

Beneficial Home Inspections

Your Home Inspection Report

Customer Name - Jane Doe

Inspection Date - 11/11/1111

Address - 000 Sample Street
Sample TX 11111



Beneficial Home Inspections
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PROPERTY INSPECTION REPORT

Prepared For: Jane Doe
(Name of Client)

Concerning: 1111 Sample Street, Sample, TX
(Address or Other Identification of Inspected Property)

By: Robert Gonzalez TREC # 5990 11/12/2002
(Name and License Number of Inspector) (Date)

(Name, License Number and Signature of Sponsoring Inspector, if required)

The inspection of the property listed above must be performed in compliance with the rules of the Texas Real Estate Commission (TREC).

The inspection is of conditions, which are present and visible at the time of the inspection, and all of the equipment is operated in normal modes. The inspector must indicate which items are in need of repair or are not functioning and will report on all applicable items required by TREC rules.

This report is intended to provide you with information concerning the condition of the property at the time of inspection. Please read the report carefully. If any item is unclear, you should request the inspector to provide clarification.

It is recommended that you obtain as much history as is available concerning this property. This historical information may include copies of any seller's disclosures, previous inspection or engineering reports, reports performed for or by relocation companies, municipal inspection departments, lenders, insurers, and appraisers. You should attempt to determine whether repairs, renovation, remodeling, additions or other such activities have taken place at this property.

Property conditions change with time and use. Since this report is provided for the specific benefit of the client(s), secondary readers of this information should hire a licensed inspector to perform an inspection to meet their specific needs and to obtain current information concerning this property.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PROVIDED BY INSPECTOR

THE HOUSE IN PERSPECTIVE

This is an average quality 62 year old (approximate age) home. As with all homes, ongoing maintenance is required and improvements to the systems of the home will be needed over time. *The improvements that are recommended in this report are not considered unusual for a home of this age and location.* Please remember that there is no such thing as a perfect home.

NOTE: For the purpose of this report, it is assumed that the house faces east.

THE SCOPE OF THE INSPECTION

All components designated for inspection in accordance with the rules of the TEXAS REAL ESTATE COMMISSION (TREC) are inspected, except as may be noted by the "Not Inspected" or "Not Present" check boxes. Explanations for items not inspected may be in the "TREC Limitations" sections within this report.

This inspection is visual only. Representative samples of building components are viewed in areas that are accessible at the time of the inspection. No destructive testing or dismantling of building components is performed.

It is the goal of the inspection to put a homebuyer in a better position to make a buying decision. Not all improvements will be identified during this inspection. Unexpected repairs should still be anticipated. The inspection should not be considered a guarantee or warranty of any kind.

Please refer to the pre-inspection contract for a full explanation of the scope of the inspection.

WEATHER CONDITIONS DURING INSPECTION

Dry weather conditions prevailed at the time of the inspection. Occasional rain has been experienced in the days leading up to the inspection.

Additional pages may be attached to this report. Read them very carefully. This report may not be complete without the attachments. If an item is present in the property but is not inspected, the "NI" column will be checked and an explanation is necessary. The inspector may provide comments whether or not an item is deemed in need of repair.

I=Inspected		NI=Not Inspected		NP=Not Present	R=Not Functioning or In Need of Repair	Inspection Item
I	NI	NP	R			

I. STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS

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A. Foundations (If all crawl space areas are not inspected, provide an explanation.)

Type of foundation: Pier and beam

Method of inspection: Visual inspection of exterior and entered crawl space

Comments (An opinion on performance is mandatory.):

The foundation is performing as intended. No significant problems were observed

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B. Grading & Drainage

Comments:

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C. Roof Covering (If the roof is inaccessible, report the method used to inspect.)

Type of roof covering: Metal

Method of inspection: Walked on roof

Comments:

Prior repairs to the roofing are evident. This would suggest that problems have been experienced in the past. This area should be monitored.

The design of the roofing system is such that several vulnerable areas exist.

There is a higher potential for unanticipated repairs. Annual inspections and ongoing maintenance will be critical to the performance of the roofing system.



Debris should be removed from the roofing.



The garage addition to the house still has lead headed nails that secure the sheet metal roofing. This is currently leaking and at minimum I recommend the replacement of all nails with neoprene washer screws. Although this will not eliminate the problem of leaks, it will help minimize the problem.



My recommendation is for a new roof design to eliminate the dead valley areas and the replacement of the current screw down roof with a new standing seam metal roof or a asphalt shingle system.

I	NI	NP	R	Inspection Item
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>D. Roof Structure & Attic (If the attic is inaccessible, report the method used to inspect.)</p> <p>Method of inspection: Entered attic and performed a visual inspection</p> <p>Approximate depth of insulation: 8 inches</p> <p><i>Comments:</i></p> <p><i>Recessed lights can pose a fire hazard if not specifically designed for installation in an insulated ceiling. It is recommended that a licensed electrician be contacted to further evaluate these light fixtures.</i></p> <p>There is evidence of vermin activity. A pest control specialist should be consulted in this regard. (See Picture Page)</p> <p>Although no evidence of failure, the ridge board is considered to be of insufficient size for the roof structure design. You may want to address this issue.</p>
				
				<p>The addition of purlin supports for the back right side of the roof structure is recommended.</p>
				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>E. Walls (Interior & Exterior)</p> <p><i>Comments:</i></p> <p>Water damage was noted in various locations. Repairs should be undertaken to prevent further damage to the structure.</p> <p>(See Picture Page)</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>F. Ceilings & Floors</p> <p><i>Comments:</i></p> <p>Water staining on the ceiling in the washroom area was noted. The cause for the staining should be determined and repairs undertaken, if necessary, to prevent structural damage. (See Picture Page)</p> <p>Water damage was noted. Repairs undertaken to prevent further damage to the structure.</p> <p>The installation of interior finishes is considered to be amateur quality.</p>

I	NI	NP	R	Inspection Item
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Floor slopes are apparent in the master bedroom. This condition could indicate greater than normal movement within the structure and potential structural problems. Further investigation may be necessary.

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G. Doors (Interior & Exterior)

Comments:

Water damage was observed adjacent to the door in the laundry room. The cause should be determined and repaired to ensure proper operation of the door. Damaged or non-functional doors should be repaired.
(See Picture Page)

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H. Windows

Comments:

The window(s) are cracked in various locations and should be repaired.
(See Picture Page)

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I. Fireplace/Chimney

Comments:

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J. Porches, Decks and Carports (Attached)

Comments:

As there is a danger of falling, a railing should be provided for the porch. For improved safety, it is recommended that a railing be provided for the steps at the front entrance to the house.



II. ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

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A. Service Entrance and Panels

Comments:

The service wires do not have adequate clearance from the ground and should be repaired. The top of the service mast and the service wires should be at least fifteen (15) feet from the ground.

I could not verify that the water and gas piping was properly bonded/grounded to the electrical system. This issue should be further investigated and repaired by a licensed electrician.



I	NI	NP	R	Inspection Item
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>B. Branch Circuits - Connected Devices and Fixtures (Report as in need of repair the lack of ground fault circuit protection where required.):</p> <p>Type of branch circuit wiring: Copper</p> <p><i>Comments:</i></p> <p>Missing outlet cover plates in the laundry room should be replaced. (See Picture Page)</p> <p>Recessed light fixtures in the laundry room that are installed in insulated ceilings can represent a fire hazard if they are not suitably rated for this application. Unfortunately, it is difficult to verify that the installation has been made safely, during a home inspection. It is recommended that a licensed electrician be engaged to verify the safety of the system. (See Picture Page)</p>

III. HEATING, VENTILATION AND AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>A. Heating Equipment</p> <p><i>Type And Energy Source:</i></p> <p>Type of heating system: Central Forced Air Furnace Energy source: Gas</p> <p><i>Comments:</i> Working as intended at the time of inspection.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>B. Cooling Equipment</p> <p><i>Type And Energy Source:</i></p> <p>Type of cooling system: Central Forced Air System Energy source: Electricity</p> <p><i>Comments:</i></p> <p>As is not uncommon for homes of this age and location, the air conditioning system is older. It may require a slightly higher level of maintenance, and may be more prone to major component breakdown. Predicting the frequency or time frame for repairs on any mechanical device is virtually impossible.</p> <p>Evidence of standing water in the safety drain pan can indicate that the main drain line is clogged. This should be further investigated and repaired by an HVAC technician.</p>



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C. Ducts and Vents

Comments: No significant issues were noted at the time of inspection.

All supply and return air vents are of the flex type, with the evidence of vermin activity I recommend that these air ducts be monitored for damage on a consistent basis. There have been issues in other locations where these types of flex ducts were damaged due to vermin and rodent activity.

IV. PLUMBING SYSTEM

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A. Water Supply System and Fixtures

Comments:

It is recommended that an anti-siphon device be added to the hose bib(s).
(See Picture Page)

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B. Drains, Wastes, Vents

Comments:

The waste piping in the crawl space does not have sufficient slope for proper drainage. This condition should be repaired. The section in question is the drain line for the RV hook up.

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C. Water Heating Equipment (Report as in need of repair those conditions specifically listed as recognized hazards by TREC rules.)

Energy Source:

Energy source: Gas

Comments:

No safety pan and drain was found for the water heater. This should be repaired by the installation of a pan with a drain by a qualified professional.



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D. Hydro-Therapy Equipment

Comments: Working as intended at the time of inspection.

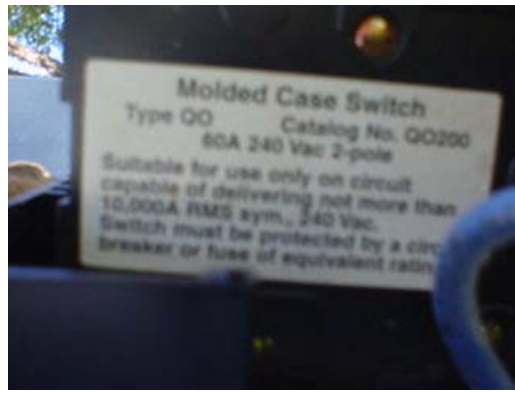
V. APPLIANCES

☒ ☐ ☐ ☐

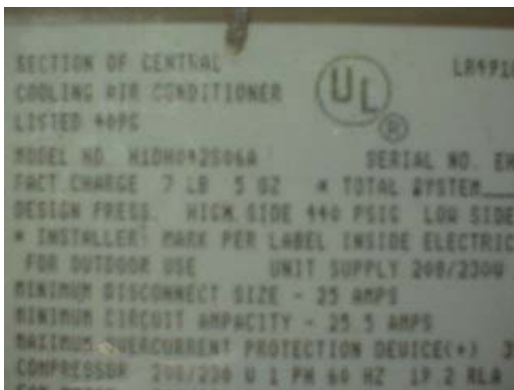
A. Dishwasher

Comments: Working as intended at the time of inspection.

I	NI	NP	R	Inspection Item
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Food Waste Disposer <i>Comments:</i> Working as intended at the time of inspection.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	C. Range Hood <i>Comments:</i> With the use of a gas range the range hood fan should be repaired so as to discharge to the building exterior.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	D. Ranges/Ovens/Cooktops <i>Comments:</i> The oven light in the range is inoperative and is in need of repair. The oven does not ignite as intended and should be repaired.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	E. Microwave Cooking Equipment <i>Comments:</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	F. Trash Compactor <i>Comments:</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	G. Bathroom Exhaust Fans and/or Heaters <i>Comments:</i> Working as intended at the time of inspection.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	H. Whole House Vacuum Systems <i>Comments:</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I. Garage Door Operators <i>Comments:</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	J. Door Bell and Chimes <i>Comments:</i> Working as intended at the time of inspection.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	K. Dryer Vents <i>Comments:</i> No significant issues were noted.

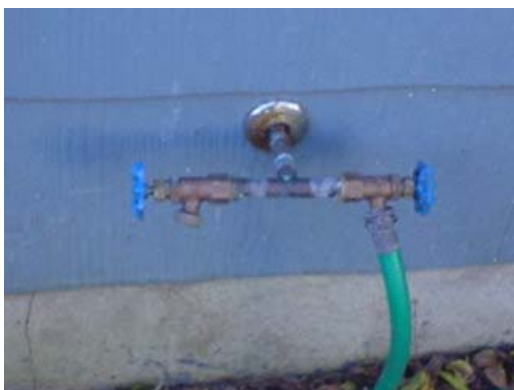


1111 Sample Street, Sample, TX



Have qualified licensed electrician verify the safe installation of the proper size breaker for unit rating.

Electrical line conduit loose / should be secured



Recommend the addition of Anti siphon valves. (Back flow prevention valves)



Water damage to drip edge



Water damage to decking located on flat roof over carport.



More water damage



Water damage to door from carport area.



Evidence of several areas that leak by numerous water damage locations throughout the garage, washroom and carport areas.



Suspected cause of concern is the two-pitched areas that meets and forms a flat dead valley area, which can collect water.



Areas of rusted metal roof material.



Various damaged areas missing siding and water damage noted.



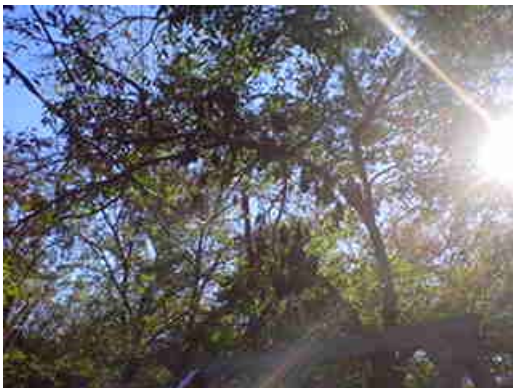
Large tree in close proximity to small foundation



Tree can and will cause damage to roof



Electrical service wiring entrance too low by today's standards. Should be repaired.



Trim trees to prevent damage to service wiring



More water damage trim



Dead valley area - note that the lead nails were replaced with neoprene washer screws only on the main house roof. The garage still has the lead nails, which are currently leaking.



Note how dead valley area collects leaves, which in turn promotes the collection of moisture.



Roofing design vulnerable to roof leaks. Water collects and drains to flat roof over carport. Recommend redesign of roof structure in this area.



Lead nails



Seam in dead valley area failing. Re-secure nails and re-seal.



Vulnerable area under flashing detail should be sealed to prevent moisture intrusion.



Vulnerable area where flat roof meets gable area.



Vermin and rodent activity noted.



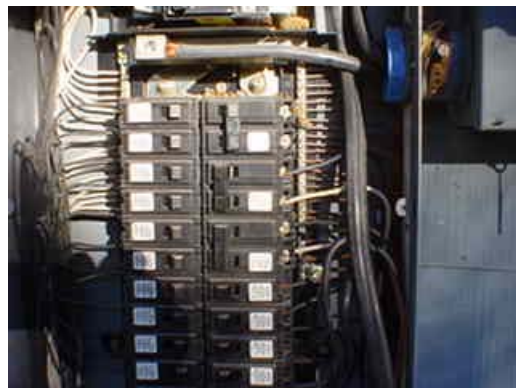
Water pipes too exterior wall should be insulated.



With the use of a gas stove the vent should be vented to the outside. This unit is a re-circulation vent hood.



Electrical receptacle cover missing.



FYI - Breaker for electric stove not in use, wiring abandoned, can be reconnected for future use if desired.



Oven light not working



Oven does not light as intended - needs repair.



Re-grout and caulk corner in the main bathroom.



Plumbing access panel located in bathroom closet



Patching noted on ceiling



Small cracking observed where wall and ceiling meet - master bedroom.



Cracked windows in various locations



Recessed light rating?



Access panel for whirlpool pump, GFCI protection for pump, located in master closet.



Shower stall seating area vulnerable to leaks, Monitor this area and re-grout and re-caulk as needed.



Recommend better securing of the attic access stairway.



Bowl located in attic / collecting water from roof leaks and/or vermin water bowl.



Note paper that shows burn marks from heater flue vent.



Recommend the addition of one more purlin stud support for the left side of the roof structure.



Recommend the addition of purlin roof rafter supports for the right side of back roof.



Recommend purlin roof rafter supports added here.



Ridge board considered being of insufficient size.



Standing water in overflow pan should be further investigated/ possible clogged main drain



Sediment trap is recommended.

I	NI	NP	R	Inspection Item
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ADDENDUM: MAINTENANCE ADVICE

Upon Taking Ownership

After taking possession of a new home, there are some maintenance and safety issues that should be addressed immediately. The following checklist should help you undertake these improvements:

- ☐ Change the locks on all exterior entrances, for improved security.
- ☐ Check that all windows and doors are secure. Improve window hardware as necessary. Security rods can be added to sliding windows and doors. Consideration could also be given to a security system.
- ☐ Install smoke detectors on each level of the home. Ensure that there is a smoke detector outside all sleeping areas. Replace batteries on any existing smoke detectors and test them. Make a note to replace batteries again in one year.
- ☐ Create a plan of action in the event of a fire in your home. Ensure that there is an operable window or door in every room of the house. Consult with your local fire department regarding fire safety issues and what to do in the event of fire.
- ☐ Examine driveways and walkways for trip hazards. Undertake repairs where necessary.
- ☐ Examine the interior of the home for trip hazards. Loose or torn carpeting and flooring should be repaired.
- ☐ Undertake improvements to all stairways, decks, porches and landings where there is a risk of falling or stumbling.
- ☐ Review your home inspection report for any items that require immediate improvement or further investigation. Address these areas as required.
- ☐ Install rain caps and vermin screens on all chimney flues, as necessary.
- ☐ Investigate the location of the main shut-offs for the plumbing, heating and electrical systems. If you attended the home inspection, these items would have been pointed out to you.

Regular Maintenance

EVERY MONTH

- ☐ Check that fire extinguisher(s) are fully charged. Re-charge if necessary.
- ☐ Examine heating/cooling air filters and replace or clean as necessary.
- ☐ Inspect and clean humidifiers and electronic air cleaners.
- ☐ If the house has hot water heating, bleed radiator valves.
- ☐ Clean gutters and downspouts. Ensure that downspouts are secure, and that the discharge of the downspouts is appropriate. Remove debris from window wells.
- ☐ Carefully inspect the condition of shower enclosures. Repair or replace deteriorated grout and caulk. Ensure that water is not escaping the enclosure during showering. Check below all plumbing fixtures for evidence of leakage.
- ☐ Repair or replace leaking faucets or shower heads.
- ☐ Secure loose toilets, or repair flush mechanisms that become troublesome.

SPRING AND FALL

- ☐ Examine the roof for evidence of damage to roof coverings, flashings and chimneys.
- ☐ Look in the attic (if accessible) to ensure that roof vents are not obstructed. Check for evidence of leakage, condensation or vermin activity. Level out insulation if needed.
- ☐ Trim back tree branches and shrubs to ensure that they are not in contact with the house.
- ☐ Inspect the exterior walls and foundation for evidence of damage, cracking or movement. Watch for bird nests or other vermin or insect activity.

I	NI	NP	R	Inspection Item
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Survey the basement and/or crawl space walls for evidence of moisture seepage.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Look at overhead wires coming to the house. They should be secure and clear of trees or other obstructions.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that the grade of the land around the house encourages water to flow away from the foundation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inspect all driveways, walkways, decks, porches, and landscape components for evidence of deterioration, movement or safety hazards.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clean windows and test their operation. Improve caulking and weather-stripping as necessary. Watch for evidence of rot in wood window frames. Paint and repair window sills and frames as necessary.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Test all ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) devices, as identified in the inspection report.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shut off isolating valves for exterior hose bibs in the fall, if below freezing temperatures are anticipated.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Test the Temperature and Pressure Relief (TPR) Valve on water heaters.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inspect for evidence of wood boring insect activity. Eliminate any wood/soil contact around the perimeter of the home.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Test the overhead garage door opener, to ensure that the auto-reverse mechanism is responding properly. Clean and lubricate hinges, rollers and tracks on overhead doors.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Replace or clean exhaust hood filters.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clean, inspect and/or service all appliances as per the manufacturer's recommendations.

ANNUALLY

- ☐ Replace smoke detector batteries.
- ☐ Have the heating, cooling and water heater systems cleaned and serviced.
- ☐ Have chimneys inspected and cleaned. Ensure that rain caps and vermin screens are secure.
- ☐ Examine the electrical panels, wiring and electrical components for evidence of overheating. Ensure that all components are secure. Flip the breakers on and off to ensure that they are not sticky.
- ☐ If the house utilizes a well, check and service the pump and holding tank. Have the water quality tested. If the property has a septic system, have the tank inspected (and pumped as needed).
- ☐ If your home is in an area prone to wood destroying insects (termites, carpenter ants, etc.), have the home inspected by a licensed specialist. Preventative treatments may be recommended in some cases.

Prevention Is The Best Approach

Although we've heard it many times, nothing could be more true than the old cliché "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Preventative maintenance is the best way to keep your house in great shape. It also reduces the risk of unexpected repairs and improves the odds of selling your house at fair market value, when the time comes.

Please feel free to contact our office should you have any questions regarding the operation or maintenance of your home. Enjoy your home!

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ADDENDUM: LEAD BASED PAINT INFORMATION

Lead-based paint is hazardous to your health.

Lead-based paint is a major source of lead poisoning for children and can also affect adults. In children, lead poisoning can cause irreversible brain damage and can impair mental functioning. It can retard mental and physical development and reduce attention span. It can also retard fetal development even at extremely low levels of lead. In adults, it can cause irritability, poor muscle coordination, and nerve damage to the sense organs and nerves controlling the body. Lead poisoning may also cause problems with reproduction (such as a decreased sperm count). It may also increase blood pressure. Thus, young children, fetuses, infants, and adults with high blood pressure are the most vulnerable to the effects of lead.

Children should be screened for lead poisoning.

In communities where the houses are old and deteriorating, take advantage of available screening programs offered by local health departments and have children checked regularly to see if they are suffering from lead poisoning. Because the early symptoms of lead poisoning are easy to confuse with other illnesses, it is difficult to diagnose lead poisoning without medical testing. Early symptoms may include persistent tiredness, irritability, loss of appetite, stomach discomfort, reduced attention span, insomnia, and constipation. Failure to treat children in the early stages can cause long-term or permanent health damage.

The current blood lead level, which defines lead poisoning, is 10 micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood. However, since poisoning may occur at lower levels than previously thought, various federal agencies are considering whether this level should be lowered further so that lead poisoning prevention programs will have the latest information on testing children for lead poisoning.

Consumers can be exposed to lead from paint.

Eating paint chips is one way young children are exposed to lead. It is not the most common way that consumers, in general, are exposed to lead. Ingesting and inhaling lead dust that is created as lead-based paint "chalks," chips, or peels from deteriorated surfaces can expose consumers to lead. Walking on small paint chips found on the floor, or opening and closing a painted frame window, can also create lead dust. Other sources of lead include deposits that may be present in homes after years of use of leaded gasoline and from industrial sources like smelting. Consumers can also generate lead dust by sanding lead-based paint or by scraping or heating lead-based paint.

Lead dust can settle on floors, walls, and furniture. Under these conditions, children can ingest lead dust from hand-to-mouth contact or in food. Settled lead dust can re-enter the air through cleaning, such as sweeping or vacuuming, or by movement of people throughout the house.

Older homes may contain lead based paint.

Lead was used as a pigment and drying agent in "alkyd" oil based paint. "Latex" water based paints generally have not contained lead. About two-thirds of the homes built before 1940 and one-half of the homes built from 1940 to 1960 contain heavily leaded paint. Some homes built after 1960 also contain heavily leaded paint. It may be on any interior or exterior surface, particularly on woodwork, doors, and windows. In 1978, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission lowered the legal maximum lead content in most kinds of paint to 0.06% (a trace amount). Consider having the paint in homes constructed before the 1980s tested for lead before renovating or if the paint or underlying surface is deteriorating. This is particularly important if infants, children, or pregnant women are present.

Consumers can have paint tested for lead.

There are do-it-yourself kits available. However, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has not evaluated any of these kits. One home test kit uses sodium sulfide solution. This procedure requires you to place a drop of sodium sulfide solution on a paint chip. The paint chip slowly turns darker if lead is present. There are problems with this test, however. Other metals may cause false positive results, and resins in the paint may prevent the sulfide from causing the paint chip

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to change color. Thus, the presence of lead may not be correctly indicated. In addition the darkening may be detected only on very light-colored paint.

Another in-home test requires a trained professional who can operate the equipment safely. This test uses X-ray fluorescence to determine if the paint contains lead. Although the test can be done in your home, it should be done only by professionals trained by the equipment manufacturer or who have passed a state or local government training course, since the equipment contains radioactive materials. In addition, in some tests, the method has not been reliable.

Consumers may choose to have a testing laboratory test a paint sample for lead. Lab testing is considered more reliable than other methods. Lab tests may cost from \$20 to \$50 per sample. To have the lab test for lead paint, consumers may:

- Get sample containers from the lab or use re-sealable plastic bags. Label the containers or bags with the consumer's name and the location in the house from which each paint sample was taken. Several samples should be taken from each affected room (see HUD Guidelines discussed below).
- Use a sharp knife to cut through the edges of the sample paint. The lab should tell you the size of the sample needed. It will probably be about 2 inches by 2 inches.
- Lift off the paint with a clean putty knife and put it into the container. Be sure to take a sample of all layers of paint, since only the lower layers may contain lead. Do not include any of the underlying wood, plaster, metal, and brick.
- Wipe the surface and any paint dust with a wet cloth or paper towel and discard the cloth or towel.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recommends that action to reduce exposure should be taken when the lead in paint is greater than 0.5% by lab testing or greater than 1.0 milligrams per square centimeter by X-ray fluorescence. Action is especially important when paint is deteriorating or when infants, children, or pregnant women are present. Consumers can reduce exposure to lead-based paint.

If you have lead-based paint, you should take steps to reduce your exposure to lead.

You can:

1. Have the painted item replaced.

You can replace a door or other easily removed item if you can do it without creating lead dust. Professionals who will control and contain lead dust should replace items that are difficult to remove.

2. Cover the lead-based paint.

You can spray the surface with a sealant or cover it with gypsum wallboard. However, painting over lead-based paint with non-lead paint is not a long-term solution. Even though the lead-based paint may be covered by non-lead paint, the lead-based paint may continue to loosen from the surface below and create lead dust. The new paint may also partially mix with the lead-based paint, and lead dust will be released when the new paint begins to deteriorate.

3. Have the lead-based paint removed.

Have professionals trained in removing lead-based paint do this work. Each of the paint-removal methods (sandpaper, scrapers, chemicals, sandblasters, and torches or heat guns) can produce lead fumes or dust. Fumes or dust can become airborne and be inhaled or ingested. Wet methods help reduce the amount of lead dust. Removing moldings, trim, windowsills, and other painted surfaces for professional paint stripping outside the home may also create dust. Be sure the professionals contain the lead dust. Wet-wipe all surfaces to remove any dust or paint chips. Wet-clean the area before re-entry.

You can remove a small amount of lead-based paint if you can avoid creating any dust. Make sure the surface is less than about one square foot (such as a window sill). Professionals should do any job larger than about one square foot. Make sure you can use a wet method (such as a liquid paint stripper).

4. Reduce lead dust exposure.

You can periodically wet mop and wipe surfaces and floors with a high phosphorous (at least 5%) cleaning solution. Wear waterproof gloves to prevent skin irritation. Avoid activities that will disturb or damage lead based paint and create dust. This is a preventive measure and is not an alternative to replacement or removal.

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Contact your state and local health departments lead poisoning prevention programs and housing authorities for information about testing labs and contractors who can safely remove lead-based paint. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) prepared guidelines for removing lead-based paint. Ask contractors about their qualifications, experience removing lead-based paint, and plans to follow these guidelines.