

Preparing for Inspection

The Inspection process can be a trying time for all parties involved; with the house on the market, people may be walking through the house on a regular basis. With the home inspection pending, the current Homeowner/Seller can make preparations to the house, so that the Inspection process will go smoothly.

Preparing the house for Home Inspection

Here are the easy steps to get the house ready for a complete home inspection:

- Eliminate all wood-soil contact on the exterior of the house- this also means against all vinyl cladding, brick and stucco or EIFS materials. This clearance should be at least 6" between the soils and cladding materials. But trenching along the foundation wall should also be avoided, because this will collect and hold water. Re-grading may be necessary in some cases. (Note: This also includes bark-type products)
- Cut back or remove all shrubs, vines and tree limbs touching the exterior siding, roof or gutters. Recommend providing at least 6" of clearance to the siding and 12"-24" (or more) to the roof and gutters, to provide air circulation, prevent damage to the building components and prevent limbs from touching the roof/gutter when it freezes or snows.
- Clean gutters, drain pipes and drain systems; re-connect or add components to the drain system to ensure that the roof drainage system drains away from the foundation and house wall. Install elbows and/or splash blocks, with the proper positive slope, as needed to divert all waters.
- When was the last time the furnace was serviced? Are there maintenance stickers on the furnace to identify service records? This is commonly called out during the inspection process. Recommend servicing the furnace/heating system prior to placing the house on the market and provide all paperwork necessary.
- Is the Electrical panel box accessible for a complete inspection? Is there sufficient access to walk up to the panel box and remove the cover for a complete inspection? The panel box needs at least 36" clearance in front of it. Are there items blocking the panel in the garage; shelving, paneling/wallboard, a workbench or furniture blocking direct access to the cover; has the cover panel been painted over or caulked/sealed to the wall? (Note: The panel cover needs to be removed to make a complete inspection of the wiring, breakers and components)
- Are the Water Heater and Furnace accessible for inspections; could a service technician walk up to the appliance and service this component at this time?
- Is the attic space(s) accessible for the Inspection process? These are often located in bedroom and hallway closet spaces in various rooms. Have shelves been installed too close to the access opening? Is a car parked under the access opening in the garage? Will the inspector be able to place a ladder under the access opening in the ceiling? Recommend removing all personal items from below the access opening and/or covering any clothing/belongings that may be below the access opening also.
- Have the Tenants been informed of the Inspection process and do they understand what will be taking place and the length of time needed as well as the access points mentioned above?
- The average inspection takes between 3 to 4 hours depending on the size, age and complexity of the house. Have you made plans to be out of the house for the inspection process?

- Have you looked in the crawl space lately? Have you actually gone into this space to determine if there are any unusual conditions present (i.e. water, rodents, downed insulation, odors)?

Additional items should be considered for repair, correction and/or upgrading:

- Pressure washing and repairing the wood shake roof is recommended. This type of roof may also require a roof certification if the conditions are in question. (Note: It is usually not recommended to pressure wash asphalt shingle roofing- this may remove the granules, groove/gouge and/or damage shingles. This may cause the shingles to lose their adhesiveness, making them prone to wind damage. If moss removal is important for roof appearances, there are chemicals that remove moss relatively easily)
- Paint the house – this may be a bit expensive, but may change the appearance of the house and make it more appealing.
- Repair or correct any hazards around the exterior of the house; driveways and walkways that may create trip hazards; lack of lighting near stairs; rotting exterior decks, stairs with damaged, loose or missing hand railings, and so on.