



Home Tips



• CHRISTIAN BUILDING INSPECTORS, INC., 3697 HABERSHAM LANE, DULUTH, GEORGIA 30096, 770-849-0920 • AUGUST 2011 •

Q & A

Home Inspector Red Flags?

We are getting ready to put our home on the market, and we do not want anything to be an obstacle in the process. Since you inspect homes every day, can you tell us some of the items to look for and correct?

They are a number of items we see every day that send up “red flags” to the home inspector. These items could be easily



corrected before the inspector arrives. We will attempt to list the more common ones:

SITE

1. Make sure the grass is cut and the shrubbery is trimmed. Remove any dead plants. This will show pride of ownership and let the inspector know the home is maintained.
2. Remove all dead trees and dead limbs. Both are safety issues that would be noted in the report.
3. If there is a drainage issue, correct it. Water running towards the house could represent a water problem inside.
4. Make sure all gutter downspouts discharge away from the house. Downspouts are the No. 1 source of water problems in the basement.

ROOF

1. If the roofing shingles are worn out, go ahead and replace them. Most buyers do not want to deal with this after moving in. Add continuous ridge vents for proper ventilation.
2. Replace all pipe flashing. The rubber boots crack over time and will leak.
3. Normally galvanized gutters will last as long as the roof. If the gutters are rusting and leaking, this is a sign of lack of maintenance. Replace them with aluminum which will never rust again.

EXTERIOR

1. Pressure wash concrete porches, walks and driveways to remove dirt and mold.
2. Synthetic stucco or “EIFS” can be a deal killer. If you have it, show the buyer you are not having a problem with it by having a stucco inspection completed before you put it on the market. If the home has real stucco or “hard coat”, be sure to note this in your advertising. Have the report on display for potential buyers.
3. Hardboard or OSB siding can be an obstacle. If some of the siding is deteriorated, go ahead and replace it with fiber cement siding commonly called “HardiePlank.” Once it is painted, you can hardly tell the difference.
4. Deteriorated wood trim should be repaired or replaced. Don’t just caulk over it and paint. Be sure all open joints are caulked.
5. If the exterior is dirty, have the house pressure-washed. A fresh paint job on the entire house will greatly increase the curb appeal and will invite buyers to come inside as well.

ATTICS

1. Make sure the attic pull down stair is sturdy and has no loose nuts and bolts.
2. You should be able to turn on the attic light without the need to enter the attic. Make sure the light bulb is not burned out. If you cannot reach it, have a professional do it.
3. The attic flooring should be thick enough for a heavy person to walk on safely. All flooring should be nailed in place and have adequate edge support.
4. Attic insulation should be R-30 which is approximately 12 inches deep.
5. Water stains on the roof decking or framing is acceptable as long as there is a new roof. If we see stains with an original roof, this is a red flag. If you have evidence of roof leaks, have a roofing company inspect the roof and give you a written report you can show the buyer.
6. If you have a new roof, inspect all metal vent pipes to insure they are not touching the roof sheathing. The pipes can get very hot which is a fire hazard. Sometimes roofers forget to center the pipes.

INTERIOR

1. Go room by room and look at the ceilings. Water stains are normally obvious to most buyers. If you see one, determine the cause and then correct it. If the stain is an old leak, seal it with a sealer such as “Kiltz” and then paint the entire ceiling. Do not spot paint because this can send up a red flag.
2. Bathrooms are very important to buyers. Make sure all bathrooms are cleaned and spotless. Replace any moldy caulking around tubs and showers.
3. Replace any broken window panes. Make sure all windows open and can be used for an emergency exit in case of a fire. Keep all blinds and shades open to create a bright inviting atmosphere.

4. Replace all burned out light bulbs. If you cannot reach them, hire a professional. A light that is not working could be a bigger problem for the buyer.

5. Make sure all handrails and guardrails are tight and secure.

6. If your smoke detectors are chirping, replace the batteries. If they are over ten years old, replace them with a combination smoke and carbon dioxide detector. Make sure you have one on each level of your home.

MECHANICAL

1. Have the interior temperature set to a very comfortable range, warm in the winter and cool in the summer. If we enter a house in the summer and the windows are open and no air on, we immediately suspect the air conditioning is not working properly.

2. Have all furnaces or heat pumps cleaned and serviced by a licensed heating and air conditioning contractor. All furnace filters should be clean. Have the receipts on display for the buyer.

3. If the furnaces are over twelve years old, have the furnace heat exchangers inspected. Heat exchangers will eventually rust out allowing carbon monoxide to leak into the supply air and be distributed throughout the house. Make sure this is noted on the receipts as well.

ELECTRICAL

1. Check all ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) and verify they trip properly. If you do not have GFCIs, install them at all damp or wet locations, such as the exterior of the house, kitchens, bathrooms, garages and unfinished basements.

2. If you have a newer home, make sure the electrical panel box arc fault circuit breakers trip properly.

3. Install carbon dioxide detectors on each sleeping level of the home.

PLUMBING

1. If your home is on a septic tank and it has not been pumped out in the last five years, go ahead and have this done. You can get a list of contractors from you local health department. Display the receipt for the buyer.

2. Check all faucets for leaks. Replace washers if you encounter leaks.

3. Look underneath all sinks for leaks in the drain pipes. Repair them as needed. If you have water stains on the bottom of the cabinets, cover them with shelf paper or vinyl flooring.

4. If you have an unfinished basement, look at the basement ceiling for evidence of water stains. Inspect all pipes for leaks.

A number of maintenance items are relatively easy and inexpensive to make, yet they can substantially improve a home's appearance, efficiency, and comfort. We do recommend a professional home inspection to point out problem areas and to make helpful maintenance recommendations.

Quote Of The Month

"The world cares very little about what a man or woman knows; it is what the man or woman is able to do that counts."

Booker T. Washington

A Tip Of The Hat To:

Robin Lemon

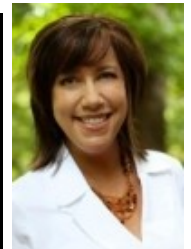
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Thank You

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