

ILLINOIS BUILDING INSPECTION, Inc.



1425 Blue Heron Drive Crystal Lake, IL 60014

 847 705-6800

Jerry Simon, president

HOUSE INSPECTION REPORT

CLIENT: Cheryl XXXX

INSPECTION ADDRESS: 948 W. XXXXXXX Bolingbrook, Illinois

DATE OF INSPECTION: June 15th, 2008

TIME: 11:45 AM until 2:00 PM

REPORTED BUILDING AGE: 1994

How to Read This Report

MAJOR REPAIR Problems that I think are likely to cost more than \$500.00 to remedy.
(Bear in mind that bids from contractors often vary widely.)

MINOR REPAIR Problems that I think are likely to cost less than \$500.00 to remedy, and regular maintenance items. These include conditions that you might ignore if you were already living in the house.

SAFETY CONCERN These are conditions that are a real threat to safety or health, regardless of costs to remedy.

INVESTIGATE FURTHER Conditions warranting further investigation by a specialist, including conditions that require destructive/invasive inspection, engineering, or analysis beyond the scope of this visual inspection. Often, you'll want to get cost estimates for deficiencies listed in this report.

FYI A general explanation of conditions. Things you may or may not want to act on immediately. Also, you can find some useful suggestions in these sections.

There is a Summary Section at the end of this Report.

CONDITIONS DURING THE INSPECTION	3
ROOF	4
ATTIC	5
GARAGE	7
GRADING NEAR HOUSE	8
EXTERIOR WALLS AND TRIM	9
DRIVEWAY, PORCHES/STOOPS, WALKWAYS	10
PATIOS / DECKS / BALCONIES	10
WINDOWS AND EXTERIOR DOORS	11
BASEMENT/CRAWL SPACE	11
ELECTRICAL SYSTEM	13
PLUMBING SYSTEM	15
HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEM	17
INTERIOR	19
FIREPLACE AND CHIMNEY	21
MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS	23
APPLIANCES	24
SUMMARY	25
END OF REPORT	30

Notes

This report is CONFIDENTIAL, and is for the use and benefit of the client only. It is not intended to be for the benefit of or to be relied upon by any other buyer, lender, title insurance company, or other third party. DO NOT DUPLICATE WITHOUT PERMISSION. Duplication without permission, other than by the Client, is a violation of federal copyright law. **Terms and conditions crucial to interpretation of the report are contained in a separate Pre-Inspection Agreement.** Do not use this report without consulting the Pre-Inspection Agreement.

The report conforms to the standards of practice of both the State of Illinois and the American Society of Home Inspectors®. Components are identified and their apparent condition is reported. The client should consult the terms of the sales contract to determine whether any of the items contained within must be repaired by the seller prior to closing. Reporting on other issues such as cosmetic damage and suggestions for improvements is included for your information only, and should not be relied upon as items that may or may not be repaired under the terms of your Sales Contract. If in doubt, consult your Sales Contract and/or an attorney to explain your rights and obligations under your Sales Contract. The Inspector offers no warranties or representations as to your rights or obligations under any Sales Contract.

I do not operate systems or components that have been shut-down. Items are most often shut-down for very good reasons and/or for safety concerns. For instance, an electrical circuit breaker may be turned off because of an electrical problem. Turning on the breaker could pose a shock or a fire hazard. Again, things are usually off for a good reason. I'll identify any such items in the report and recommend they be inspected when they're up and running.

Conditions During the Inspection

The inspected property is a two-story house atop a partial basement and a partial crawl space.

The buyer was present.

The house was occupied and furnished.

The weather was warm and sunny. The outdoor temperature during the inspection was about 80 degrees.

The soil was very wet. Heavy rains fell the past couple of weeks.



ROOF¹

ROOF AREA: HOUSE AND GARAGE

The roof is constructed of trusses sheathed with OSB (oriented strand board).

The roof type is gable. The roof was examined by walking on it.

The roof covering is asphalt shingles (one apparent layer). Based on visible wear, its age was estimated to be fifteen to sixteen years.

Gutters are installed on the house.

Observations and Recommendations

The roof flashings were observed. The flashings are in functional condition.

The shingle tabs are not properly sealed down; see notes below.

The roof decking felt solid underfoot.

A metal flue chimney was observed. The chimney is in adequate condition.

The interiors of the plumbing stacks were observed. The stacks are in adequate condition, and stack blockage was not observed.

The gutters are properly sloped. I saw minimal corrosion.

Minor Repair Exposed nail heads found at the end-ridge shingles can corrode and may allow leakage. These exposed nail heads should be dabbed with sealant to prevent or arrest corrosion.

Like these already-corroded nail heads...



¹ This report is not intended to be conclusive regarding the lifespan of the roofing system or how long it will remain watertight in the future. Nothing in the inspection of report constitutes a warranty, guarantee, or policy of insurance. I strongly advise you to ask the Seller, point blank: "Has the roof ever leaked?" If it has, you'll want to know when, where, and if repairs were done. All roofs require periodic maintenance to achieve typical life-spans; and, all roofs should be inspected annually.

Minor Repair Many of the shingle nails have popped up and punctured through the shingles above, and the resulting exposed nail heads/shingle damage can allow leakage. Have a roofer repair all such popped nails and damaged shingles.

Like this one...



FYI The roof shingles have lost a pretty good amount of protective granule. This can shorten the expected lifespan of the shingles; lack of an adequate amount of protective granule can allow the sun's destructive ultra-violet rays to attack and deteriorate the shingle matting. Seeing how the roof nails are popping, and seeing that the shingles have lost a pretty good amount of protective granule, you better start budgeting for a new roof covering. Barring a severe hailstorm that could destroy the roof shingles overnight, expect no more than another five years of useful shingle life (you might get more, you might get less — no real way to know — only time will tell; but again, start putting money away to cover the cost of a new roof covering).

This is just some of the lost granule lying in the front gutter...



ATTIC

Description

The attic was entered through the access opening in the hall.

The attic was examined by walking through it.

The attic is insulated with fiberglass.

Ceiling insulation R-value is estimated to be 30. (R-value is the ability to resist the movement of heat. Higher numbers are better. Modern standards usually call for at least R-30 coverage, while R-38 is ideal for this climate.)

(FYI...Wall insulation could not be observed.)

Observations and Recommendations

The condition of readily visible framing elements in the attic is adequate. Roof sheathing and framing were examined for signs of deterioration. None was found.

No structural damage was observed in the readily visible portions of the wood framing in the attic.

Attic ventilation is provided by soffit and pod vents.

Attic ventilation appears to be adequate.

I saw no evidence of leakage in the readily accessible areas.

The insulation is considered adequate for this climate.

Investigate Further Up in the attic, I don't know why part of the roof framing and roof decking was sprayed with white paint (?). It might be a fungicide addressing mold growth. Ask the seller about this. If indeed there was a history of mold growth, find out what was done to eliminate the moisture source that promoted the mold growth in the first place. (If nothing was done to address the moisture source — assuming there was a mold problem — expect to have mold issues again.)



Safety Concern Bird nesting was observed in the attic. Bird droppings can be a source of disease and may represent a serious, even fatal health threat to occupants. Testing to determine if disease is present should be done. If disease is found, cleanup must be done using methods for toxic waste. Costs for cleanup can be significant. Follow up testing should be done after any cleanup. (If no disease is found, cleanup is relatively inexpensive.) For further information, contact a pest control firm or a cleaning company experienced in this type of work.



This nesting...

Minor Repair Have the damaged roof vent fixed (the one where the birds got in the attic).

GARAGE

Description

The house has an attached garage.

The garage wall framing is covered with drywall or other material and is not visible.

The framing in the garage ceiling is covered with drywall or other material and is not visible.

The garage attic was entered through the ceiling scuttle hole.

The garage floor was readily visible.

The garage overhead door is metal.

The door has an automatic opener. The opener has an automatic electric eye to reverse the door when an object crosses the door's path. This is a child-safety feature.

Observations and Recommendations

Garage door safety tips: The garage overhead door is the largest moving object in the house. Operation of the safety mechanisms should be verified monthly. Test the reversing mechanism by lying a 2x4 block of wood flat on the floor and closing the door on the block. The door should reverse. Switches for door openers should be located as high as practical to prevent children from playing with the door. Children should be warned of the potential risk of injury.

Regular lubrication of the garage door tracks, rollers, springs, and mounting hardware is recommended.

The garage door was operated and found to be functional. Hardware fastening together and supporting the door appears to be in adequate condition.

The garage overhead door was checked for proper balance (the door should stay open at any height). The door is balanced.

The “electric eye” beam was found to be functional. The door reversed when it was interrupted.

The framing in the garage attic is in adequate condition. The garage floor has normal cracks.

Safety Concern There is supposed to be a Child Safety Warning Label for the garage overhead door’s automatic opener posted right next to the opener’s control button. The missing warning label should be obtained and posted.

This is what the label looks like...



GRADING NEAR HOUSE

Description

Proper grading is important to keep water away from the foundation. Soil should slope approximately 1 inch per foot in a direction away from the building for at least 6 feet to prevent problems caused by excess water. Excess water here can cause settlement of soil and lead to cracking of foundations and walls and water entry into the building. The water discharged from roof gutters and downspouts should be directed away from the foundation for the same reason.

Observations and Recommendations

The grading around the house is adequate.

EXTERIOR WALLS AND TRIM

Description

The exterior walls are constructed of wood frame. The primary wall cladding on the house is aluminum siding. Trim on the house is primarily wood. Soffits and fascia are constructed of wood.

Observations and Recommendations

The exterior surfaces were observed while walking around the exterior of the house. They were found to be in need of minor repairs; see notes below.

The exterior surfaces have no signs of movement that would indicate significant foundation or other structural movement.

Trim around the house was examined and found to be in need of repairs; see notes below.

The soffits and fascia were found to be in adequate condition.

I looked into the accessible exterior vent hoods to check for bird nesting blockage. The vents are clear.

Minor Repair There are a few areas of loose and/or buckling aluminum siding on the east and back sides of the house.

Minor Repair The wood at the bottom of the (twisted) front porch column is rotted. Have the rotted wood patched or replaced A.S.A.P.; left unchecked, such rot tends to rapidly spread.

Minor Repair Some J-Channel trim is missing on the west face of the fireplace chimney.

Minor Repair Areas of the fireplace corner trim are rotted. Have the rotted wood patched or replaced A.S.A.P.; left unchecked, such rot tends to rapidly spread.

DRIVEWAY, PORCHES/STOOPS, WALKWAYS

Description

The driveway is constructed of asphalt. Walks are constructed of concrete. The front porch is concrete.

Observations and Recommendations

The driveway, walks, and steps are in adequate condition.

I saw typical minor cracks, and there is some slight driveway deterioration at the south end of the drive.

PATIOS / DECKS / BALCONIES

Description

A wooden deck is present.

The deck is very low-to-the-ground and it's skirted; most of the framing under the deck is not visible.

Observations and Recommendations

Major Repair The deck is leaning, in a couple different directions; not just a little, a lot, with sugar on top. I don't know if this can be fixed, or if the deck needs to be completely or partially re-built. Ask a carpenter. Either way, this will likely make for a Major Repair Item.

Safety Concern The metal joist hangers under the deck do not have the proper number of nails installed. The deck should not be used until the missing fasteners are installed.

FYI The top of the deck ledger board is not flashed. This can allow leakage and water damage in the exterior wall cavity behind the ledger. I looked for and didn't see any damage inside behind this area, but the sooner the missing flashing is installed, the better. I don't know if this will be a Major Repair Item or a Minor Repair Item; it could go either way. Talk with a carpenter contractor about what it will take and cost to address this.

Safety Concern The 10” step at the bottom of the deck stairway poses a stumbling/falling hazard (a normal and safe step height should be about 7.5" tall).

WINDOWS AND EXTERIOR DOORS

Description

The windows are a mixture of hung and sliders.

The windows have insulated glass. The exterior doors are metal.

Observations and Recommendations

Doors and random windows were operated and found to be functional.

I didn't see any fogged or cracked window panes.

I didn't see any fogged or cracked sliding door glass panes.

BASEMENT/CRAWL SPACE²

Description

The foundation walls are constructed of poured concrete.

The basement floor is concrete.

The basement columns are steel tubes.

The crawl space floor was not visible; it's completely covered with polyethylene.

The floor structure of the house is conventional wood framing with steel beams.

A sump pump is present in the basement to remove excess water.

An ejector pit containing a water pump is present in the basement. FYI...such a pump cannot be used for a future bath.

² This report reflects conditions that were apparent at the time of the inspection, and includes no predictions on whether or not the basement will eventually get wet. It's impossible for me – or anyone else – to make an accurate long-term prediction. I strongly advise you to ask the Seller, point blank: “Have you ever seen water in the basement? If so, when and how much?”

Observations and Recommendations

Signs of past water entry were not observed in the basement or crawl space.

(Determining whether or not water entry has occurred is often difficult during a one time inspection, particularly if walls are finished or have been recently painted. Almost all basements and crawl spaces suffer from water entry at one time or another.)

The basement has at least one fully-functional escape window present.

The basement floor is in adequate condition; typical cracks are present.

The basement and crawl space foundation walls are in adequate condition; typical, normal cracks were observed.

The ceiling framing is in adequate condition.

The foundation sill plates have problems with their anchor bolts; see notes below.

The sump pump tested as functional.

The water pump in the ejector pit tested as functional.

After running a lot of water about the house, I checked the visible plumbing waste pipes in the basement looking for leaks. None were observed.

Minor Repair The foundation sill plate anchor bolts, which are supposed to hold the house to its concrete foundation, are missing their fastening nuts and washers.

Safety Concern The lid for the ejector pit should be fully sealed to the top of the ejector pit. This will help prevent unhealthy methane gas from entering the house, and it's a child-safety measure.

FYI If a backup ground-water sump pump system is not already installed, or even if a battery powered system is installed, I recommend installing a backup pump that's powered by the municipal water supply. Batteries can leak acid, they require maintenance, and they can even explode. One place to find such a system is at <http://www.radonseal.com/pumps/water-powered-pumps.htm>

Safety Concern I recommend installing protective metal grates atop the exterior basement window wells (child-safety recommendation). Do not rely on plastic well covers to prevent someone from falling into the window well.

Minor Repair Have the debris cleaned out of the basement window wells.

Investigate Further There is a significant pet-urine odor/stench about the basement and the crawl space. You should consult with a cleaning company about what it will take and cost to eliminate the stench (and you should know that such odors can often be difficult, if not impossible, to fully eliminate).

ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

Description

The 120/240 volt, 200 amp service enters the house from underground.

The main service panel is located in the basement. The main panel contains circuit breakers.

The main disconnect is a 200 amp circuit breaker located in the main panel.

Service grounding connections were observed at a metal water pipe.

I didn't find any sub-panels.

The readily visible wiring is copper in rigid and flexible metal pipe and some copper in non-metallic sheathed cable.

Receptacles are the modern three-slot grounded type.

Smoke detectors were observed outside the sleeping areas only. Additional devices are recommended; see notes below.

Observations and Recommendations

Electrical systems require regular maintenance for safety reasons. I recommend that you have a licensed electrician perform annual inspection and maintenance.

I inspected the interior of the main electrical panelboard. I saw problems inside the panelboard; see notes below.

I tested a random number of receptacles using a testing device. Most tested as being wired correctly and grounded; see notes below about the ones that are not properly wired.

Light switches and permanently installed light fixtures were tested. I found them to be in adequate condition.

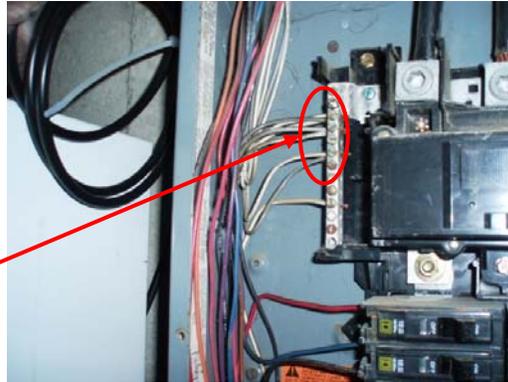
Electrical ground-fault devices tested functional using a testing device.

The ceiling fans were checked for proper grounding, operation and balance. Problems were found; see notes below.

Investigate Further I saw non-metallic sheathed cable wiring up in the house attic. I don't know if the local code permits the use of this type of wiring, but since the rest of the dwelling has wiring enclosed in metal pipe, I'm guessing they don't. I recommend you check with the local code authority to see if they permit the use of non-metallic sheathed cable wiring. If they don't, an electrician should replace this wiring with code-approved wiring.

Safety Concern Inside the main electrical panelboard, neutral wires are improperly double-tapped off the left-side neutral bus bar. Such multiple-tapped wires can loosen and over-heat, posing a fire hazard. Have an electrician eliminate the double-tapping.

Here...



Safety Concern I saw electrical boxes with open knockout holes. Electrical boxes should fully enclose the wiring inside to contain sparks or arcs that may occur during an electrical short; this is a fire-prevention item. Also, if the box is readily accessible, children tend to stick their fingers in such open holes, posing a shock hazard. And, mice like to get inside electrical boxes through such holes and ingest the wiring insulation; this would pose a fire hazard. All open holes should be capped. Box locations: up in the garage attic.

Safety Concern One or more electrical receptacles were noted as being improperly wired with reversed-polarity, posing shock hazards. For instance, should one turn off a lamp that's plugged into one of these receptacles, the lamp socket would remain energized, and one could easily get shocked when changing a light bulb. Receptacle locations: on the south basement wall, a few feet right of the main sewer piping/sewer cleanout.

Safety Concern The ceiling fans located in the master bedroom and in the SE & NE bedrooms are lacking required safety grounding, posing a potential shock hazard. An electrician should provide grounding for these three fans.

Safety Concern I strongly recommend that you have an electrician install hard-wired smoke detectors in the bedrooms (worst case, battery-operated ones).

Safety Concern The bond strap is missing on the electrical pipe that contains the electrical system ground wire. Lack of the bond strap poses a potential shock hazard. Have the missing bond strap installed A.S.A.P.

This is where the pipe-strap is missing...



Safety Concern At the water softener, the plastic head of the water softener interrupts bonding (connection together) of metal water piping. Metal water piping should be electrically continuous. This reduces the chance of shock in the event of a fault. A bonding jumper should be installed here to restore the bonding of the metal water piping.

Safety Concern The protective cover is missing from one or more electrical receptacles exposing live conductors. This shock and fire hazard can and should be eliminated by installing a new cover. Locations: on the north basement wall, behind the refrigerator.

FYI You don't want to plug refrigerators into GFCI-type electrical receptacles like they're doing at this house down in the basement; if the receptacles experience nuisance tripping, as such are prone to do, you might have a lot of food spoil (or perhaps worse, have to drink warm beer).

Note: The inspection does not include low voltage systems, telephone wiring, intercoms, alarm systems, cable TV wiring, timers or the operation of smoke detectors.

PLUMBING SYSTEM

Description

The water is supplied by the municipal system.

The waste system is municipal sewers.

Readily visible plumbing supply pipes are copper.

Readily visible waste pipes are PVC plastic.

The gas-fired 40-gallon water heater is located in the basement.

I estimate the age of the water heater to be four years old.

A temperature pressure relief valve is present on the water heater.

The main shut off valve for the water supply piping was found in the basement.

The main sewer cleanout is located in the basement.

The main gas shut-off is located at the exterior gas meter.

Observations and Recommendations

The readily visible supply piping system is in functional condition.

The readily visible drain piping system is in functional condition.

A lot of water was run through all fixtures and drains.

Adequate functional flow was observed.

Adequate functional drainage was observed.

Toilets were flushed multiple times and all properly evacuated. The toilets are secure to the floors. Leakage was not observed.

The main sewer cleanout cap was not removed; the location of the cap prevents seeing much of anything in the sewer line.

The readily accessible gas lines were checked by more-than-gently pushing/pulling on them. The lines were secure. I also didn't smell any gas leakage (and I'm very sensitive to the mercaptin that's added to natural gas so one can smell leakage).

All fixtures were operated. All fixtures were functional.

(Your main water shut-off valve and shut-off valves under sinks, if present, are not operated. Even if the valves are only a few years old, they tend to seize-up and don't readily operate. Many don't operate at all. Ones that still operate tend to leak when opened and closed. If you want to know if these valves work, have the seller demonstrate such. If shut-off valves are not present under the sinks — common in many homes and condominiums — you should consider having them installed; newer-style valves have much improved functionability.)

Hose faucets were checked for flow and leakage. The faucets are in adequate condition.

Hot water was present at all fixtures on the correct side of the fixture.

The temperature of the hot water was 120 degrees. The temperature is within the safe range.

Be aware of the risk of scalding from water temperatures above 120° F. The risk is especially acute for infants, children, and the elderly. Water temperatures should never be set higher than 120° F.

The temperature pressure relief valve on the water heater should be tested upon moving in and on a regular basis thereafter. This is an important safety device that prevents the water heater from exploding in the rare event of a defect in the built in operating and safety controls. I do not test these valves.

I saw problems with the water heater flue pipe; see notes below.

I could not observe the water heater burner; this heater has a sealed combustion area.

Tile walls in the tub(s) and/or shower(s) were more-than-gently tapped to test for signs of deterioration. None were observed. The tile walls are in adequate condition.

Adequate bath ventilation was observed (operable fans or windows).

Minor Repair The aluminum water heater flue piping should be replaced with proper, galvanized sheet metal flue piping. (Aluminum flue piping tends to corrode and rust-through in a fairly short period of time, and a rusted-out flue would pose a carbon monoxide health hazard.)

HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEM

Description

The heating system for the entire house, located in the basement, consists of a gas-fired hot air furnace.

The heating system capacity is 100,000 BTU's.

The heating system is estimated to be fifteen years old.

The air conditioning system for the entire house is a straight cool split-system.

The estimated size of the system is three tons.

The estimated age of the cooling system is ten years old.

Observations and Recommendations

Note: The report should not be read as a prediction of the remaining lifespan of the system. Typical lifespans of equipment may range from 10 - 20 years, but there are many exceptions to this. Most air conditioning compressors are warranted for only 5 years. Be advised that defects or failure can occur at any time, and that the inspection in no way lessens the risk or likelihood of repairs or replacements being needed at any time in the future, including the day after the inspection. Any mechanical equipment can fail without warning at any time.

I recommended that all equipment be serviced at least once a year. Regular service is very important for efficient operation and to achieve maximum lifespan. Filters in forced air systems should be changed monthly.

Combustion System:

The supply of combustion air appears adequate.

The flue draft was observed during operation and found to be deficient; see notes below.

The condition of the flue is otherwise adequate.

The induced draft fan was observed running during inspection. The fan is functional. The fan housing gasket has a problem, though. See notes below.

Burners were observed during operation and are clear in adequate condition.

The flame was observed during operation. The flame is normal.

Furnace clearance to combustibles was observed and is adequate. Be sure to maintain clearance from combustibles for safety reasons.

The blower motor properly functioned. The blower wheel vanes are clean.

The heat exchanger is the chamber in the furnace where combustion takes place. The heat exchanger separates the house air and the combustion air. When cracks or holes develop in the heat exchanger, potentially toxic gases can mix with the house air. Replacement of the furnace is required at that time as replacement is not practical or cost effective. The average life span is twenty years. The presence of holes or cracks usually cannot be determined during a house inspection; the furnace would have to be taken apart by a heating technician to be sure if indeed holes or cracks are present, and such is beyond the scope of this visual inspection. The heat exchanger could not be examined due to configuration of the furnace. Condition is unknown and specifically excluded from the inspection and report.

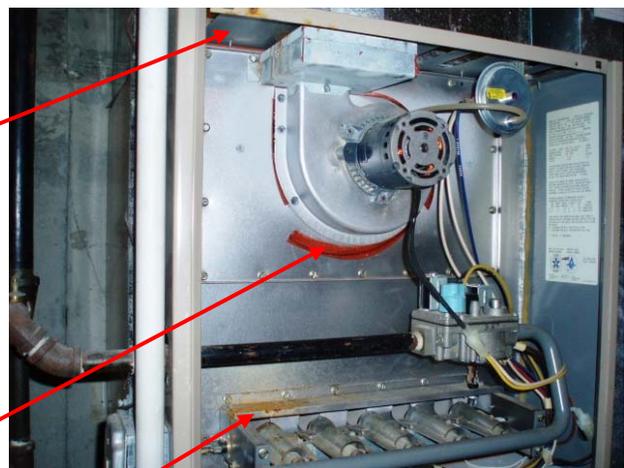
The fan limit switch was not tested during inspection. It's an internal, inaccessible type switch.

Investigate Further Flue gases have been cooling and condensing inside the furnace's flue piping before the flue gases properly and fully vent up and out of the furnace flue pipe. This condensate has been leaking out of the flue piping above the furnace draft inducer. This leakage can damage the furnace components. A heating technician should be consulted about the best way to eliminate this leakage. Sometimes, building an insulated chase (box) up in the attic around the flue pipe will keep the flue pipe warm enough so the flue gases fully vent before they cool and condense inside the pipe; sometimes not. Again, consult with a heating technician. The technician should also check for moisture-damaged furnace components.

This is where I can see some of the rust on the furnace due to the leakage mentioned above...

Investigate Further The gasket behind the furnace draft inducer housing has fallen out of proper position. A heating contractor should check this and repair or replace the furnace as needed.

This orange gasket...



This rust is also from the flue condensate leakage...

Central Air Conditioning:

The central air conditioner was operated during the inspection using the normal operating controls. The temperature differential was measured and found to be 23 degrees. This is the number of degrees the system is cooling (or heating) the condominium air. Normal range for this number is 16-22 degrees when operating the system during hot weather, higher when ambient temperatures are lower.

The suction line at the air handler was found to be cold and sweating which is normal. The liquid line was found to be warm which is normal.

The RLA (Running Load Amps) rating for the condensing unit is 18.6 amps (total for fan and compressor). The unit drew 10.2 amps. This rough check is within the normal operating range (even a bit lower than expected; good news).

Fins on the condensing unit were examined and found to be clean and in functional condition.

The evaporator coil is sealed inside the supply plenum and could not be observed.

Motors and fans were found to be in functional condition. No unusual noises were observed.

The condensate drain line was inspected where readily visible. The drain is functional.

Minor Repair The air conditioning condensing unit is out of level (not a lot, but enough to warrant fixing as a leaning condenser can promote condenser component damage). The condenser should be leveled.

Ductwork:

Filters should be cleaned or changed on a regular basis. This helps keep the system and the house clean and reduces operating costs.

Air flow was noted to all of the accessible registers.

Visible ductwork was observed where readily accessible and found to be in adequate condition.

INTERIOR

Description

The walls and ceilings are drywall.

Ceilings are supported by floor joists and roof trusses.

Floors are wood and carpet and tile.

Interior cabinets are wood.

Observations and Recommendations

Minor cracks are found on interior surfaces in all buildings and are typically cosmetic in nature. This type of cracking is usually caused by settlement, shrinkage of building components or thermal expansion and contraction. Small cracks of this type are not mentioned in the report.

Larger than normal cracks suggesting significant structural movement were not observed.

I cannot determine the condition of floors underneath carpet and other coverings. The condition of concealed floors is specifically excluded from the inspection and report.

Walls were found to be in adequate condition.

Stained ceilings were observed; see notes below.

Interior floors were found to be in adequate condition.

Interior cabinets were found to be in adequate condition.

Interior doors were found to be in adequate condition.

FYI There are moisture stains on the master bedroom ceiling. The stains tested *dry* with an electronic moisture meter (and we've had a lot of rain lately). I don't think the stains are from roof leakage; I think the stains might be related to the bird nesting in the attic which is directly above the stains. Keep this in mind when addressing the cleanup of the attic bird nesting, and know that the drywall will have to be painted, patched, or replaced.



The staining is up here...

Stairways:

The main stairway is in adequate condition. The riser heights and tread widths are consistent (within 3/8"), a handrailing is present, and the headroom is adequate.

The basement stairway has unsafe conditions, posing stumbling and/or falling hazards. See items listed below.

I more-than-gently pushed on the stair handrails and the side protective railings; the rails and railings are secure.

Safety Concern The basement stairway has inconsistent riser (step) heights. The top step is over an inch taller than the rest of the step heights. This poses a stumbling/falling hazard (step heights should be consistent within 3/8's of an inch). Have the stairway re-built so as to eliminate this hazard (or have the *added* first level flooring removed, this being the reason for the tall upper step). Please don't ignore this; falling on steps and stairs is one of the prime causes of injury in a house.

Safety Concern The handrail at the bottom section of the basement stairway does not meet "graspability" requirements (it's a 2x4). One should be able to wrap their hand around a handrail for safety reasons. I recommend the installation of a suitable handrail. Again, falling on steps and stairs is one of the primary causes of injury in the house.

This "handrail"...



FIREPLACE AND CHIMNEY

Description: Family Room Fireplace

The chimney is prefabricated metal in a wood frame structure. The chimney has a spark arrestor.

The fireplace is a metal prefabricated unit. The fireplace has a damper.

A gas-log set was observed.

Observations and Recommendations

The chimney and fireplace were examined visually. A fire was not started (unless gas-logs are installed...those were started if present). No comment can be made on the efficiency or operation of wood fires.

Chimneys cannot be fully inspected as part of a house inspection. The interiors of flues and chimneys cannot be reliably observed from the fireplace or roof. Areas that are visible are usually covered with soot.

The readily visible areas of the chimney are in adequate condition.

The conditions of the readily visible areas of the fireplace are deficient; see notes below.

I probed the inside of the firebox for excessive corrosion; none was observed.

The damper is in functional condition.

The flue was observed from the firebox. The readily visible areas of the flue appear to be in adequate condition, however a more invasive inspection is recommended; see notes below.

A hearth extension of adequate size was observed.

I more-than-gently pushed and pulled on the fireplace mantle; the mantle is secure.

Safety Concern The fireplace manufacturer put a tag on the fireplace that says the fireplace is intended for use with solid wood fuel only. Don't use this wood-burning fireplace until the installed gas log-set is removed.

This tag...



Investigate Further The National Fire Protection Association recommends that a Level II inspection be performed whenever a house is sold. This involves the inspection of the interior of the fireplace flue using a video camera. I recommend you contact a qualified fireplace inspection company to perform this inspection. Such an inspection could reveal dangerous fire hazards that can't be seen by simply looking up into the flue chimney. (The chimney should first be swept/cleaned.)

Maintenance It is important that a fireplace flue be cleaned on a regular basis to prevent a buildup of creosote in the flue, which can catch fire. I recommended that the flue be examined and cleaned if needed before use each year.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Observations and Recommendations

Investigate Further The following areas had a very high amount of storage and clutter present, greatly limiting what I could see during the inspection: the perimeter basement walls. These areas should be inspected when the house is vacant. At a minimum, the Client should perform a diligent final walk-through, with special attention paid to these areas.

For example...



***FYI* A Word about Mold and Other Indoor Air Contaminates**

Susceptibility to mold and other contaminants has become an issue for some homeowners. There are no acceptable or unacceptable levels of mold contamination set by the Center for Disease Control, the Environmental Protection Administration, or any other independent authoritative source.

If you have concerns about mold or other indoor air quality issues I recommend that you contact specialists in the field such as the CDC, the EPA and other experts.

For further information regarding the issues of mold and other indoor air contaminants I recommend that you visit the Center for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/asthma/factsheets/molds/default.htm> and the Environmental Protection Administration at http://www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/i-e-r_plan.html

APPLIANCES

Description

Per the Inspection Agreement, I inspect the built-in appliances only. The appliances were inspected by operating the appliance using the normal operating controls as you would under every day use. I inspected these appliances by turning them on briefly, save for the dishwasher (if present). Dishwashers are run through a full cycle and afterward checked for leakage by removing the bottom panel and looking under the dishwasher. Extensive testing of timers, thermostats, and other controls is not performed. No report can be made regarding the effectiveness of any appliances. (For example, it is impossible to thoroughly check a washer and dryer without a load of clothes.) The inspection only determines whether or not the appliances run.

Observations and Recommendations

Dishwasher: Operated during inspection, found to be functional.

Microwave/Exhaust Fan: Operated during inspection, found to be functional.

Disposer: Operated during inspection, found to be functional.

And, while I only check built-in appliances, it was hard not to notice that:

Safety Concern The anti-tip bracket that prevents the range from tipping over is not installed. The bracket should be installed to prevent the possibility of injury. See the manufacturer's installation instructions for details.

Discovery of recalled appliances and other products is outside the scope of this inspection. For the latest information on recalls, visit <http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/recallsdesc.htm#CP> and <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prerel.html>

Dryer Maintenance: Adequate venting of your dryer is a priority. **Vents clogged with lint, or crushed or kinked vents can and do cause fires.** The vent should be cleaned of lint and debris at least twice a year. I recommend you clean this vent upon moving into the house. During a typical house inspection, I usually can't observe or evaluate any of the dryer venting. Often, the dryer blocks my view of the vent. In many if not most cases, much of the vent is hidden by finish materials (such as wallboard), and insulation.

I recommend that you make sure your dryer vent is made of proper materials, and is properly installed. You should do this before closing, when you have a good opportunity to observe the dryer vent. Here's why I make the recommendations: The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that in 1997, there were 16,700 fires, 30 deaths and 430 injuries associated with clothes dryers. Some of these fires occur when lint builds up in the filter or in the exhaust duct. Under certain conditions, when lint blocks the flow of air, excessive heat build-up can cause a fire in some dryers.

To prevent fires, closely follow manufacturers' instructions for new installations. Most manufacturers specify the use of a rigid or flexible metal duct to provide a minimum restriction of airflow. The duct joints should not be secured with screws; screw tips can trap lint. If metal duct is not available at the retailer where the dryer was purchased, check other locations such as hardware or builder supply stores. If you are having the dryer installed, insist upon metal duct unless the installer has verified that the manufacturer permits the use of plastic duct. Source: CPSC Document #5022.

End, summary follows.

Inspector: Jerry Simon, president Illinois Building Inspection, Inc.



Illinois License #450.0000114 Expires 11-30-08

SUMMARY

1.	Minor Repair Many of the shingle nails have popped up and punctured through the shingles above, and the resulting exposed nail heads/shingle damage can allow leakage. Have a roofer repair all such popped nails and damaged shingles.
2.	Minor Repair Exposed nail heads found at the end-ridge shingles can corrode and may allow leakage. These exposed nail heads should be dabbed with sealant to prevent or arrest corrosion.
3.	Safety Concern Bird nesting was observed in the attic. Bird droppings can be a source of disease and may represent a serious, even fatal health threat to occupants. Testing to determine if disease is present should be done. If disease is found, cleanup must be done using methods for toxic waste. Costs for cleanup can be <u>significant</u> . Follow up testing should be done after any cleanup. (If no disease is found, cleanup is relatively inexpensive.) For further information, contact a pest control firm or a cleaning company experienced in this type of work.
4.	Minor Repair Have the damaged roof vent fixed (the one where the birds got in the attic).

5.	Investigate Further Up in the attic, I don't know why part of the roof framing and roof decking was sprayed with white paint (?). It might be a fungicide addressing mold growth. Ask the seller about this. If indeed there was a history of mold growth, find out what was done to eliminate the moisture source that promoted the mold growth in the first place. (If nothing was done to address the moisture source — assuming there was a mold problem — expect to have mold issues again.)
6.	Safety Concern There is supposed to be a Child Safety Warning Label for the garage overhead door's automatic opener posted right next to the opener's control button. The missing warning label should be obtained and posted.
7.	Minor Repair There are a few areas of loose and/or buckling aluminum siding on the east and back sides of the house.
8.	Minor Repair The wood at the bottom of the (twisted) front porch column is rotted. Have the rotted wood patched or replaced A.S.A.P.; left unchecked, such rot tends to rapidly spread.
9.	Minor Repair Some J-Channel trim is missing on the west face of the fireplace chimney.
10.	Minor Repair Areas of the fireplace corner trim are rotted. Have the rotted wood patched or replaced A.S.A.P.; left unchecked, such rot tends to rapidly spread.
11.	Safety Concern The metal joist hangers under the deck do not have the proper number of nails installed. The deck should not be used until the missing fasteners are installed.
12.	FYI---- The top of the deck ledger board is not flashed. This can allow leakage and water damage in the exterior wall cavity behind the ledger. I looked for and didn't see any damage inside behind this area, but the sooner the missing flashing is installed, the better. I don't know if this will be a Major Repair Item or a Minor Repair Item; it could go either way. Talk with a carpenter contractor about what it will take and cost to address this.
13.	Safety Concern The 10" step at the bottom of the deck stairway poses a stumbling/falling hazard (a normal and safe step height should be about 7.5" tall).
14.	Major Repair The deck is leaning, in a couple different directions; not just a little, a lot, with sugar on top. I don't know if this can be fixed, or if the deck needs to be completely or partially re-built. Ask a carpenter. Either way, this will likely make for a Major Repair Item.
15.	Minor Repair The foundation sill plate anchor bolts, which are supposed to hold the house to its concrete foundation, are missing their fastening nuts and washers.
16.	Safety Concern The lid for the ejector pit should be fully sealed to the top of the ejector pit. This will help prevent unhealthy methane gas from entering the house, and it's a child-safety measure.

17.	Safety Concern I recommend installing protective metal grates atop the exterior basement window wells (child-safety recommendation). Do not rely on plastic well covers to prevent someone from falling into the window well.
18.	Minor Repair Have the debris cleaned out of the basement window wells.
19.	Investigate Further There is a <u>significant</u> pet-urine odor/stench about the basement and the crawl space. You should consult with a cleaning company about what it will take and cost to eliminate the stench (and you should know that such odors can often be difficult, if not impossible, to fully eliminate).
20.	Safety Concern Inside the main electrical panelboard, neutral wires are improperly double-tapped off the left-side neutral bus bar. Such multiple-tapped wires can loosen and over-heat, posing a fire hazard. Have an electrician eliminate the double-tapping.
21.	Safety Concern I saw electrical boxes with open knockout holes. Electrical boxes should fully enclose the wiring inside to contain sparks or arcs that may occur during an electrical short; this is a fire-prevention item. Also, if the box is readily accessible, children tend to stick their fingers in such open holes, posing a shock hazard. And, mice like to get inside electrical boxes through such holes and ingest the wiring insulation; this would pose a fire hazard. All open holes should be capped. Box locations: up in the garage attic.
22.	Investigate Further I saw non-metallic sheathed cable wiring up in the house attic. I don't know if the local code permits the use of this type of wiring, but since the rest of the dwelling has wiring enclosed in metal pipe, I'm guessing they don't. I recommend you check with the local code authority to see if they permit the use of non-metallic sheathed cable wiring. If they don't, an electrician should replace this wiring with code-approved wiring.
23.	Safety Concern One or more electrical receptacles were noted as being improperly wired with reversed-polarity, posing shock hazards. For instance, should one turn off a lamp that's plugged into one of these receptacles, the lamp socket would remain energized, and one could easily get shocked when changing a light bulb. Receptacle locations: on the south basement wall, a few feet right of the main sewer piping/sewer cleanout.
24.	Safety Concern The ceiling fans located in the master bedroom and in the SE & NE bedrooms are lacking required safety grounding, posing a potential shock hazard. An electrician should provide grounding for these three fans.
25.	Safety Concern I strongly recommend that you have an electrician install hard-wired smoke detectors in the bedrooms (worst case, battery-operated ones).

26.	Safety Concern The bond strap is missing on the electrical pipe that contains the electrical system ground wire. Lack of the bond strap poses a potential shock hazard. Have the missing bond strap installed A.S.A.P.
27.	Safety Concern At the water softener, the plastic head of the water softener interrupts bonding (connection together) of metal water piping. Metal water piping should be electrically continuous. This reduces the chance of shock in the event of a fault. A bonding jumper should be installed here to restore the bonding of the metal water piping.
28.	Safety Concern The protective cover is missing from one or more electrical receptacles exposing live conductors. This shock and fire hazard can and should be eliminated by installing a new cover. Locations: on the north basement wall, behind the refrigerator.
29.	Minor Repair The aluminum water heater flue piping should be replaced with proper, galvanized sheet metal flue piping. (Aluminum flue piping tends to corrode and rust-through in a fairly short period of time, and a rusted-out flue would pose a carbon monoxide health hazard.)
30.	Investigate Further Flue gases have been cooling and condensing inside the furnace's flue piping before the flue gases properly and fully vent up and out of the furnace flue pipe. This condensate has been leaking out of the flue piping above the furnace draft inducer. This leakage can damage the furnace components. A heating technician should be consulted about the best way to eliminate this leakage. Sometimes, building an insulated chase (box) up in the attic around the flue pipe will keep the flue pipe warm enough so the flue gases fully vent before they cool and condense inside the pipe; sometimes not. Again, consult with a heating technician. The technician should also check for moisture-damaged furnace components.
31.	Investigate Further The gasket behind the furnace draft inducer housing has fallen out of proper position. A heating contractor should check this and repair or replace the furnace as needed.
32.	Minor Repair The air conditioning condensing unit is out of level (not a lot, but enough to warrant fixing as a leaning condenser can promote condenser component damage). The condenser should be leveled.
33.	FYI---- There are moisture stains on the master bedroom ceiling. The stains tested *dry* with an electronic moisture meter (and we've had a lot of rain lately). I don't think the stains are from roof leakage; I think the stains might be related to the bird nesting in the attic which is <u>directly</u> above the stains. Keep this in mind when addressing the cleanup of the attic bird nesting, and know that the drywall will have to be painted, patched, or replaced.
34.	Safety Concern The basement stairway has inconsistent riser (step) heights. The top step is over an inch taller than the rest of the step heights. This poses a stumbling/falling hazard (step heights should be consistent within 3/8's of an inch). Have the stairway re-built so as to eliminate this hazard (or have the *added* first level flooring removed, this being the reason for the tall upper step). <u>Please don't ignore this; falling on steps and stairs is one of the prime causes of injury in a house.</u>

35.	Safety Concern The handrail at the bottom section of the basement stairway does not meet “graspability” requirements (it’s a 2x4). One should be able to wrap their hand around a handrail for safety reasons. I recommend the installation of a suitable handrail. Again, falling on steps and stairs is one of the primary causes of injury in the house.
36.	Safety Concern The fireplace manufacturer put a tag on the fireplace that says the fireplace is intended for use with solid wood fuel only. Don’t use this wood-burning fireplace until the installed gas log-set is removed.
37.	Investigate Further The National Fire Protection Association recommends that a Level II inspection be performed whenever a house is sold. This involves the inspection of the interior of the fireplace flue using a video camera. I recommend you contact a qualified fireplace inspection company to perform this inspection. <u>Such an inspection could reveal dangerous fire hazards that can’t be seen by simply looking up into the flue chimney.</u> (The chimney should first be swept/cleaned.)
38.	Investigate Further The following areas had a <u>very</u> high amount of storage and clutter present, greatly limiting what I could see during the inspection: the perimeter basement walls. These areas should be inspected when the house is vacant. At a minimum, the Client should perform a diligent final walk-through, with special attention paid to these areas.
39.	Safety Concern The anti-tip bracket that prevents the range from tipping over is not installed. The bracket should be installed to prevent the possibility of injury. See the manufacturer’s installation instructions for details.

All safety concerns listed in the report should be addressed prior to occupancy.

While I make an effort to identify existing or potential problems, it is not possible for a house inspector to predict the future. I recommend that you budget perhaps \$1,000.00 to \$2,000.00 dollars a year for unforeseen repairs and maintenance. This would hold true for any house you were considering.

SUPPORT AFTER THE INSPECTION³

YOUR QUESTIONS: Ask all the questions you want, and I'll do my best to answer them. All I ask is that you read the whole report first. Feel free to call me tomorrow, next week, or even next year.

THE QUESTIONS OF OTHERS: If a seller, a seller's representative, or a seller's repair person calls me with a question about your inspection, I'll politely inform them that I can't talk about your inspection, unless you're in on the conversation or unless you give me specific permission to do so. I'll suggest they set up a conference call with you, and call me back.

If a seller or a repair person calls and asks how to fix something, I'll politely decline. It's not because I don't know how to fix things, it's because I'm not willing to boss a repair job by remote control. (It's also to protect you from unqualified repair people, and to protect me from people who might just forget what I told them between the time of the phone call and the actual job.) And, if you think about it, if someone doesn't know how to fix something, they probably shouldn't be the one doing the fixing.

LASTLY...

- Perform a diligent final-walkthrough (don't let anyone rush you...damage or problems can arise between the time of the inspection and the day of closing).
- If repairs are going to be made with regards to this inspection report, I recommend you obtain paid, itemized receipts for such repairs, as well as any related repair warranties.
- Unless this is a new house, buy new smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and install them first thing. Also, a few fire extinguishers make excellent house-warming gifts for you and yours. (Note: as of January 1st 2007, Illinois law requires that all residential dwellings have carbon monoxide detectors installed within 15 feet of any rooms used for sleeping. Again, the installation of new carbon monoxide detectors, as well as new smoke detectors, is strongly recommended...any *old* detectors have an unknown remaining life-span.)
- Lock your telephone box outside to prevent unauthorized use when you're not at home.

END OF REPORT

³ **Re-Inspection Policy:** I'm often asked if it would be possible to re-inspect the problem areas disclosed in the inspection, after repairs are made. I have a minimum fee of \$250.00 for this service. This fee covers a re-inspection of any deficiencies contained in the original inspection report, and does not include a written re-inspection report, which is \$75.00 extra.