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HOME

Spring 2022
A Stonebridge Press
Publication

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Don't Pass on the Home Inspection!

In today's market, finding the right home can be such a difficult task as the market challenges buyers with few homes available to purchase. With home inventory at its all-time low, buyers are making offers on home way above asking price with no contingencies and more than HALF of today's buyers are now forgoing a home inspection to hope their offer is more appetizing to sellers over other offers. A very dangerous and potentially costly risk!

For most of us, purchasing a home is the biggest investment we will ever make. The process of purchasing a home is both rewarding and often stressful. Dealing with contract negotiations, mortgage loans, and mountains of paperwork can be quite overwhelming. The last thing a home buyer needs to worry about is an unforeseen problem with his or her investment. That's why taking the time and investing in a professional home inspection is so important.

A home inspection is an inexpensive way to discover the universal condition of a home. It is important to conduct a home inspection to avoid a costly mistake by purchasing a property in need of major repairs. Charley Bonzey, of HomeTeam Inspection Service says, "Everyone watches HGTV and YouTube and believes they can fix anything. So many Do-It-Yourself (DIY) projects happen without proper professionals causing so many future bigger issues (structural problems are a BIG one as well as electrical)."

HomeTeam Inspection Service wants to point out some of the biggest issues found in homes during a home inspection are:

MOLD IN ATTIC Spaces – in the past 6 months, we at HomeTeam Inspection Service have found so much mold-like substances growing within attic spaces

Turn To **INSPECTION** page **A15**

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Commercial Services

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INSPECTION

continued from page A1

(basements as well, but more frequently the attics).

OLD ROOF – Depending on the type of roof shingles, the roof that is 15 years old can be nearing its end of life. Some roofs are 15-20 year shingles while others are 30-35 year shingles –without the proper professionals to -determine the age, you could be walking into a big expense.

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PLUMBING PROBLEMS – corrosion on supply and drain lines. Replacing cast iron drain lines can be an expense.

HEATING SYSTEM – how old is the heating system? When do we replace it? How do you maintain it?

ELECTRICAL PANELS – is there corrosion and poor electrical wiring in your electrical panel? Is the panel overloaded? Is there water getting into my electrical panel?

DECKS – the #1 item that never gets proper permitting and not built properly. “Everyone has a group of buddies that will come over for barbeque and beverages and build a deck” – not a great combination.

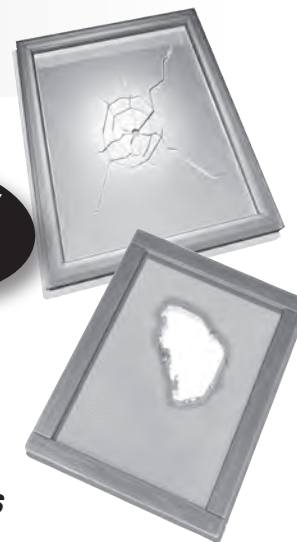
The list can go on....

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Signs your gutters are in need of repair

Fall is a great time to tackle projects around the house. The weather each fall allows homeowners to make improvements to their homes' exteriors without worrying about extreme heat or cold, while interior projects like painting are made easier because homeowners can open the windows to allow for proper ventilation.

Fall also marks a great time to prepare for upcoming projects that can make winter work that much easier. For example, fall is a great time to take stock of your gutters so you can address any issues before leaves begin to fall or the first snowstorm touches down. Compromised gutters can contribute to water issues in basements and adversely affect a home's foundation if not addressed immediately, so it behooves homeowners to learn the signs that gutters are in need of repair or replacement.

• **Gutters hanging off the home:** Gutters were once installed predominantly with spikes. However, many industry professionals now install gutters with hanger brackets. Why the change? Spikes loosen over time, leading to the gutters hanging off the home. That can contribute to serious issues if left untreated. Gutters hanging off the home need

not necessarily be replaced, but rather secured to the home, ideally with hanger brackets instead of spikes. Brackets hook into the front of the gutter and are then screwed into the fascia of a home. A professional who specializes in gutter repair can perform this task relatively quickly, and it's an inexpensive yet highly effective solution.

• **Gutter separation:** Gutters that are no longer fastened together can leak and contribute to issues that affect the home's foundation, siding and appearance. Clogs and the accumulation of debris can cause gutters to separate because they are not designed to hold too much weight. Replacement of separated gutters may or may not be necessary depending on how big the problem is and the condition of the existing gutters. If replacement is not necessary, separated gutters may be remedied by securing the joints, another relatively simple and inexpensive fix.

• **Peeling exterior paint:** Paint that appears to be peeling off of your home may indicate that water is seeping over the edge of the gutter closest to your home. When that happens, water is coming down the side of the house, causing the paint to peel. In such instances, replacing the gutters is often necessary.



• **Basement flooding:** Not all signs of deteriorating gutters are outside a home. Many a homeowner has been flummoxed by flooding in their basements, and such flooding can be caused by aging, ineffective gutters. That's because deteriorating gutters sometimes allow water to leak near the foundation of a home, contributing to basement flooding.

Fall is an ideal time to inspect gutters and have any issues fixed before leaves begin to fall or harsh winter weather arrives.



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It's no secret that the costs of living, gas, groceries and more have been rising steadily since the beginning of the pandemic. Affordable living is becoming harder to secure, especially when it comes to home heating. Fossil fuel prices are the highest they've been in years, so there's no better time to switch to wood heat.

Why heat your home with wood? It's easy to fall in love with the sizzling crackle and aromatic scent of burning wood, especially when it heats your home so efficiently and affordably. Heating your home with wood can be a wonderful way to create a cozy, warm environment while also reducing costs and becoming energy independent.

One of the most efficient and powerful ways to heat your home with wood is with an outdoor wood furnace. Outdoor wood furnaces are a clean, easy, and efficient way to heat your entire home. Wood, bugs, dust, and smoke all stay outside while you enjoy cozy warmth inside.

One of the best brands of outdoor wood furnaces on the market today is the WoodMaster CleanFire. Since 1989, WoodMaster has been continually finding innovative uses of natural energy and alternative fuel sources. Their leadership team collaborates with industry experts, other furnace manufacturers and governing entities in many states to establish and adhere to emissions standards. Today, WoodMaster outdoor furnaces provide security in uncertain times. Become energy-independent by purchasing a WoodMaster CleanFire outdoor furnace. Not only is wood a readily available resource, but it's inexpensive when compared to other fuel sources.

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How to pick the right trees for your property

Trees benefit a landscape by serving both aesthetic and utilitarian functions. A home surrounded by healthy green trees can be a sight to behold, and those same trees can benefit surrounding plants and wildlife at the same time.

As appealing as trees are, not all trees and landscapes make for the perfect match. The Arbor Day Foundation notes the importance of planning when designing a landscape. Planning ensures the trees homeowners ultimately choose for their properties will grow well in the soil and moisture present in their yards.

Careful consideration of a handful of variables can help homeowners determine which trees will make the best fit for their properties.

- **Height:** Homeowners must consider the projected height of a tree before planting it. Avoid trees that will bump into anything when fully grown, as that can adversely affect surrounding greenery and pose a safety hazard. The ADF's tree sizing guide can be accessed at <https://www.arborday.org/trees/rightTreeAndPlace/size.cfm> and serves as an invaluable resource for homeowners who want to plant new trees around their properties.

- **Canopy spread:** Trees grow out as well as up, so it's important to consider their potential width at maturity as well. The ADF sizing guide can help homeowners get an idea of how wide a tree is likely to be at maturity. Trees that spread out quite a bit don't necessarily need to be avoided, but it's important that they're planted far enough apart so they don't adversely affect surrounding plants. In addition, wide trees that are planted too close together can make the landscape appear crowded, taking something away from its aesthetic appeal.

- **Growth rate:** Growth rate is an important variable because it can affect how quickly homeowners will see changes in their landscapes. Homeowners who want to plant for privacy can consider trees with quick growth rates or purchase more mature trees that are already near full growth. Those who are not in need of instant transformation can try trees with slower growth rates, which the ADF notes typically live longer than fast-growing species.

- **Requirements:** Different trees require different amounts of sun and moisture



and different soil components to thrive. Homeowners can have their soil tested to determine which trees will thrive in it. Local garden centers can be a great resource for homeowners who want insight as to which trees will thrive in their local climates.

Trees serve many functions on a property. Choosing the right trees for a landscape requires careful consideration of a host of variables.

How to remove mildew from your home's exterior

Homeowners want their residences to look inviting inside and out. Part of keeping an attractive property involves addressing issues that can compromise not only the appearance of a home, but even its integrity.

People who live in regions with high humidity may find their homes are vulnerable to exterior mildew growth. Mildew is a kind of mold. Molds include all species of microscopic fungi that grow in the form of hyphae, which are multicellular filaments, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. Mold thrives on any organic matter and surfaces with moisture management problems. Mildew, in particular, lives on shower walls, windowsills and other places where moisture levels are high. Mildew also can grow on home siding as well as fences and other exterior structures. While typically gray or white, mildew can be various colors.

Experts recommend various cleansers to help combat the issue of mildew on a home. One of the first products that homeowners tend to reach for is sodium hypochlorite, which is a standard bleach used in laundry and pool sanitation. While sodium hypochlorite seems to make mildew vanish, those at This Old House say that chlorine evaporates too quickly to get to mildew's roots on porous surfaces, such as wood or vinyl siding. Bleach also can stain clothing and damage foliage around the house. Hydrogen peroxide, or oxygen bleach, is less volatile, will not affect foliage and can clean

mildew, algae and dirt on and below the surface.

Trisodium phosphate is another effective cleanser. Commonly known as TSP, it often succeeds where other solutions fail in regard to stubborn stains and mildew. TSP also works well on various exterior surfaces. TSP needs to be used with extreme caution. When using TSP, wear long sleeves, gloves, goggles, and a respiratory mask, says Today's Homeowner. The product also requires adequate ventilation. There also are some environmental concerns, as TSP can damage foliage. In addition, if the product ends up in lakes and streams, it can trigger an overgrowth of algae that results in the depletion of oxygen levels in the water. Eco-conscious homeowners may want to try oxy cleansers before TSP.

Mildew shies away from bright sunlight, so it tends to grow on the north side of homes. Removing trees or other foliage that can further block sunlight to areas of the house can help eradicate mildew growth and stop it before it starts. Another tactic is to clean out gutters regularly and thoroughly to reduce moisture and to prevent decomposing debris from running over the edge of the gutters. This runoff can drip down the home's siding and spread the mildew to other areas.

Mildew can be problematic any time of year. Clean up mildew when the weather cools down to spruce up the look of a home.

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