

Safe and Sound: Value of a Home Inspection



Example

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First Last

Real Estate Name
125 Main Street
Waynesboro, PA 17295

Cell Phone:
(717) 555-1111

Office Phone:
(717) 555-2222

Fax:
(717) 555-3333

Email:
me@something.com

Website:
<http://www.something.com>

Unlike other major purchases like an automobile, your ability to “test drive” a home before you actually live in it is very limited. As a home buyer you seek out a property that fits your aesthetics, household needs and price range. Much of a home’s value (and eventual cost to you) rests in how sound its construction and major systems are – but the untrained eye isn’t able to determine the significance of common home issues that might be apparent during a walk-through.



A home inspection is designed to give you the information you need to make an informed decision about the quality and current condition of a home. Armed with information from your home inspection, you can make a smart decision about whether you accept the home as it is, if you’d be willing to buy it under certain conditions (such as the sellers addressing certain issues before closing), or if you should keep shopping for the right property.

The inspection reviews the condition of the home’s structure (foundation, roof, walls, interior and exterior) and major systems (electrical, plumbing, air and heating systems) so you can determine what work the home needs and anticipate repairs you’d need to do to maintain a safe and

habitable property. Some common items a home inspection will identify include the following:

- Foundation: Does it show cracks, settling, or moisture intrusion?
- Structure: Do the roof, walls, exterior, and foundation support the property?
- Roof: Do the roof and gutters adequately divert rain from the house?
- Exterior: Are siding materials water resistant? Is their condition sufficient?
- Interior: Are walls, floors, stairways, and ventilation in sufficient shape?
- Plumbing: What type of piping distributes water in the house? Are there signs of leakage, drips, or clogs?
- Electrical system: What sort of electrical system does the house have and does the home have sufficient supply for modern appliances?
- Heating and air conditioning: Are heating and air conditioning systems operational, or are there signs of condensation and poor ventilation?

Of course, a home inspection isn’t just for new buyers. Many home owners arrange inspections to help them assess which elements of their home need maintenance attention. Sellers also arrange inspections so they can assess their home’s condition and make repairs or better understand what price to place on their property. Because a home has many different components with different lifespans, a home’s systems require ongoing maintenance and examination.

Buyers, sellers, and owners can all use inspection data to keep track of their home’s condition. Inspections help answer many questions. Is this an older home that has, over time, been updated with newer materials? Does the property have updated electrical wiring? Is it a newer property made with sensitive materials, such as synthetic stucco? If the home is in a moist climate, is there evidence of water penetration? If the home is in a dry climate, is there evidence of insect infestation or a risk of fire? Are there any signs of deterioration? Is the foundation settling? How is the roof holding up?

Inspections answer these questions and many more so that buyers, sellers, and owners can better understand a property.

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1-800-309-6753