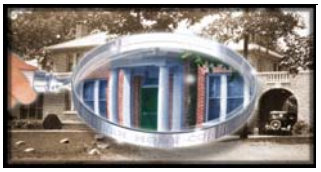

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Seller's Checklist in Preparation for a Home Inspection

I. Accessibility

- Crawl space, make sure crawl space is unlocked and as accessible as possible.
- Attic, remove excessive stored items and insure the attic can be accessed.
- Garage, if possible move stored items to center to expose all exterior walls
- Electrical, insure the main electrical panel is accessible for the cover to be removed. No shelves or stored items in front.
- Interior, walk around the house and insure all rooms are generally accessible.

II. Exterior

- Wood rot is probably the number one problem found on the exterior. If possible have a qualified licensed exterminator perform a Wood Destroying Organism Inspection prior to listing.
- Examine all exterior wood siding and trim. Pay special attention around doors and windows along the bottom edges of the surrounding trim, jambs and door core.
- Check all exterior doors by opening them and examining the jambs and door cores on both the hinge and latch sides. If you have double French doors, open both sides of the door and examine the door core on the hinge sides along with the jambs.
- If you have wood or clad windows, open each one and make sure there is no wood rot in the sills.
- Look under the eaves for water stains and wood rot.
- Note any excessive cracking on the exterior and if there is, consult with a Structural Engineer.
- Look at all of the surrounding trees and make sure there are no dead or dying trees close to the house. If so have them removed.
- Walk around the house from a distance and objectively look at the entire house and note anything out of the ordinary.

III. Foundation & Crawl Space

- Do you have a slab, crawl space, basement or a combination?

Identifying a crawl space:

- Check for HVAC grills in the floor.
- Check for foundation vents on the foundation wall.
- Check for access doors to a crawl space.

Slab potential problems:

- Walk around the house and view the exposed concrete slab
- Check for excessive cracking and separation of joints between blocks or bricks.
- Check for erosion around the foundation.
- Insure there is a minimum of 4 inches of clearance from the top of the soil to the bottom of any exterior cladding, siding or stucco.
- Crawl space problems. **The crawl space represents the most potential for major problems, surprises and "deal killers". If you have a crawl space it is strongly recommended that you have the crawl space fully inspected prior to listing your home. Problems that occur within a crawl space can encompass everything from wood rot, pest infestation, electrical issues, plumbing issues, HVAC issues and ductwork issues**.

IV. Roof & Attic

Roof Shingles

- Three tab regular asphalt, fiberglass roofing shingles have an average life of 15-20 years.
- Dimensional, architectural shingles have an average life of 20-25 years.

- Most lenders and insurance companies are requiring a minimum of five (5) years of remaining life.
- How old is your roof? Do you have a record of the installation date and who did the work?
- Have all roof debris removed.
- Clean all gutters and downspouts.
- Are all gutters properly sloped toward the down spouts?

Attic

- Insure attic is accessible.
- If you have any moisture stains on your ceiling, chances are there is wood rot in the roof decking from a leak.
- Check around all chimneys for leaking and wood rot.
- Check around all plumbing stacks for leaking
- Insulation, check for coverage above all heated and cooled areas. Pay special attention to any vertical walls that should be insulated with fiberglass batts.

V. Plumbing

- Water heater, age, corrosion, leaks around valves? Water heater average life expectancy is 12-15 years.
- Supply lines, check for Polybutelyne piping if your house was built in the early 1990's. Check under sinks and at the water heater. Go to www.pbpipe.com for more information if you suspect you have Polybutelyne pipes.
- Septic tank, if you are on septic have the system pumped and inspected by a licensed Septic Tank installer. Have the inspection available.

VI. Heating & Cooling

- HVAC heat pump systems normally last 12-15 years. How old is your unit?
- Have the system serviced and checked by a licensed HVAC technician. Keep the record of the service and any comments the technician has.
- Insure the technician checks all ducts for leakage.
- If you have a furnace, check for proper clearances around all vents pipes.

VII. Electrical

- Has anyone other than a licensed Electrician done any wiring on your home? If so, it is recommended that the wiring be reviewed by an Electrician.
- Is the electrical panel a breaker system. If you have fuses then an update may be required prior to closing due to insurance requirements.
- If your home is older and has two pronged outlets, have any been replaced with three pronged without grounding? If so you should return them to two pronged type.

VIII. Interior

- Check all entry doors for wood rot and ease of opening and closing.
- Check all Interior doors for opening and closing. Insure they all latch.
- Check all windows for opening, closing and locking. Are any fogged?
- Check interior walls and ceilings. Moisture stains should be further investigated.
- Check interior floor coverings for damage and stains.
- Fireplaces should be cleaned annually by a licensed chimney sweep. Keep records for the inspection.
- Check for mantel clearances from the opening of the fireplace.
- If a gas log set is in use insure they operate properly.
- Handrails on stairs should be tight.
- Smoke detectors outside of all sleeping areas should be tested and new batteries installed.

Miscellaneous items

- Central Vacuum system.
- Bar sinks
- Ice makers

IX. Garages

- Cracks in garage floors are common. Typically unless the cracks are greater than 1/8 inch is width or there is a difference in height from one side to the other there is not a problem.
- Check ceilings and walls for damage.
- Check garage door for damage and opener should operate properly. Will the door automatically retreat if an obstruction is encountered?
- Insure garage is accessible for inspection.

X. Kitchen

- Check kitchen sink for leaks underneath. Check faucet and sprayer for proper operation.
- Range and oven should be checked to insure all elements, lights and controls operate properly.
- Range vent, light and filter should be operational. Check filter for grease and dirt. Most can be run through the dishwasher to clean.
- Check refrigerator seals, especially along the bottom on the hinge side.
- Dishwasher should be operational and properly attached to cabinet.
- Disposal should have a proper splash guard and be operational.

Miscellaneous items that should be checked for proper operation:

- Trash compactor
- Microwave
- Hot water dispenser
- Free standing icemakers, (not inside refrigerator)
- Food processors

Laundry should be checked for

- Proper electrical ground for clothes washer
- Proper dryer venting, is it clean?
- Plumbing connections should be clean and have no leaks.

XI. Baths

- Check under all sinks for leaks.
- Check all sink drain stoppers for proper operation
- Check toilets for leaks around bottom, tank and flapper valve inside tank.
- Check tubs for damage, proper operation of shower valve and drain stoppers.
- Insure the whirlpool is operational.
- Check any shower and tub enclosures for leaks. Pay special attention to the adjacent trim and sheetrock. Some damage may not be obvious.
- Check bath vents for proper operation. If there is no vent insure there is an operational window in the bath.

XII. Pools

- Check pump and equipment for leaks. Is gauge operational?
- What is the condition of the pool surface?
- Diving boards may create an insurance liability.
- Check the surrounding decking for cracks, damage or undermining.
- Fencing around the pool is normally an insurance requirement.

Repairs

It is strongly recommended that all repairs be performed by licensed professionals. Builders, Electricians, Plumbers, Heating & Cooling, Roofers & Pool contractors are all regulated by the State of Florida. You can check license status by going to www.myfloridalicense.com or call 1-850-487-1395. Someone that claims they are "Licensed and Insured" may not have proper licenses or insurance that will protect you.

Summary

The above is in no way a complete inspection process, however if you as a seller take the steps recommended you will minimize the possibility of encountering a "Deal Killer" from the home inspection.