



## **Maximize your sale with a Pre-Listing Inspection**

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A pre-listing home inspection (aka. seller's inspection) is the prudent home seller's first step in the process of selling his or her home. To sell your client's home fast and get top dollar especially in a sluggish market, you must present the most salable property possible. It is pretty safe to assume that a buyer who contracts to buy your client's house will want to have a professional whole house inspection conducted. Most sale contracts are written with a "*contingent upon an acceptable whole house inspection*" clause. So why not wait until you have a buyer who wants and will pay for an inspection? While many agents do wait for just this situation, there are a few compelling reasons for the seller to invest in a house inspection *before* listing the house.

The three main reasons to get the inspection before hand:

- 1) **Knowing in advance** the condition of the home's mechanical systems, roof, foundation and appliances can help eliminate any surprises that may arise after a buyer's home inspection. Identifying these issues in advance gives you're the opportunity to work with your client to fix them or address them in your presentation of the house. This also gives the client the advantage of having the time to negotiate with the contractors for the cost of the repairs.
- 2) **Minimizing the number of issues** that the buyer can use as negotiating leverage. Frequently buyers will use an older roof or malfunctioning appliance as leverage to win a price concession. Sometimes just identifying the issues in advance gives you time to prepare for handling the issue with the buyer.
- 3) **Full Disclosure is important.** Seller and his agent are not protected by the "We didn't know" excuse. The courts have established that ignorance of an issue is no longer a valid reason for the home seller not to properly disclose the condition of the home to a homebuyer. In the past, the buyer was at risk when purchasing a home. It was up to the buyer to find out any and all defects in the home that was being purchased. More recently, litigation has favored the buyers to a point that it's now up to the seller to disclose problems -- even those problems that they seller or his/her agent may not have known about.

It's true you can sell a home that is in less-than-perfect condition. However, don't expect anyone except the bargain hunters to get excited about the chipped paint and peeling wallpaper. If the house needs work, and if it's being sold "as is", you will probably have to price the home below similar homes that have sold in the neighborhood that may have been in better condition. If you don't price your home correctly, you run the danger of waiting a long time for a buyer who recognizes the potential and is willing to pay for it. A better idea is to spend time to thoroughly clean and stage your home. Invest in a couple of cans of white paint and improve the curb appeal.

Make your seller's home look as good as possible inside and out. It is to the seller's advantage to get a home inspection report. A home inspector can list those areas that need repair as well as those areas that need general maintenance to improve the salability of the home for a top dollar return.

A small investment in an inspection report prior to the sale can streamline the negotiations and maximize the seller's return.

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