

After You Buy ... If Something Goes Wrong

There may come a time that you discover something wrong with the house, and you may become upset or disappointed with your home inspection. Please understand that some problems can only be discovered by living in the house. They cannot be discovered during the few hours of a home inspection. For example, some shower stalls leak when people are in the shower but don't leak when you simply turn on the tap. Some roofs and basements only leak when specific conditions exist. Some problems will only be discovered when carpets are lifted, furniture is moved or finishes are removed.

These problems may have existed at the time of the inspection but there were no clues as to their existence. Our inspections are based on the past performance of the house. If there are no clues of a past problem, it is unfair to assume we should foresee a future problem.

In certain cases, our reports may identify some minor problems, but not others, which create an appearance of inconsistency. However, the minor problems that are identified likely were discovered while looking for more significant problems. We note them simply as a courtesy to our customer. Generally speaking, the intent of the inspection is not to find \$200 problems – it is to find the \$2,000 problems. These are the problems that affect a buyer's decision to purchase.

A HomeSafe inspection focuses on the property's current condition in regard to the presence of termites and/or termite activity at the time of the inspection. A "termite-free" declaration should not be misconstrued as a guarantee against future termite infestations. Termite experts agree that termites can infest a home in as little as a month. If termites infest a home anytime AFTER a HomeSafe inspection, HomeSafe cannot be held responsible.

The main source of concern with home inspectors relates to comments made by contractors. Contractors' opinions may differ from the home inspector's. Don't be surprised if three roofers say the roof needs replacement when we said that, with minor repairs, the roof will last a few more years. While our advice represents the most prudent thing to do, some contractors may be reluctant to undertake these repairs - because of the "Last Man In" theory. A contractor may fear that if he is the last person to work on the roof, then he will be blamed if the roof leaks, regardless of whether the roof leak is his fault or not. Consequently, he may shy away from a minor repair with high liability and prefer to re-roof the entire house for more money and reduce the likelihood of a call-back. This is understandable.

There is more to the "Last Man In" theory. It suggests that it is human nature for homeowners to believe the last bit of expert advice that they receive, even if it is contrary to previous advice. As home inspectors, unfortunately we often find ourselves in the position of "First Man In" and, consequently, it is our advice that is often disbelieved. Contractors may say, "I can't believe you had this house inspected and they didn't find this problem." There are several reasons for such apparent oversights.

We are generalists, not specialists. The heating contractor may indeed have more heating expertise than we do. This is because we are expected to have heating expertise, plumbing expertise, roofing expertise, electrical expertise and more – the heating contractor is ONLY expected to have heating expertise. Obviously, hindsight is always 20/20. Anyone can say that the basement is prone to flooding when there is 2 inches of water on the floor at that very moment. Predicting the problem is a different story. If we spent half an hour under the kitchen sink or 45 minutes disassembling the furnace, we'd find more problems, too. Unfortunately, the inspection would take several days and cost considerably more.

In conclusion, a home inspection is designed to better your odds. It is not designed to eliminate all risk. For that reason, a home inspection should not be considered an insurance policy. The premium that an insurance company would have to charge for a policy with no deductible, no limit and an indefinite policy period would be considerably more than we charge. It would also not include the value added by the inspection.

We truly appreciate the opportunity to serve you and hope you consider these factors while evaluating our work.



HomeSafe has revolutionized the home inspection process by combining traditional inspection techniques with powerful infrared and acoustic technologies. **HomeSafe** is a pioneer in home safety inspections with its innovative Home Protection Plan, including Child, Fire, and Adult Senior Safety Inspections as well as Security and Mold Inspections. **HomeSafe's** unique application of technology was initially developed at the University of Mississippi's National Center for Physical Acoustics as part of a project for funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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