

Additional Information



The purpose of the home inspection is to identify current problems with a piece of property and to educate buyers about potential future problems. Inspection Support Services Inc. is a supplier of reporting systems, on-line and in-class training and related documents to the home inspection industry, construction industry and other related associations. We take no part whatsoever in the physical inspection of new or resale homes conducted by the purchasers of our report system and furthermore to the finished contents of the report in point of fact, performed by the home inspector.

This document is for general information only and does not reflect professional advice but rather experience of inspection conditions often encountered and is not intended to supersede seeking your own choice of professional advice.

Asbestos

Generally, asbestos-containing materials do not have to be removed from any residential property. In fact, asbestos-containing material does not have to be removed from any residential structures unless it will be disturbed during renovations or demolition activities. As long as the asbestos-containing material is in good condition, intact and will not be disturbed; it does not pose a significant health risk. It's when asbestos is exposed and friable, flaking or crumbling, and that it's likely to become airborne, is when I recommend encapsulation or professional removal by properly licensed personnel.

Removal should never be attempted by the homeowner. This action requires special equipment and detailed training which would generally be too expensive and time-consuming for a homeowner to acquire for a one-time job. Removal is also the last choice among alternatives because it poses the most risk of fiber release if not done properly.

Buried Oil Tanks

Source: Technical Standards and Safety Authority – (T.S.S.A.)

If you own a buried fuel oil tank, it must be upgraded with leak and spill-protection equipment or removed.

Your first step is to register your tank, free of charge, with the Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA). ***Your fuel supplier may refuse to fill your underground tank if it is not registered with TSSA***

This **does not include** oil tanks in basements and above ground fuel storage tanks. The provincial regulations include a phased-in, multi-year program to upgrade or remove these tanks. If your underground fuel tank was installed:

- **25 or more years ago** - the tank must be upgraded or removed by **October 1, 2006**
- **20 to 24 years ago** - the tank must be upgraded or removed by **October 1, 2007**
- **10 to 19 years ago** - the tank must be upgraded or removed by **October 1, 2008**

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- **Less than a year to 9 years ago** - the tank must be upgraded or removed by **October 1, 2009**

To register your underground tank and find out more about the new inspection requirements, please call T.S.S.A.'s Fuels Safety program.

Environmental Issues

Investigating, sampling, and testing for any environmental issues is beyond the scope of this inspection.

Environmental issues are defined as: The circumstances, objects or condition by which one is surrounded.

No one individual is affected the same way. Some people appear not to be affected at all while others show symptoms when exposed to various issues.

Fireplaces (Dirty flue, dirty damper, soot)

Excessively dirty flue and damper and/or accumulation of soot can present a potential fire hazard. An accumulation of soot and other materials can result in a chimney flue fire. There is also the possibility that soot, dirt, and cobwebs concealed other problems or defects; concealed defects are not within the scope of the home inspection. Recommend having flue and/or damper cleaned and inspected by a licensed chimney professional before use.

Furnished Homes

Structures that are occupied and fully or partially furnished at the time of the inspection many times prevent home inspector from seeing everything, testing everything, or having access to everything.

Concealed defects are not within the scope of the home inspection. Along with defects that might not have noted due to such conditions, since the structure is still being lived in and used, additional deferred maintenance items may be present by the time escrow closes. We simply recommend careful observation during final walk-through and before close of escrow.

Garage Doors

Since the early 1990's rules and regulations have been put in place mandating both the installation of automatic reversing features should the door strike an object while closing, and secondarily to stop the door should anyone attempt to walk through it while it is closing.

Indoor Air Quality

The quality of indoor air is influenced both by the quality of outdoor air and by the emission characteristics of indoor sources. In almost all inhabited enclosed spaces, there is a continuous exchange of air with the outside. Therefore, all contaminants of outdoor air are likely to be present indoors. Important pollutants in this category include carbon monoxide, oxides of nitrogen, oxides of sulphur, particulate matter, ozone (and other photochemical oxidants) and lead.

Internally generated airborne pollutants fall into one of three categories:

- those formed in combustion processes for heating and cooking;

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- those derived from construction materials and furnishings;
- those related to human activity or presence.

Lead Pipes

Many homes have lead water supply pipes in the street. Although you may not be able to see the pipes in the house, the water come to you through them from your Municipal supplier. Lead can seriously harm a fetus, small child or (in big enough quantities) an adult.

If you are or intend to become, pregnant, have children or are in any way concerned, you must contact your Health professional, ***before proceeding***.

In many cases, the lead can be filtered out by using a simple and inexpensive filter. The filter manufacturer, Brita, claims that their filter system will remove a very large percentage of lead from water. Testing is the only way to determine if lead exists.

Radon

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas. It is produced by the decay of uranium-bearing minerals in rocks and soils. Radon typically can reach high concentrations in enclosed spaces such as basements.

Radon itself is inert, but the daughters are solid particles that can be breathed in and cause lung cancer. They can also attach themselves to dust particles or settle out onto surfaces.

Radon gas is measured by pico Curies per litre (pCi/L). Excessive high readings in a given area may contribute to cancer in the occupants.

If a home has high radon readings, there are measures that can be taken to reduce the levels. For example, sealing basement cracks, cover dirt floors, cover sump pump hole, improve natural ventilation by using exhaust fans, etc.

Remedial measures should be undertaken in a dwelling whenever the average annual radon concentration exceeds 200 Bq/m³ in the normal occupancy area. Thus specific radon testing is required in order to determine the presence of radon in a home. Further information may be found through Health Canada.

Septic Systems

Septic systems treat and disperse relatively small volumes of wastewater from individual or small numbers of homes and commercial buildings. Septic system regulation is usually a local responsibility. Due to the concealed access, the interior of the septic system (waste disposal) cannot be inspected.

If your septic tank failed, or you know someone whose did, you are not alone. As a homeowner, you are responsible for maintaining your septic system. Proper septic system maintenance will help keep your system from failing and will help maintain your investment in your home.

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Failing septic systems can potentially contaminate the ground water that you or your neighbors drink and can pollute nearby rivers, lakes and coastal waters.

Vermiculite (Insulation)

Vermiculite insulation is often found in attic spaces. This type of insulation may contain some trace amounts of asbestos. Although testing would be needed to confirm this, it is best to assume it may contain asbestos and not be disturbed. Remediation or removal of the material is generally needed only if disturbed during remodeling or repair in the area, and the process can be invasive and costly. The attic area should not be used as storage for this reason. Asbestos is a known carcinogen. It is recommended reading more about it at to determine your personal risk.

Wall Hangings

Wall hangings might conceal defects or damage to walls; concealed defects are not within the scope of the home inspection.

Water Features (Fountains/waterfall/ponds/pools/spas on property)

Home inspectors generally do not inspect these components of the property, and do not offer any opinion of the condition, function, or operation of these components. However, there are many horror stories about young children being injured or killed by them. A young child of only 50 pounds hanging on the edge of a fountain can definitely generate enough downward force to tip the fountain over. Additionally, children have been known to drown in waterfalls, ponds, pools, and spas.

Fountains should be secured so that they cannot be pulled over, and waterfalls, ponds, pools, and spas should be protected by non-climbable fences and gates with audible alarms to indicate when gates have been opened or are open. If young children are to occupy or visit the property, please take care of these items before close of escrow. I don't want to wake up one morning and read in the newspaper about an avoidable and unfortunate accident.

Windows (Safe Means of Egress)

There should be at least one latch-operable secondary means of exit in every room in a basement sleeping area designated for the purpose of "sleeping".