



A home inspection is the best way to learn about the overall condition of the home

Buying a home may well be the largest financial investment you will ever make. Naturally, you will want to know as much as possible about the property before you finalize its purchase at closing.

The first thing you will notice about the house is its architectural style. If you like the way the house looks in its setting and it satisfies your needs as to location, size, and price, you may decide to make a purchase offer. You may want to make your offer contingent upon the home having an acceptable inspection.

Inspection

At this point it is important to turn to a knowledgeable and independent home inspector for advice on the overall condition of the home. The home inspector will examine the house and let you know if the home is structurally sound and if the primary systems are in good working order.

At the time of the inspection you will be given a printed statement setting forth the conditions and limitations under which the inspection is performed. This statement explains that the inspection is visual and of the accessible areas only.

You should accompany the inspector on a tour of the house, discussing the pros and cons of the visible features. After completing the inspection, the inspector will provide you with a written report summarizing what he has found. The inspection report will detail the condition of the principal items inspected and any other items which may be of concern to you.

A professional home inspection report is a valuable thing. It can tell you if and where the house needs work and whether or not you should consider asking for a price concession to cover the cost of necessary repairs. A satisfactory report reaffirms the original asking price.

Value after Purchase

After you purchase your home, keep the inspection report handy. You will want to refer to it as you follow up and repair the conditions that the inspector indicated need attention. The cost of most routine repairs is low. By attending to known problems and performing regular maintenance on your home, you can spread costs out over time and prevent serious problems from occurring.

Warranty

Ask your real estate agent about the availability of a home warranty insurance program. A home warranty policy protects you from the expense of major repair or replacement caused by unexpected mechanical failure of a major system or appliance. For a moderate premium, payable at

closing, you can acquire a policy which protects you for one full year after closing from major repair or replacement bills.

History of Home

It is always a good idea to learn as much as you can about the history of your new home. Did the previous owner have any major remodeling or repair work performed? If so, are there warranties and paperwork that should be passed on to you?

Most homes are usually professionally inspected only when they change ownership, but the average home should be inspected more often than that. The key to protecting your home from expensive repairs is to recognize early warning signals and eliminate the causes before they can do further damage.

