

Home Inspections

What Can a Seller Expect?

As home buying becomes more and more sophisticated and buyers become more discerning, home inspections have become the norm not the exception. As in automobile purchases, Buyer's have the right to "test drive" their prospective new home. Paragraph 12b of the North Carolina Association of Realtors Offer to Purchase and Contract specifically advises Buyers of this right, and it is our policy at Beach Realty & Construction to make sure all our Sellers understand the importance of this necessary scrutiny of their homes. While the Buyer pays for the inspection, the Seller is required by the contract to convey the home with all specified items "performing the function for which intended and not in need of immediate repair."

A good home inspector will give the Buyer an unbiased assessment of the structural and mechanical well-being of your home. A home inspector will discover and identify any existing or potential problem areas and give an overview of the foundation and grading, drainage and basement, walls and floors, ceilings, doors and windows, roofs and roofing systems, plumbing and electrical and heating and cooling systems. Some home inspectors will offer suggestions and advice on how to solve the problems as well as list them in order of priority.

Some Sellers have found it beneficial to have an inspection of their home done before they list their property for sale. The homeowner will know up front what necessary repairs and maintenance items need to be addressed to ensure a smooth transaction. When hiring a home inspector, make sure of the following:

- that they are well established and can offer references;
- that they are independent and unbiased - they have no affiliation with any real estate firms that might create a conflict of interest
- that they will provide a thorough written report of their findings;
- that they are adequately licensed or members of ASHI (American Society of Home Inspectors), NAHI (National Association of Home Inspectors).

Sellers are usually not surprised by the outcome of a home inspection, after all they have lived in the house. Sometimes an inspection reveals an unexpected condition that alerts the Buyer and could ultimately prevent the transaction from taking place. Any repairs or maintenance items a Seller can remedy in advance can only work to his advantage.

When a satisfactory home inspection is included as a contingency in the Offer to Purchase and Contract, the Buyer specifies the date by which the inspection shall be completed and the written notice of necessary repairs shall be given to the Seller. "Necessary repairs" should refer to those items or systems listed in 12b which are not "performing the function for which intended" and are "in need of immediate repair." The home inspection should make a clear distinction between deficiencies that need immediate attention, and routine maintenance suggestions or opinions regarding the remaining life of various systems or equipment offered merely for the Buyer's information.

If any repairs are necessary, the Seller has the option of completing the repairs or refusing to complete them. If the Seller refuses to complete them, the Buyer has the option of accepting the property in its present condition or terminating the contract, in which case the earnest money will be refunded in full.

When the inspection is done in a timely manner, the Buyer and the Seller have the opportunity to negotiate the various items, get estimates for the cost of repairs, decide who shall complete the repairs, or even escrow the cost of the repairs at closing if they cannot be completed in time.

Courtesy of Beach Realty & Construction