

## Inspection Preparation

The following is a list of pre-inspection preparations that Realtors and sellers can follow to improve results in the potential buyer's Home Inspection Report. The idea is to maximize the list of items in the "satisfactory" column and minimize those in the "needs maintenance or repair" column.

- **Have a pre-sale Inspection performed.** This is absolutely the best way to *find and address* any defects in the home, some of which the current resident may not even be aware. Minor repairs and/or maintenance will improve the Inspector's Report for the potential buyer.
- **Hire a licensed Heating/Cooling contractor for a tune-up of the Heating and Cooling system.** A licensed HVAC contractor is able to address these systems more comprehensively than anyone else is permitted to do, according to state laws, and well worth the expense.
- **Hire a professional pool maintenance service and a plumber.** Pool equipment and plumbing shutoff valves (for water and gas) may become corroded and difficult to operate over time from non-use.
- **Drain sediment from water heater.** Sediment can collect in water heaters over time and should be drained at least once a year. This sediment build-up could cause the water heater to make funny noises, which would appear in the Inspection Report.
- **Replace burned-out light bulbs.** Proper illumination is essential to the home inspection process and working lights certainly look better in the Inspection Report.
- **Remove any "Handyman" wiring.** This would also be known as amateur work in branch circuit wiring, such as extension cords used as permanent wiring. This is considered *extremely hazardous* and will be reported as such in the Inspection Report. Hiring a professional electrician is strongly recommended in this case.
- **Test Smoke Alarms.** Be sure they have fresh batteries where applicable.
- **Clean up the yard.** Buyers, Realtors and home inspectors do not enjoy stepping in animal waste.
- **Clean up the house.** Dirty, smelly homes turn off buyers.

The following is a list of pre-inspection preparations that Realtors and sellers can follow in homes that have been unoccupied for a month or more when a Home Inspection is imminent.

- **Check that the gas, water and electric utilities are on.** Frequently, inspections are canceled and deals fall apart because sellers refuse to turn on utilities.
- **The air conditioner / heat pump should be active for at least 24 hours.** Power to condensing unit for 24 hours is necessary to insure proper operation; the heating / cooling system should be allowed to stabilize (at least 8 hours) for a more accurate evaluation.
- **Check that all pilot lights are lit, hot water tanks and heating systems are operable, and appliances are connected and that all water valves are "on" (weather permitting).**
- **Disarm alarm systems.** Appearances by police and fire departments during inspections are disruptive.
- **Run water in all sinks and flush toilets at least once a month.** Extended non-use of toilets could cause O-rings, gaskets, etc., to become dry and crack, causing leaks during the inspection. The traps under the sinks could become dry without routine use, allowing sewer gases to enter the home.
- **Be sure the fireplace damper is closed.** An open damper allows all kind of creatures and weather to enter the home.



The following is a list of pre-inspection preparations that Realtors and sellers can follow to allow the home inspection to proceed as efficiently as possible.

- **Provide access to the property to be inspected.** Doors should be unlocked or the keys/garage door openers readily accessible.
- **If the seller is required to provide access to the property, be there at the appointed time.**
- **Provide access to the water meter, gas meter and electrical panel.** Remove pictures or decorative items used to conceal electrical panels.
- **Provide access to hatches or crawl spaces.** If access to a crawl space is through a closet ceiling or floor, remove contents of the closets or storage rooms as necessary to facilitate access. If access panels are extraordinarily obscure, leave a note to assist the inspector in locating these panels.
- **If any repair or replacement work** (*roofing, foundation, heating systems, basement waterproofing, siding or windows, electrical/plumbing, etc.*) **has been done recently, provide inspector with copies or relevant paperwork.**
- **Have disclosure forms, engineering reports, point-of-sale information and/or any other pertinent documentation regarding the property available to the inspector.**
- **Provide access to gated communities, such as entry code or notify guard gate at the entrance.**

The following is a list of additional pre-inspection preparations that Realtors and sellers can follow to allow the home inspection to proceed as efficiently as possible when the residence is occupied.

- **Remove pots and pans from cooking equipment.**
- **Remove laundry from washers and dryers.**
- **Remove dishes and clutter from kitchen countertops and sinks.**
- **Provide as much visibility as reasonably possible for garage walls, basement walls, attics, storage rooms, etc.**
- **Provide easy access to heating systems, hot water tanks and appliances.**
- **Disarm alarm systems.** Appearances by police and fire departments during inspections are disruptive.
- **Control pets.** Barking and/or jumping dogs make it difficult for the home inspector to do his/her job. Chasing a runaway cat is detrimental to the inspection process.
- **Do not run water (except for required toilet flushing) during the inspection.** Running a dishwasher, doing laundry, showering, car washing, lawn watering, etc., are disruptive to the inspector's testing procedures.
- **Turn off the sprinkler system.** The sprinklers are not typically part of the Inspection, but sprinklers that turn on during an Inspection could interfere or slow down the Inspection.
- **Turn off all non-essential electronics.** I recommend you turn off personal computers, televisions and any other sensitive electronics to avoid any possible damage due to unintentional power failure.
- **Relocate valuable, breakable items from traffic areas.** I would not want to accidentally break any valuable items during the Inspection.
- **Remove all vehicles from the Garage.** The Inspector would not want to scratch any paint jobs during the Inspection, and the Inspector needs access to all parts of the Garage.
- **Remove posters or pictures or other items from your teenager's (and other children's) room that could be considered offensive.** This is not essential, but at least try to avoid an embarrassing moment with the potential buyer. Not everyone has the same taste, values, tolerances or sense of humor.