PROPERTY INSPECTION REPORT

Prepared For: Sample Report

Concerning:

By: Steve May # 8994 02-10-09

This property inspection report may include an inspection agreement (contract), addenda, and other information related to property conditions. If any item or comment is unclear, you should ask the inspector to clarify the findings. It is important that you carefully read ALL of this information.

This inspection is subject to the rules (“Rules”) of the Texas Real Estate Commission (“TREC”), which can be found at www.trec.state.tx.us.

The TREC Standards of Practice (Sections 535.227-535.231 of the Rules) are the minimum standards for inspections by TREC-licensed inspectors. An inspection addresses only those components and conditions that are present, visible, and accessible at the time of the inspection. While there may be other parts, components or systems present, only those items specifically noted as being inspected were inspected. The inspector is not required to move furnishings or stored items. The inspection report may address issues that are code-based or may refer to a particular code; however, this is NOT a code compliance inspection and does NOT verify compliance with manufacturer’s installation instructions. The inspection does NOT imply insurability or warrantability of the structure or its components. Although some safety issues may be addressed in this report, this inspection is NOT a safety/code inspection, and the inspector is NOT required to identify all potential hazards.

In this report, the inspector will note which systems and components were Inspected (I), Not Inspected (NI), Not Present (NP), and/or Deficient (D). General deficiencies include inoperability, material distress, water penetration, damage, deterioration, missing parts, and unsuitable installation. Comments may be provided by the inspector whether or not an item is deemed deficient. The inspector is not required to prioritize or emphasize the importance of one deficiency over another.

Some items reported as Deficient may be considered life-safety upgrades to the property. For more information, refer to Texas Real Estate Consumer Notice Concerning Recognized Hazards, form OP-I.

This property inspection is not an exhaustive inspection of the structure, systems, or components. The inspection may not reveal all deficiencies. A real estate inspection helps to reduce some of the risk involved in purchasing a home, but it cannot eliminate these risks, nor can the inspection anticipate future events or changes in performance due to changes in use or occupancy. It is recommended that you obtain as much information as is available about this property, including any seller’s disclosures, previous inspection reports, engineering reports, building/remodeling permits, and reports performed for or by relocation companies, municipal inspection departments, lenders, insurers, and appraisers. You should also attempt to determine whether repairs, renovation, remodeling, additions, or other such activities have taken place at this property. It is not the inspector’s responsibility to confirm that information obtained from these sources is complete or accurate or that this inspection is consistent with the opinions expressed in previous or future reports.
Items identified in the report do not obligate any party to make repairs or take other action, nor is the purchaser required to request that the seller take any action. When a deficiency is reported, it is the client’s responsibility to obtain further evaluations and/or cost estimates from qualified service professionals. Any such follow-up should take place prior to the expiration of any time limitations such as option periods. Evaluations by qualified tradesmen may lead to the discovery of additional deficiencies which may involve additional repair costs. Failure to address deficiencies or comments noted in this report may lead to further damage of the structure or systems and add to the original repair costs. The inspector is not required to provide follow-up services to verify that proper repairs have been made.

Property conditions change with time and use. For example, mechanical devices can fail at any time, plumbing gaskets and seals may crack if the appliance or plumbing fixture is not used often, roof leaks can occur at any time regardless of the apparent condition of the roof, and the performance of the structure and the systems may change due to changes in use or occupancy, effects of weather, etc. These changes or repairs made to the structure after the inspection may render information contained herein obsolete or invalid. This report is provided for the specific benefit of the client named above and is based on observations at the time of the inspection. If you did not hire the inspector yourself, reliance on this report may provide incomplete or outdated information. Repairs, professional opinions or additional inspection reports may affect the meaning of the information in this report. It is recommended that you hire a licensed inspector to perform an inspection to meet your specific needs and to provide you with current information concerning this property.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PROVIDED BY INSPECTOR
I. STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS

A. Foundations

Type of Foundation(s): Pier and beam

Comments:

The foundation is performing as intended. No significant problems were observed however,

1. Vents should be installed on the exterior of the crawl space within 3 feet of every 90 degree corner. Recommend installing additional vents to allow for proper circulation in the crawl space.

2. Minor settling was observed in the laundry room area. The exterior wall just outside of the kitchenette exit door has slightly pulled away from the structure. Recommend re-pointing the stone mortar and patching the damage stucco in the area. The said area should be monitored for further movement.

3. Substantial foundation cracking was observed on the garage floor. This implies that structural movement of the building has occurred. The rate of movement cannot be predicted during a one-time inspection. A structural engineer/foundation company should be consulted to further evaluate this condition and the remedies available for correction.

4. A distinct slope in the floor was observed at the office entrance off of the master bedroom. The floor joists appeared to be properly supported in the area however it is recommended that the floor joists in the said area be stabilized and or shimmed to even out the low spot.

5. The master bathroom entry door would not close. The door was rubbing on the door frame during the inspection. This is conducive to settling. Repairs are recommended for proper use.

B. Grading & Drainage

Comments:

1. The grading should be improved at the front of the house to promote the flow of storm water away from the structure. This can usually be accomplished by the addition of top soil. The ground should slope away from the house at a rate of one inch per foot for at least the first ten feet. Ideally, at least eight (8) inches of clearance should be maintained between soil level and the top of the foundation walls.
2. The grading should be improved at the rear of backhouse to promote the flow of storm water away from the house. This can usually be accomplished by the addition of top soil. The ground should slope away from the house at a rate of one inch per foot for at least the first ten feet. Ideally, at least eight (8) inches of clearance should be maintained between soil level and the top of the foundation walls. Wood siding below grade. And left side

3. All trees and shrubbery should be trimmed back from the guest house a minimum of 3 feet for proper use. Trees located within 3’ of the roof line will cause damage to the roof covering over time. Shrubbery located with 3’ of the home will increase the risk of water penetration into the home and is conducive to wood destroying insects.

C. Roof Covering Materials

Type(s) of Roof Covering: Fiberglass composition shingle/ Roll Roofing
Viewed From: Walked on roof

Comments:
1. Rain gutters should be installed on the roof pitch installed to the right of the front door. This will help keep water from pooling near the foundation.
2. All exposed nails on the roof jacks and flashing points should be sealed with a roofer’s grade material to prevent any possible water penetration.
D. Roof Structure & Attic

Viewed From: Entered attic and performed a visual inspection
Approximate Average Depth of Insulation: 8 inches
Approximate Average Thickness of Vertical Insulation: 5 inches
Comments:
1. Ideally, the attic access hatch should be better insulated in the upstairs main jack and jill bathroom.

E. Walls (Interior & Exterior)

Comments:
1. Weep holes were not present in the stone veneer. Weep holes should be installed every 33 inches at the lower end of the stone veneer to allow for moisture to properly drain from the wall cavity.
2. Weep holes should be installed above the window at the right front corner of the home. Weep holes should also be added over the rear exit door off of the master bedroom. Improvements should be made prior to closing.

F. Ceilings & Floors

Comments:
1. The carpet padding was missing in the gust house bathroom. Improvements should be made for proper use.

G. Doors (Interior & Exterior)

Comments:
1. Weather stripping should be installed at the top of the front door and around the laundry room exit door to prevent air loss within the home.
2. The laundry room exit door would not latch when in the closed position. General trimming and adjustments are recommended.
3. The half bath entry door would not latch on the day of the inspection.
4. The weep screed was missing on the master shower door and the upstairs main bathroom shower door. Improvements are recommended for proper use.
5. The glass installed in the laundry room exit door was not marked as tempered glass. All glass within exit doors is required to be tempered as per current standards. This is typical in older homes.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☑  H. Windows

Comments: Many of the newly installed windows in the home would not latch on the day of the inspection. A window technician should evaluate and repair. This typically occurs when settling is present in the home. The below listed windows should be repaired prior to closing.

1. It may be desirable to replace window screens on entire home and guest house where missing. The owner should be consulted regarding any screens that may be in storage.
2. The window installed to the right of the fire place would not lock. Recommend repair.
3. The left middle window installed in the kitchenette was in need of repair. The locking mechanism was missing screws which secure it to the window frame.
4. The older windows are in mild disrepair. This is a common condition that does not necessitate immediate major repair. Trimming and adjustment, hardware improvements and glazing repairs would be logical long term improvements. In practice, improvements are usually made on an as needed basis only. The most important factor is that the window exteriors are well maintained to avoid rot or water infiltration.
5. The rear right window installed in the master bedroom would not lock. This should be repaired for proper use.
6. The windows installed in the rear left bedroom would not lock. Adjustments should be made to the windows for proper use.
7. Two windows in the upstairs right rear bedroom would not lock. Repairs should be made for proper use.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  I. Stairways (Interior & Exterior)

Comments:
J. Fireplace/Chimney

Comments:
1. The damper would not open in the fireplace placed installed in the front family room.
2. Significant creosote build up was noted in the fireplace flue and/or firebox in the rear living room. Cleaning of these areas should be undertaken for improved safety.
   1.

K. Porches, Balconies, Decks, and Carports

Comments:

II. ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

A. Service Entrance and Panels

Comments:
1. The large bush should be trimmed back from the main electrical panel to allow for proper access.

2. The electrical panel installed on the right side of the home should be sealed at the stone veneer to prevent water penetration behind panel.
3. The main electrical panel door would not properly close on the day of the inspection. Tape is currently being used to keep the panel door closed. Repairs should be made for proper use.

4. Any openings in the main panel should be covered. (No Tape)
5. The exterior electrical panel installed at the guest house was not labeled on the day of the inspection.

6. The electrical outlet which powers the Jacuzzi tub should be secured to the framing members for proper use.

7. One arc fault breaker installed in electrical sub panel should be replaced. The said arc fault breaker would not manually trip on the day of the inspection.

B. Branch Circuits, Connected Devices, and Fixtures

Type of Wiring: Copper

Comments:

1. The outlet installed in the guest house bathroom was improperly wired. The hot and neutral wires were reversed on the said outlet.

2. The electrical outlet installed in the kitchen hutch was not ground fault protected. All outlets installed in kitchen areas are required to be ground fault protected as per current standards.

3. An accessible electrical outlet should be installed in the kitchen island for proper use. One was not located on the day of the inspection.

4. Two electrical outlets should be installed at the bar area. Electrical outlets should be installed every two feet where a counter top is present. Updating is recommended.

5. The light Under Stairway is inoperative. If the bulbs are not blown, the circuit should be investigated.

6. The switch safety cover plate was missing in the right walk in attic. The cover plate should be installed for proper use.

7. The light switch which powers the kitchen recessed lights should be evaluated by a licensed electrician. Excessive heat was noted at the switch plate on the day of the inspection.
III. HEATING, VENTILATION AND AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS

A. Heating Equipment
   Type of System: Heat Pump
   Energy Source: Electricity
   Model #ahp60d2ch21a (Unit # 1)
   Serial #a0h68455691
   Model #ahp48d2ch21a (Unit # 2)
   Serial #a0h6865244
   Comments:
   1. The dirty air filter should be replaced in the return air vents.

B. Cooling Equipment
   Type of System: Central Forced Air System
   Model # e1rd036s06b (Unit # 1)
   Serial # w0k6899098
   Model # e1rd060s06a (Unit # 2)
   Serial # w0c6046774
   Comments:
   1. Vegetation in the vicinity of the outdoor unit of the air conditioning system should be cut back.
   2. The over current protection device with protects the condensing unit marked as unit # 1 in this report was over sized. The installed 50 amp breaker should be replaced with a 30 amp breaker as per the manufactures label.

C. Duct System, Chases, and Vents
   Comments:

IV. PLUMBING SYSTEM

A. Water Supply System and Fixtures
   Location of water meter: Rear Alley
   Location of main water supply valve: Not Present
   Static water pressure reading: 45. PSI
   Comments:
   1. The shower was inoperative in the guest house.
   2. A sink was not installed in the guest house on the day of the inspection.
   3. The left handle installed on the master bathroom Jacuzzi tub was not properly secured. Repairs should be made for proper use.
4. Due to the sloping floor the water in the master shower drains towards the rear wall and not around the drain. Water was allowed to pool in the master shower. Repairs should be made for proper use.

☑ ☐ ☐ ☐ B. Drains, Wastes, and Vents
Comments:

☑ ☐ ☐ ☐ C. Water Heating Equipment
Energy Source: Electricity
Capacity: 50Gallon
Model #e1f30rd045v x3
Comments:
1. The water heaters were installed in the attic area. The water heaters were functioning as intended on the day of the inspection.

☑ ☐ ☐ ☑ D. Hydro-Massage Therapy Equipment
Comments:
1. A knocking noise could be heard when the master Jacuzzi tub was in the on position. It sounded like a solid substance was lodged in the jetting system or a pipe was loose on the tub. It is recommended that a licensed plumber evaluate and repair.

V. APPLIANCES
☑ ☐ ☐ ☑ A. Dishwasher
Comments:
1. The dishwasher should be better secured.

☑ ☐ ☐ ☐ B. Food Waste Disposer
Comments:

☑ ☐ ☐ ☐ C. Range Exhaust Vent
Comments:

☑ ☐ ☐ ☐ D. Ranges, Cook tops, and Ovens
Comments:
E. Microwave Oven

Comments:

F. Trash Compactor

Comments:

G. Mechanical Exhaust Vents and Bathroom Heaters

Comments:
1. The bathroom exhaust fan should be repaired so as to discharge to the building exterior.

H. Garage Door Operator(s)

Comments:
1. The light cover as well as one light bulb was missing on the garage door operator.

2. Safety sensors should be installed on the garage door operator as per current standards. It is recommended that the said sensors be installed prior to closing.

3. The garage door opener did not automatically reverse under resistance to closing. There is a serious risk of injury, particularly to children, under this condition. Improvement may be as simple as adjusting the sensitivity control on the opener. This should be repaired immediately.

I. Doorbell and Chimes

Comments:

J. Dryer Vents

Comments:

VI. OPTIONAL SYSTEMS

A. Lawn and Garden Sprinkler Systems

Comments:

B. Swimming Pools, Spas, Hot Tubs, and Equipment

Type of Construction: In Ground

Comments:
C. Outbuildings
   Comments:

D. Outdoor Cooking Equipment
   Energy Source:
   Comments:

E. Gas Supply Systems
   Comments: The gas lines could not be inspected. The gas lines in walls are not accessible and or visible for inspection.

F. Private Water Wells (A coliform analysis is recommended.)
   Type of Pump:
   Type of Storage Equipment:
   Comments:

G. Private Sewage Disposal (Septic) Systems
   Type of System:
   Location of Drain Field:
   Comments:

H. Whole-House Vacuum Systems
   Comments:

I. Other Built-in Appliances
   Comments:
ADDENDUM: REPORT 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.

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

Major Concerns: 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 Issues: denotes a condition that is unsafe and in need of prompt attention.

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

Improvement Items: denotes improvements which are recommended but not required.

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

Deferred Cost Items: 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.

MAJOR CONCERNS
The inspection of the property listed above must be performed in compliance with the rules of the Texas Real Estate Commission (TREC).

- Vents should be installed on the exterior of the crawl space with in 3 feet of every 90 degree corner. Recommend installing additional vents to allow for proper circulation in the crawl space.
- Weather stripping should be installed at the top of the front door and around the laundry room exit door to prevent air loss within the home.
- The laundry room exit door would not latch when in the closed position. General trimming and adjustments are recommended.
- The half bath entry door would not latch on the day of the inspection.
- The weep screed was missing on the master shower door and the upstairs main bathroom shower door. Improvements are recommended for proper use.
- Due to the sloping floor the water in the master shower drains towards the rear wall and not around the drain. Water was allowed to pool in the master shower. Repairs should be made for proper use.

SAFETY ISSUES
- The glass installed in the laundry room exit door was not marked as tempered glass. All glass within exit doors is required to be tempered as per current standards. This is typical in older homes.
- Safety sensors should be installed on the garage door operator as per current standards. It is recommended that the said sensors be installed prior to closing.
- The garage door opener did not automatically reverse under resistance to closing. There is a serious risk of injury, particularly to children, under this condition. Improvement may be as simple as adjusting the sensitivity control on the opener. This should be repaired immediately.

REPAIR ITEMS
- Substantial foundation cracking was observed on the garage floor. This implies that structural movement of the building has occurred. The rate of movement cannot be predicted during a one-time inspection. A structural engineer/ foundation company should be consulted to further evaluate this condition and the remedies available for correction.
A distinct slope in the floor was observed at the office entrance off of the master bedroom. The floor jousts appeared to be properly supported in the area however it is recommended that the floor joists in the said area be stabilized and or shimmed to even out the low spot.

The master bathroom entry door would not close. The door was rubbing on the door frame during the inspection. This is conducive to settling. Repairs are recommended for proper use.

The grading should be improved at the front of the house to promote the flow of storm water away from the structure. This can usually be accomplished by the addition of top soil. The ground should slope away from the house at a rate of one inch per foot for at least the first ten feet. Ideally, at least eight (8) inches of clearance should be maintained between soil level and the top of the foundation walls.

The grading should be improved at the rear of backhouse to promote the flow of storm water away from the house. This can usually be accomplished by the addition of top soil. The ground should slope away from the house at a rate of one inch per foot for at least the first ten feet. Ideally, at least eight (8) inches of clearance should be maintained between soil level and the top of the foundation walls.

All exposed nails on the roof jacks and flashing points should be sealed with a roofer’s grade material to prevent any possible water penetration.

Weep holes were not present in the stone veneer. Weep holes should be installed every 33 inches at the lower end of the stone veneer to allow for moisture to properly drain from the wall cavity.

Weep holes should be installed above the window at the right front corner of the home. Weep holes should also be added over the rear exit door off of the master bedroom. Improvements should be made prior to closing.

It may be desirable to replace window screens on entire home and guest house where missing. The owner should be consulted regarding any screens that may be in storage.

The window installed to the right of the fire place would not lock. Recommend repair.

The left middle window installed in the kitchenette was in need of repair. The locking mechanism was missing screws which secure it to the window frame.

The older windows are in mild disrepair. This is a common condition that does not necessitate immediate major repair. Trimming and adjustment, hardware improvements and glazing repairs would be logical long term improvements. In practice, improvements are usually made on an as needed basis only. The most important factor is that the window exteriors are well maintained to avoid rot or water infiltration.

The rear right window installed in the master bedroom would not lock. This should be repaired for proper use.

The windows installed in the rear left bedroom would not lock. Adjustments should be made to the windows for proper use.

Two windows in the upstairs right rear bedroom would not lock. Repairs should be made for proper use.

The damper would not open in the fire placed installed in the front family room.

Significant creosote build up was noted in the fireplace flue and/or firebox in the rear living room. Cleaning of these areas should be undertaken for improved safety.

The electrical panel installed on the right side of the home should be sealed at the stone veneer to prevent water penetration behind panel.

The main electrical panel door would not properly close on the day of the inspection. Tape is currently being used to keep the panel door closed. Repairs should be made for proper use.

Any openings in the main panel should be covered. (No Tape)

The exterior electrical panel installed at the guest house was not labeled on the day of the inspection.

The electrical outlet which powers the Jacuzzi tub should be secured to the framing members for proper use.

One arc fault breaker installed in electrical sub panel should be replaced. The said arc fault breaker would not manually trip on the day of the inspection.

The outlet installed in the guest house bathroom was improperly wired. The hot and neutral wires were reversed on the said outlet.

The electrical outlet installed in the kitchen hutch was not ground fault protected. All outlets installed in kitchen areas are required to be ground fault protected as per current standards.
• An accessible electrical outlet should be installed in the kitchen island for proper use. One was not located on the day of the inspection.

• Two electrical outlets should be installed at the bar area. Electrical outlets should be installed every two feet where a counter top is present. Updating is recommended.

• The light Under Stairway is inoperative. If the bulbs are not blown, the circuit should be investigated.

• The switch safety cover plate was missing in the right walk in attic. The cover plate should be installed for proper use.

• The light switch which powers the kitchen recessed lights should be evaluated by a licensed electrician. Excessive heat was noted at the switch plate on the day of the inspection.

• Vegetation in the vicinity of the outdoor unit of the air conditioning system should be cut back.

• The over current protection device with protects the condensing unit marked as unit # 1 in this report was over sized. The installed 50 amp breaker should be replaced with a 30 amp breaker as per the manufactures label.

• The left handle installed on the master bathroom Jacuzzi tub was not properly secured. Repairs should be made for proper use.

• A knocking noise could be heard when the master Jacuzzi tub was in the on position. It sounded like a solid substance was lodged in the jetting system or a pipe was loose on the tub. It is recommended that a licensed plumber evaluate and repair.

• The dishwasher should be better secured.

IMPROVEMENT ITEMS

• All trees and shrubbery should be trimmed back from the guest house a minimum of 3 feet for proper use. Trees located within 3’ of the roof line will cause damage to the roof covering over time. Shrubbery located with 3’ of the home will increase the risk of water penetration into the home and is conducive to wood destroying insects.

• Rain gutters should be installed on the roof pitch installed to the right of the front door. This will help keep water from pooling near the foundation.

• Ideally, the attic access hatch should be better insulated in the upstairs main jack and jill bathroom.

• The carpet padding was missing in the gust house bathroom. Improvements should be made for proper use.

• The large bush should be trimmed back from the main electrical panel to allow for proper access.

• The bathroom exhaust fan should be repaired so as to discharge to the building exterior.

ITEMS TO MONITOR

• Minor settling was observed in the laundry room area. The exterior wall just outside of the kitchenette exit door has slightly pulled away from the structure. Recommend re-pointing the stone mortar and patching the damage stucco in the area. The said area should be monitored for further movement.

DEFERRED COST ITEMS
ADDENDUM: 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-striping 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!
ADDENDUM: LEAD BASED PAINT INFORMATION

Lead-based paint is hazardous to your health.

Lead-based paint is a major source of lead poisoning for children and can also affect adults. In children, lead poisoning can cause irreversible brain damage and can impair mental functioning. It can retard mental and physical development and reduce attention span. It can also retard fetal development even at extremely low levels of lead. In adults, it can cause irritability, poor muscle coordination, and nerve damage to the sense organs and nerves controlling the body. Lead poisoning may also cause problems with reproduction (such as a decreased sperm count). It may also increase blood pressure. Thus, young children, fetuses, infants, and adults with high blood pressure are the most vulnerable to the effects of lead.

Children should be screened for lead poisoning.

In communities where the houses are old and deteriorating, take advantage of available screening programs offered by local health departments and have children checked regularly to see if they are suffering from lead poisoning. Because the early symptoms of lead poisoning are easy to confuse with other illnesses, it is difficult to diagnose lead poisoning without medical testing. Early symptoms may include persistent tiredness, irritability, loss of appetite, stomach discomfort, reduced attention span, insomnia, and constipation. Failure to treat children in the early stages can cause long-term or permanent health damage.

The current blood lead level which defines lead poisoning is 10 micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood. However, since poisoning may occur at lower levels than previously thought, various federal agencies are considering whether this level should be lowered further so that lead poisoning prevention programs will have the latest information on testing children for lead poisoning.

Consumers can be exposed to lead from paint.

Eating paint chips is one way young children are exposed to lead. It is not the most common way that consumers, in general, are exposed to lead. Ingesting and inhaling lead dust that is created as lead-based paint "chalks," chips, or peels from deteriorated surfaces can expose consumers to lead. Walking on small paint chips found on the floor, or opening and closing a painted frame window, can also create lead dust. Other sources of lead include deposits that may be present in homes after years of use of leaded gasoline and from industrial sources like smelting. Consumers can also generate lead dust by sanding lead-based paint or by scraping or heating lead-based paint.

Lead dust can settle on floors, walls, and furniture. Under these conditions, children can ingest lead dust from hand-to-mouth contact or in food. Settled lead dust can re-enter the air through cleaning, such as sweeping or vacuuming, or by movement of people throughout the house.

Older homes may contain lead based paint.

Lead was used as a pigment and drying agent in "alkyd" oil based paint. "Latex" water based paints generally have not contained lead. About two-thirds of the homes built before 1940 and one-half of the homes built from 1940 to 1960 contain heavily-leaded paint. Some homes built after 1960 also contain heavily-leaded paint. It may be on any interior or exterior surface, particularly on woodwork, doors, and windows. In 1978, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission lowered the legal maximum lead content in most kinds of paint to 0.06% (a trace amount). Consider having the paint in homes constructed before the 1980s tested for lead before renovating or if the paint or underlying surface is deteriorating. This is particularly important if infants, children, or pregnant women are present.

Consumers can have paint tested for lead.

There are do-it-yourself kits available. However, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has not evaluated any of these kits. One home test kit uses sodium sulfide solution. This procedure requires you to place a drop of sodium sulfide solution on a paint chip. The paint chip slowly turns darker if lead is present. There are problems with this test, however. Other metals may cause false positive results, and resins in the paint may prevent the sulfide from causing the paint chip to change color. Thus, the presence of lead may not be correctly indicated. In addition the darkening may be detected only on very light-colored paint.

Another in-home test requires a trained professional who can operate the equipment safely. This test uses X-ray fluorescence to determine if the paint contains lead. Although the test can be done in your home, it should be done only by professionals trained by
the equipment manufacturer or who have passed a state or local government training course, since the equipment contains radioactive materials. In addition, in some tests, the method has not been reliable.

Consumers may choose to have a testing laboratory test a paint sample for lead. Lab testing is considered more reliable than other methods. Lab tests may cost from $20 to $50 per sample. To have the lab test for lead paint, consumers may:

- Get sample containers from the lab or use re-sealable plastic bags. Label the containers or bags with the consumer's name and the location in the house from which each paint sample was taken. Several samples should be taken from each affected room (see HUD Guidelines discussed below).
- Use a sharp knife to cut through the edges of the sample paint. The lab should tell you the size of the sample needed. It will probably be about 2 inches by 2 inches.
- Lift off the paint with a clean putty knife and put it into the container. Be sure to take a sample of all layers of paint, since only the lower layers may contain lead. Do not include any of the underlying wood, plaster, metal, and brick.
- Wipe the surface and any paint dust with a wet cloth or paper towel and discard the cloth or towel.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recommends that action to reduce exposure should be taken when the lead in paint is greater than 0.5% by lab testing or greater than 1.0 milligrams per square centimeter by X-ray fluorescence. Action is especially important when paint is deteriorating or when infants, children, or pregnant women are present. Consumers can reduce exposure to lead-based paint.

If you have lead-based paint, you should take steps to reduce your exposure to lead.

You can:

1. Have the painted item replaced.

   You can replace a door or other easily removed item if you can do it without creating lead dust. Items that are difficult to remove should be replaced by professionals who will control and contain lead dust.

2. Cover the lead-based paint.

   You can spray the surface with a sealant or cover it with gypsum wallboard. However, painting over lead-based paint with non-lead paint is not a long-term solution. Even though the lead-based paint may be covered by non-lead paint, the lead-based paint may continue to loosen from the surface below and create lead dust. The new paint may also partially mix with the lead-based paint, and lead dust will be released when the new paint begins to deteriorate.

3. Have the lead-based paint removed.

   Have professionals trained in removing lead-based paint do this work. Each of the paint-removal methods (sandpaper, scrapers, chemicals, sandblasters, and torches or heat guns) can produce lead fumes or dust. Fumes or dust can become airborne and be inhaled or ingested. Wet methods help reduce the amount of lead dust. Removing moldings, trim, window sills, and other painted surfaces for professional paint stripping outside the home may also create dust. Be sure the professionals contain the lead dust. Wet-wipe all surfaces to remove any dust or paint chips. Wet-clean the area before re-entry.

   You can remove a small amount of lead-based paint if you can avoid creating any dust. Make sure the surface is less than about one square foot (such as a window sill). Any job larger than about one square foot should be done by professionals. Make sure you can use a wet method (such as a liquid paint stripper).

4. Reduce lead dust exposure.

   You can periodically wet mop and wipe surfaces and floors with a high phosphorous (at least 5%) cleaning solution. Wear waterproof gloves to prevent skin irritation. Avoid activities that will disturb or damage lead based paint and create dust. This is a preventive measure and is not an alternative to replacement or removal.

Contact your state and local health departments lead poisoning prevention programs and housing authorities for information about testing labs and contractors who can safely remove lead-based paint. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) prepared guidelines for removing lead-based paint. Ask contractors about their qualifications, experience removing lead-based paint, and plans to follow these guidelines.