

Pacific Crest Inspections, LLC

Should You Get A Pre-Listing Inspection?

By Rick Bunzel

Pacific Crest Inspections



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 home fast and get top dollar, you must present the most salable property possible. It is pretty safe to assume that a buyer who contracts to buy a home 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 homeowners 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 an inspection before listing:

- 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 fix them or address them in advance. This also gives you 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 the homeowner time to prepare for handling the issue with the buyer.
- 3) **Full Disclosure is important.** You 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 you, the seller, to 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 the 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. It pays to spend time to thoroughly clean and stage your home. Invest in a couple of cans of white paint and improve the curb appeal. The next step is to look for some of the most common issues home inspectors find in this area. Some of these items a homeowner can identify themselves but others will take the skills and knowledge of a home inspector to identify:

- 1) **Improper Surface Grading and Drainage.** Water is responsible for the most common household aggravations, including water penetration into the basement or crawlspace.
- 2) **Water Damage at shower/tub floor and walls.** Shower and tub areas are some of the most common problematic areas in any home.
- 3) **Improper Electrical Wiring.** This can be a significant issue, particularly in an older home. This includes such situations as insufficient electrical service, inadequate overload protection, and amateur (often dangerous) wiring connections.
- 4) **Roof Damage.** Leaking or damaged roofs are a frequent problem. Roofs have a life expectancy of 20 to 30 years.

4) Heating Systems. Most homeowners are not aware that the average life of a furnace is 15-18 years. The life expectancy of a furnace is directly related to the frequency of maintenance it receives.

5) Poor Overall Maintenance. Deferred maintenance is a common problem with many homeowners.

Make your home look as good as possible inside and out. It is to the your 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.

If you have questions or comments, Rick Bunzel can be contacted at Pacific Crest Inspections @ 360-588-6956 or Rick@PacCrestinspections.com