

# Sellers Home Inspection Preparation Guide

The purpose of a home inspection is to document the overall condition of the property at the time of the inspection and to ensure that its major systems and components are installed and working properly. As most issues during a home inspection may seem small, when there are many small issues they start to add up to a lot of time and money for a buyer. If sellers know what to look for, they can resolve many of the smaller issue before the inspection even takes place. This, of course, is not a full list of issues but these are some a seller might be able to notice and correct easily. While all things are considered, and major items are focused on; collectively a long list of even minor issues can cause a prospective buyer to say, “No thanks, to many problems.”

## **BEFORE THE INSPECTION:**

### EXTERIOR:

- Make sure all dirt and landscaping is away from wood siding.
- All plant growth should be cut back 10-12 inches from the home.
- Any stored items should be moved away from the structure.
- Check the siding, trim, fascia, boards for any damage and repair if needed.
- Hairline cracks in stucco are common, look for any areas or excessive damage and repair.
- Repair any missing caulking around the doors, windows, over nail heads.
- Check exterior doors for wood decay, this is very common.
- Make sure all exterior doors operate smoothly and all weather strips are fresh.
- Replace any damaged/missing window screens – most homes have some damaged screens.

### ROOFING & GUTTERS:

- Clean all debris off the roof.
- Clean out gutters and replace any rust, sagging, leaking joints, and missing downspout components.
- Make sure all downspouts are properly diverted away from the house. This will require elbows, splash blocks, or drain lines.

## GARAGE:

- Look for wood decay at the side garage pedestrian door and the bottom of all main garage door openings.
- Check the garage door opener and adjust as needed so that it reverses against pressure.
- Make sure door is working properly and lubricate/repair as needed.
- Make sure door between garage and main home seals properly.

## KITCHEN, UTILITY, & BATHROOMS:

- Check for leaks around faucets and repair.
- Look for any floor damage around toilets, tubs, and showers and repair as needed.
- Make sure all caulking looks fresh and in good repair. This included tub surrounds and along the floors around the shower and toilet.
- Check to be sure all fixtures, fans, and appliances are working properly.
- Clean and organize items stored or remove items from under sinks to allow for inspection.

## INTERIOR AND ATTIC:

- Check interior doors and windows to make sure they are operating properly, this includes spring mechanisms, sash cords, cracking glass, etc.
- Make sure smoke detectors and/or carbon monoxide detectors are in place and operational.
- Remove all stored items from the attic space, closets, etc. that will block full access.
- Look for any rodent activity in the attic.
- Make sure all pilots are lit or automatic igniters for fireplaces are functional. Inspectors **DO NOT** light pilot lights.

## ELECTRICAL:

- Make sure all light fixtures are functional and any **burned out bulbs are replaced.**
- Press the test button on any GFCI receptacles to make sure the device trips and re-sets.

## PLUMBING:

- Check your water heater for any leakage or damage.
- If the home is vacant, make sure the water heater pilot light is on.
- Look for dripping faucet/tub spouts and any leaks under sinks.

## HEATING & COOLING:

- Inspect your return filter(s) and change, or clean, if dirty. The filter will be considered when evaluating the overall condition of the system.
- Make sure all debris/shrubs are cleared from the exterior condenser unit.

- Regarding a gas-fired appliance, make sure the gas to the home is on and any pilot lights are lit. The pilot light may have been off for the summer or is the house has been vacant.

#### CRAWL SPACE:

- Make sure the opening is accessible.
- Remove any debris, wood, concrete, etc.
- Remove or replace any damaged, fallen floor insulation and HVAC ductwork.
- Repair any damaged foundation vent screens and make sure all foundation vents are clear.

#### POOLS:

- Make sure all pool components are operational and check the pipes and pump for leaks.
- Verify Operation of the heating system if present – this is a very common issue.

#### SPRINKLERS:

- Verify operation of the system and adjust/repair any heads as needed.

### **ON THE DAY OF INSPECTION**

1. Make sure all animals are secured or go out for a play date.
2. Make sure all utilities are on.
3. Remove any locks or provide keys for outside gates, electrical panels, etc.
4. Be sure there is total and complete access to the following areas:
  - a. Electrical Panel
  - b. Air Handler Unit
  - c. Water Heater
  - d. Attic Space
  - e. Crawl Space Under House, if any
  - f. All bedrooms and living areas. Remove any secondary window locks
  - g. Be sure there are no clothes in the washer and dryer – Dishwasher can be full or empty

**What to Expect:** The inspector may show up early to begin the inspection and the exterior and the roof of the home. They will be in your home about 2-4 hours depending on multiple variables, few of which are size of the home, age, number of attic openings, condition of the home, and auxiliary inspections such as WDO inspections, wind mitigation insurance inspections, four-point insurance inspections. The inspector will operate all components and alliances in the home. If anything in the home does not work properly you **MUST** inform the inspector.

**When You Return:** An inspector makes every attempt to return the home to its original state. If a thermostat is too hard to reset, you may have to return it to its original place. Hard to close windows and blinds may need to be corrected. They will relock all windows and doors tested during the inspection

**The No-No List:** Do not follow the inspector around. Do not try to cover up defects prior to an inspection

**Finally:** The most important thing a seller can do is leave for an inspection. Although this is your home, this is not your home inspection. The buyer is paying for this very crucial information and most times don't feel comfortable to ask questions and truly observe the home with you over their shoulder. Your chance to tell them about the home will be following their review of the home and the report.