

Stoffer Inspections'

Insight

Stoffer Inspections, L.C.



Dave Stoffer
Professional Home Inspector

Member

(785) 766-0600

Insight from the Area's Leader in Home Inspections

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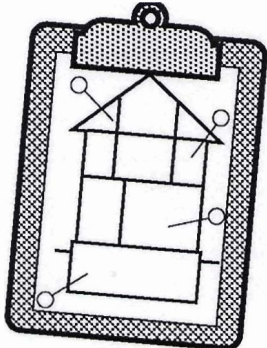
Common Findings From a Home Inspection

Many prospective homeowners are wisely deciding to hire a professional home inspector before buying a home. Some, however, don't know what problems to expect a home inspector to find. A major problem, such as one with the foundation, is only one of the defects home inspectors look for. There are many more common faults found by home inspectors.

Most homes will have some sort of problem with the roof. These problems could be due to age, wear, or improper installation. Homes with roof defects usually do not need a brand new roof. Roof problems can usually be repaired before the home is purchased.

1. Ceilings. Stains on the ceiling are a telltale sign of past or current roof leaks. Some ceiling stains can be leftover signs of previous roof problems that have since been repaired. Others may be due to faulty plumbing.

2. Basements. Leaky basements are another problem home inspectors often find. These leaks can be caused by faulty drainage systems. Unfortunately, faulty drainage can do a lot of damage to a home and can sometimes be hard to fix. Remedies range from a simple re-grading of the ground, or adding roof gutters, to major, expensive improvements such as installing French drains.



3. Electrical. Home inspectors find many problems besides foundation-related defects when inspecting a homebuyer's prospective purchase. Older homes frequently have electrical problems, such as ungrounded outlets, lack of shock protection devices, and faulty wiring in electrical panels. These common problems are often due to wiring that has been added or changed by people who were not qualified electricians, however, they are sometimes the result of errors at the time of construction.

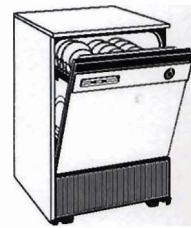
4. Rot. Wet wood can indicate a real problem to a home inspector. If wood remains wet for long periods of time, in roof eaves, exterior trim, decks, around tubs and showers, or below loose toilets, fungus is likely to attack, causing dry rot. This can cause extensive damage to a home.

5. Garages. When homeowners tell the home inspector, "We added the garage without a permit, but it was all done to code," this is usually an undeniable admission that building violations have occurred. It is impossible for the average person who has no construction knowledge to know the entire building code. Firewalls, which are specially built and fire-resistant, have been required since 1927 for walls and doors that separate a garage from a home.

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Dishwasher Draining?

Homeowner Question: We think that the dishwasher in the home we just purchased is broken, since there is a puddle of water inside the machine even after the dishes are washed. What should we do?



Our Answer: Dishwashers in proper working order do not drain themselves completely. Instead, some water is left in the unit at the end of each cycle. This keeps the element type heater, which is used for the drying cycle, from burning up. If a substantial amount of water stays in the sump, there could be a drain clog. A clogged air gap, which is that small chrome dome on the kitchen counter, can cause the same effect.

Also check the hoses on the dishwasher regularly to assure that they are supple and flexible. Replace any hose that shows indication of dry rot or cracking.



Home On The Web

Check out these web sites for a more topographical understanding of your residential area.

➔ **Earthquake** Central.earthquake.usgs.gov

➔ **Geological** Central.mapping.usgs.gov

Continued from front page.

Violations in this area include faulty construction, damage or alterations to the garage interior, or changes in code requirements since the home was built. Older homes are not required to be brought up to code when they are sold.

6. Wood-burning Fixtures. Upon inspecting prospective new homes for homebuyers, professional home inspectors have found that lack of maintenance and faulty installation of wood-burning fixtures can cause major violations. These include missing spark arrestors, improper placement of freestanding fireplaces, and insufficient clearance between hot metal surfaces and combustible materials.

People without knowledge of fire safety requirements (such as homeowners) are often the ones responsible for installing wood-burning stoves in homes. In addition, attics can be a hazard in that they can harbor fire hazards that are not discovered until a roof fire occurs.

7. Water Heaters. Water heaters sometimes not installed in compliance with plumbing code requirements. Violations found by home inspectors include inadequate strapping, improperly installed overflow piping, unsafe flue conditions, or faulty gas piping. Leaks can develop in units that are only five years old, as modern water heaters do not last as long as older models lasted.

8. Gas Heaters. Gas heaters can create big problems if not properly maintained. These can range from fire safety violations, to a cracked firebox, to the venting of carbon monoxide into the building. Correct maintenance, including an annual service call or a review by the gas company, can prevent many fire hazards.

HOME Highlights

THE LIGHTER SIDE OF HOME LIFE

Hail Damage

Hail can be a problem year round, but storms are worse in the spring, peaking in June with an average 3,600 nationwide.



Bug Patrol

Ever reach for a tissue to grab a spider or sliverfish bug and throw it in the trash. Yuk! The Bug Vacuum, a cordless vacuum cleaner that sucks the creatures in and then executes them with a low-voltage zap, is now available from Lentek International of Orlando, Fla..



Sleepy Time

Setting out nice, soft towels and fancy soaps are nice, but they don't count if house guests aren't sleeping well on that lumpy mattress! The Better Sleep Council reports that those surveyed in a research study, 41 percent reported moving a mattress from another room into the guest room to assure their guests of a good night's sleep.

Common Plumbing Abbreviations

CWM..... Clothes Washing Machine	HWT Water Heater
DWM..... Dishwashing Machine	LT Laundry Tray
W/C Toilet	CFT Claw Foot Tub
LAV Bathroom Sink	FD Floor Drain

This newsletter contains basic information on the home and general topics of interest. Due to the variations in homes, individual recommendations require a comprehensive evaluation. To reprint any article in this newsletter, please contact our office. © 1996-2001. All rights reserved.(ISJA01)

Stoffer Inspections, L.C. Information

Dave Stoffer provides technically superior inspections and is able to explain them all to clients on the most common terms. Stoffer Inspections, L.C. provides 3-D computer-generated narrative reports, that are both quick and comprehensive. My service also provides digital photography services for complete record keeping. Each home inspection includes and evaluation of roofing, electrical, heating, air conditioning, built-in appliances that stay with the home, plumbing, and visual structure.

Dave is a certified member of the American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI), the Great Plains Chapter of ASHI, and the Kansas City area Pro ASHI Chapter. To obtain certification, member must perform a minimum of 250 home inspections and pass a series of written tests that cover both mechanical and structural aspects of a home. Once certified, member must maintain at least 40 hours of continuing education every two years. All of these requirements ensure that your clients will receive a thorough, experienced, ethical, and knowledgeable home inspection.



Certified Member of the American Society of Home Inspectors

Stoffer Inspections, L.C.
3910 W. 13th , Lawrence, Kansas 66049
(785) 766-0600 or (800) 966-0601
Fax: (785) 842-9267

Meet Your Home Inspector Dave Stoffer

Visit our web page at www.grapevine.net/~dstoffer