

## Don't Delay Your Home Inspection

By Rick Bunzel  
Pacific Crest Property Inspections



Once you have written an offer on your "dream home," you will typically have a period of 7-14 days in which to get it inspected. This is typically called the inspection contingency period. Unfortunately, many buyers wait until late in the period to contact and schedule a home inspection. By waiting the buyer is limiting the amount of time they have to examine any issues the inspection discovers. For example, many inspections turn up an old furnace that hasn't been serviced since the 80's. You may choose to have it replaced or ask the buyer to replace it. Having the time to get a quote on a replacement furnace will give you a better negotiating position. Another home I inspected recently had a finished attic but in doing so the owners may have removed much of the supporting truss work. Since I did not have a copy of the original build plans and the sellers did not produce a building permit, we had to call in a structural engineer. The engineer was busy and could not get to the property for several days. Fortunately, this particular buyer didn't wait and everything happened within the allotted contingency period.

In Washington's real estate contract there is a provision to extend the contingency period. It is commonly called "extend-amend." However the extend-amend can only be used when both parties agree to it. The seller has the right to decline the extend-amend and many times this will happen when the seller has another offer. When this happens the buyer is put in the difficult position of having to decide whether they want the home in its current state or to walk away.

In a competitive market sometimes offers are made as-is and the inspection contingency is taken out of the contract. I may be biased as a home inspector but why would you waive the right to an inspection on one of the largest purchase you will ever make? Many roofs have damage that is not obvious from the ground; basements have signs of flooding or water damage, construction is done without permits and so on. If you're buying the home for the land only, then the home doesn't matter, but for 99% of the buyers out there they plan on keeping the home so they will want to know the issues.

Many buyers stretch themselves financially to get into a home and the maintenance costs in the first 1-2 years are critical. Once they have an inspection report, extra time will allow them to get quotes on what costs could be to repair and maintain the home. For example, many homes show signs of needing paint. Painting most homes in this area will run \$4,000-\$10,000. For most of us, that's a big expense. An inspection report will help the buyer determine what the cost of ownership will really be.

Rick Bunzel is the Principle Inspector at Pacific Crest Inspections. If you have questions or comments, Rick Bunzel can be contacted at Pacific Crest Inspections @ 360-588-6956 . If you would like to know more about your home go to <http://www.paccrestinspections.com/>