

PREPARING YOUR PROPERTY FOR A BUYER'S INSPECTION

Tips for Listing Agents and Sellers

Probably every real estate agent has experienced it ... the buyer and seller finally agree to a price and contract terms. The buyer orders a home inspection and the inspector delivers a report full of items in need of repair, adjustment or replacement. The perfect house doesn't look so wonderful anymore. The buyer panics, questioning their decision to purchase this particular property. The seller is upset, blaming the home inspector for criticizing his or her "perfect" house. The agents are doing everything possible to save the transaction.

This scenario should not happen very often, but we believe it can be minimized or totally eliminated. One of the best possible solutions is to order a **pre-listing home inspection**. Such an inspection can reveal most of the problems. It will also include a list of recommended repairs.

However, even without such an inspection, the **sellers can prepare the property for a buyer's home inspection**. Common problems that typically appear on a home inspection report are summarized below. Early correction of these problems can increase a home's appeal. This can then set the stage for a favorable buyer's home inspection and help expedite and simplify the sale. It is very important to pay **attention to the details**. Sellers should also consider **maintenance improvements**, take **safety precautions** and make **cosmetic improvements** to the property.

OUTSIDE

- Trim trees and shrubs which touch or overhang the house
- Apply new caulking and weather-stripping as needed around windows and doors
- Clean gutters of debris; repair or replace cracked or broken gutters and downspouts; install downspout extensions
- Check for proper drainage; re-grade soil around the foundation, as needed, to keep water away from the house
- Re-secure any loose railing on the deck; re-stain decking

HEATING

- Replace dirty filters in the heating systems
- Have the heating system professionally serviced
- Have chimneys professionally cleaned and install caps as needed

BATHROOMS AND KITCHEN

- Repair leaky faucets
- Repair leaky sinks and tub drains
- Replace bathroom grout and caulk where necessary

INTERIOR

- Tighten loose door knobs
- Replace damaged screens
- Replace broken glass panes
- Replace burned-out light bulbs
- Secure loose railings
- Patch holes and cracks in walls and ceilings
- Repair peeling wallpaper
- Ventilate closed basements and crawl spaces

ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

- Re-secure loose outlets and switches
- Install GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters) electrical outlets in "wet" areas (kitchen countertops, bathrooms, garages, and outside)

PREVENT FIRE HAZARDS

- Install smoke detectors (at least one on each level)
- Keep flammable products away from water heaters, furnaces, boilers and fireplaces

MAKE COSMETIC IMPROVEMENTS

- Open windows and curtains; create a bright, inviting atmosphere
- Keep the kitchen and bathrooms clean

It is a good idea to assemble in advance various **house records** that can be used to answer questions from buyers and home inspectors.

- Appliance receipts, service records and warranties
- Major component warranties (e.g., siding, roof shingles)
- Water, gas and electric bills from the previous year

Keep areas clear to give the buyer and the home inspector **access** to the garage, crawl space, attic, heating and electrical equipment.

Tiger Home & Building Inspections, Inc.

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