

What You Can & Should Expect from Inspecting the Home You Buy

Once you get the home you want under contract, you should have it professionally inspected for hidden defects. Hopefully your agent has a list of several trusted inspectors for you to interview.

When a new inspector asks me to add him to the list of those inspectors I recommend to clients, I ask for a sample report and ask several qualifying questions.

Hand written inspection reports and reports that utilize a simple checklist are not acceptable to me. I want a narrative report, in which the inspector describes each discovered problem in his or her own words.

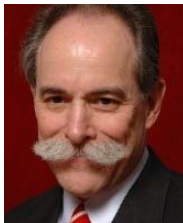
The inspector should have a digital camera and include photos of each problem next to his description of it.

I like the report to be composed onsite and emailed to my buyer (and me) as a PDF the same day as the inspection.

I want an inspector to have and use two important tools. One is a carbon monoxide probe to use when inspecting forced air furnaces. With it and a borescope (fiber optic light and camera), the inspector can determine whether the all-important heat exchanger deep inside the unit might be cracked and emitting carbon monoxide into the home. If cracked, it can't be fixed. The furnace needs to be replaced.

In Memoriam: Oliver Frasca

The real estate industry lost one of its most noted and colorful members this week when Oliver Frasca died in a plane crash near his airport home in Erie. I considered Oliver a friend and attended several of his famous BBQ's in his hangar, where he would play the keyboard for his own band. He gave me and my clients valuable legal advice on more than one occasion and he frequently gave feedback on this column, which he received by email. His CE classes were extremely popular for both his knowledge of the subject matter and his great humor. As counsel to 24 Realtor associations, he was invaluable for his advice and for his staunch advocacy of the Realtor brand. He'll be missed.



REAL ESTATE TODAY



By **JIM SMITH, Realtor®**

Another important tool is a device to detect moisture within walls. If you can see water stains on a wall or ceiling, this device can tell the inspector whether there is moisture beneath the surface. If no moisture is detected, you'll still want to get an explanation of the stains.

A third device which I'll start asking for is a black light for detecting pet urine within wall-to-wall carpeting. Just last week a client closed on a home and hired a carpet cleaning company which, by using a black light, detected widespread pet urine in the basement carpeting.

The seller had not disclosed that there was more than occasional pet presence in the house. If the inspector had used a black light during inspection, we could have made carpet replacement a key demand, but we didn't.

One inspector I recommend frequently does have a black light, but I have learned that inspecting for pet urine in carpets is beyond the scope of a normal inspection — which means you can't assume he will test for it, you must request it. I have a black light for this purpose.

Another item "beyond the scope" of a normal inspection is the sprinkler system. During watering season, perhaps you could test it yourself. Failing that, you could include among your inspection demands, "Seller shall demonstrate to Buyer's satisfaction that the sprinkler system is in working condition." If the unit is winterized and it's warm enough, you could ask about de-winterizing, testing and re-winterizing the system. Otherwise, you could rephrase the above sentence to read, "Seller represents that the sprinkler system is in working condition." That way you would have a basis for requesting repairs in the spring if it doesn't work right.

This Week's Featured Golden Real Estate Listings



Table Mountain Heights is a subdivision of 24 four-plexes located on the north slope of North Table Mountain. This is unit #10, located in the building known as **18288 W. 58th Place**. It's a 2-story unit with two bedrooms and 2½ bathrooms. All kitchen appliances and washer & dryer are included. It has a 1-car attached garage plus a reserved parking space directly across from the entrance shown above. You'll enjoy the gas fireplace and the enclosed private patio. **Open this Sunday, 1-4 pm.**

Don't miss this charming home at **28 Pinon Circle** in the desirable Missouri Lakes subdivision with its three stocked fishing lakes & easy access. This great corner lot has nice trees & privacy and is only 2 miles from Black Hawk's casinos & entertainment. A 3-bed/2-bath home, it has 1,800 finished square feet and a 1-car oversized attached garage. Enjoy the fenced yard, rock outcroppings, natural gas heat, cozy freestanding gas fireplace, and views of the Continental Divide from the wrap-around deck.



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