

The best, most thorough inspection can be performed for the client when the home has been properly prepared prior to my arrival. There are numerous things an owner can do to assist me in doing a more complete job of inspecting the property. All of these items, while not required, should have been completed before I arrive to get the most thorough report possible. Here are some suggestions...

1. Access:

The Standards of Practice for home inspectors required by the State of Wisconsin are very specific regarding access to items being inspected. The home inspector is not required or urged to move personal property to perform their inspection. This means that for me to do a thorough job of inspecting the house I need room to access the furnace, electrical service panel, water heater, under sinks and the air conditioning unit. If these items in your home are surrounded with personal items I'd ask that you move or remove them for the inspection day.

2. Pets:

A home inspection can be very stressful for your cat or dog. You would be doing everyone (including your pet) a great service by removing them from the home during the time of the inspection.

3. Attics:

I need access to the attic to inspect the insulation, roof, ventilation and appliance exhaust systems. Please remove or move boxes or other items which would make it difficult for me to climb into and move around in this area. Check to be sure there are functioning lights in the space.

4. Basic Home Maintenance:

It is important that every light fixture in the home is equipped with light bulbs that are functioning. During the course of an inspection I will note which fixtures don't work but that does not tell the client whether it was the bulb or a different electrical problem if new bulbs have not been tried first. Please consider doing the following:

- Change your furnace filter, it can have a big impact on the function of your heating and central air conditioning systems.
- Clean your rain gutters, it will make it much easier for me to inspect them.
- Change the batteries in your smoke and CO (carbon monoxide) detectors.
- Have your furnace cleaned if it has not been done in the last two years. Many times furnace malfunctions can be traced to lack of proper maintenance which is performed during a cleaning. Ask the HVAC contractor to check the heat exchanger to be sure it is not cracked.
- Change your water filters if you have them. A plugged main water filter can severely limit water flow affecting the performance of plumbing fixtures.

5. Doors and Windows:

I need to operate the windows of a home to determine their condition. Please remove all personal items from the window sills to prevent any damage them. The interior and exterior doors need to be evaluated for operation and condition. Please remove any items from the swing area of the doors so I can determine how well they work.

6. Electricity, Water & Heat:

The owner should turn on all functioning utilities in the home for my evaluation. This means the water should be turned on to all working fixtures, the furnace and water heater pilot lights should be lit (if they have a standing pilot light) and the circuit breakers should be turned on to all functioning circuits. The Standards of Practice for home inspectors do not require or urge them to open any water valves, light any pilot lights or energize any circuits with the circuit breaker.

7. Owner:

It would be greatly appreciated if the owner would be absent during the inspection (if he/she is not the client). This will create a more relaxed environment for the buyer, real estate agent and the inspector.