspection prior to placing your home on the market. This will give you a better understanding of conditions which may be discovered by the buyer's inspector, and an opportunity to make repairs that will put the house in better selling condition.

WHAT WILL IT COST?

The inspection fee for a typical one-family house varies geographically, as does the cost of housing. Similarly, within a given area, the inspection fee may vary depending upon the size of the house, particular features of the house, its age, and possible additional services, such as septic, well, or radon testing. It is a good idea to check local prices on your own.

However, do not let cost be a factor in deciding whether or not to have a home inspection, or in the selection of your home inspector. The knowledge gained from an inspection is well worth the cost, and the lowest-priced inspector is not necessarily a bargain. The inspector's qualifications, including his experience, training, and professional affiliations, should be the most important consideration.

BEFORE THE INSPECTION:

Choose a home inspection company with top credentials. You have a goal, you want to be well informed, and you want to make a wise investment. Choose a home inspection company that understands your needs and will work with you to help you meet your goals.

Be Sure To Obtain a Written Home Inspection Report

Be sure that your home inspection report will be a detailed written report, not a handwritten checklist that is given to you at the conclusion of the home inspection. A checklist may be void of details and may not provide all of the information advice you need.

Don't Be Confused By Home Inspector "Certifications"

Don't be confused by home inspector "certifications" offered by, or sold by trade societies or companies, or obtained via home inspection home study courses, certifications are available to anybody, a high school diploma is not a requirement and certifications can be readily purchased. Choose an ISHI

Certified member that follows strict Operating Principles and Inspector Standards.

DURING THE INSPECTION:

Be Sure To Attend the Home Inspection

Be sure to attend the home inspection; the inspection should take about two hours. One picture is worth a thousand words, and this is a unique opportunity to learn about your new home and its systems.

Be Sure That the Home Inspector is Well-Equipped

The home inspector should be fully equipped with necessary tools including electrical testers, a fuel gas and carbon monoxide detector, moisture meter, ladder, inspection mirror, flashlight, level, and other home inspection tools.

Be Sure to Follow the Home Inspector and Ask Questions

No questions are foolish ones. Learn as much as you can from the home inspector during the inspection.

Be Sure That All of the Following Points Are Fully Covered

"Location, Location, Location." You've heard that often enough when looking for a home. But once you find the home that's right for you, there's nothing more important than Foundation!

You need to know that the home you are purchasing is properly leveled (that's an important reason for retaining the services of a home inspection company an ISHI-Certified PhI Member).

The physical, plumbing, heating, air-conditioning, and electrical systems should be thoroughly inspected and evaluated. The home inspector should look for aluminum electrical distribution wires, electrical systems that are not adequate for modern usage, lead and galvanized steel water supply pipes, aged and inefficient heating and air-conditioning systems, etc.

The home inspector should be able to include an inspection for wood-destroying insects that will be accepted by your mortgage lender. Let the inspector know up front so that he can bring along a qualified specialist.

If the home has a well and/or septic system, these systems should also be able to be evaluated. Please let the inspector know up front so that he can bring along a qualified specialist.

Consider Optional Tests

Where applicable, testing underground storage tanks, testing paint for lead, testing drinking water for lead, testing well supplied drinking water for bacteria, testing for radon gas in air, testing for urea formaldehyde foam insulation, etc.

Please let the inspector know up front so that he can bring along a qualified specialist.

Be Sure To Obtain A Full Verbal Report At The Time Of Inspection

The home inspection report should be available the next working day after the home inspection but a full verbal report should be obtained at the conclusion of the home inspection.

AFTER THE INSPECTION:

You Should Know:

- The condition of the home you are purchasing, including all positive and negative aspects.
- What repairs are needed (as well as the urgency of those repairs) and the magnitude of the repair costs.
- The proper course of corrective repairs, and whether alternatives are available.
- If there are any safety issues that need immediate attention.

You Should Expect:

- An easy-to-understand, detailed home inspection report in writing.
- Answers to any questions you may have regarding the report.
- The home inspector to be available to answer future questions.

You Should Not Expect:

- The home inspector to offer to repair, for a fee, any uncovered defects.