



Preparing For a Home Inspection

Home inspections are a stressful time for both the buyer and the seller in a real estate transaction. Both parties have already been through the negotiation process and financing and all other subjects have often been resolved. A successful inspection is what both buyer and seller would like to see and honestly, we as home inspectors want nothing more than for our clients to get their dream home.

To give your home the best opportunity for a successful home inspection, here are some tips that will help the inspector see your home's best qualities.

General Comments

- Treat the home inspection like another open house. Inspectors will want to be able to see as much of the home as possible and when it is clean and tidy, the house presents itself best for inspection.
- Make sure locks on yard gates, garages, storage, and suites are open so the inspector can make their way through the inspection unimpeded. Leave keys if necessary.
- Make repairs ahead of time. Fix handles, knobs, faucets, etc. These minor blunders can present your home in a less favorable light.
- Expect the inspection to take 3-4 hours and when possible, allow the inspector, realtors, and buyer's sole access to the home so they can concentrate on the inspection and the inspector is free to answer questions openly for the clients.
- Inspectors may arrive up to 30 minutes before the inspection and will typically start the inspection on the exterior of the home.
- Pets should be removed from the home. Inspectors will be opening and closing doors and windows and cannot keep an eye on pet activities or work around pets.
- Inspectors will look under EVERY sink, remove items that block the view of the piping and drainage areas (and please empty all sinks and remove any garbage!)
- **Make sure all sensitive electronics (e.g. computers) are turned off. AFCI's and GFCI's will be tested! Unexpected power loss may cause equipment failure or corrupt files.**
- **Label major known defects to prevent the inspector from doing additional damage. Such as a known leaky shower or a faulty gas fireplace.**
- **Inaccessible areas or inoperable equipment may result in an incomplete inspection.**
- **Incomplete inspections may delay the release of the home inspection contingency clause, which, in turn, may delay closing.**
- **Documentation such as permits, major repairs, renovations, water testing, warranty's etc..., should be available for review.**

Utilities

- Electrical, water, and gas services should all be active in the home.
- Replace burned out light bulbs in light fixtures.
- Inspector will be looking for main water turn offs. Provide access and remove covers if they are not obviously located or are concealed behind interior finishes.
- Ensure all equipment circuit breakers are turned on. (Some AC units need to be energized 24 hours prior to use. AC units will not be tested if the outside temperature is below 15 Celsius).
- Ensure pilot lights are lit in all gas appliances such as fireplaces and furnaces and these appliances respond to normal operator controls.
- **Rival Inspection Services cannot light pilot lights for insurance reasons and will write up these appliances as needing further investigation.**

Outside

- Inspectors will need to see around the perimeter of the entire home. Ensure there is a clear path for the inspector to walk around the home and to safely setup ladders for roof access.
- Inspectors will look at the foundation of the home. Remove stored items, foliage, garbage bins, or anything else that blocks visibility. These items can be in the yard area or against fences.
- In particular, inspectors need to be able to access the gas meter, electric meter, hose bibs (outside taps), electrical outlets, gas outlets, and any entrances, windows or similar areas.
- Remove clutter on balconies, decks, and patios to allow the inspector to view these areas (don't worry about the BBQ or deck chairs).

Appliances

Rival Inspection Services, unlike most other inspection companies, includes major appliances in our home inspections.

- Refrigerator - Ensure all the refrigerators are turned on and have had time to cool to correct temperatures (ice cubes in the freezer are generally a good indicator the freezer is working)
- Oven/Range/Cooktops - Remove all items on cook tops and in ovens as inspectors will be activating the cooking elements checking for correct operation.
- Dishwashers - Inspectors will run the dishwasher (no soap) to check for correct operation. Best practice is to leave the dishwasher empty.
- Clothes Washers - Inspectors will run a wash cycle (no soap) to check for proper operation. Best practice is to leave the washer empty.
- Clothes Dryer - Inspectors will run a dryer cycle. Best practice is to leave the clothes dryer empty.
- **Even if an appliance is not included in the sale, we will operate your machines to ensure plumbing, venting and electrical supplies are in working order.**

Access Areas

- Electric Panel - Inspectors need to be able to safely remove the panel covers. Allow access right to the panel from the front and about 1 meter on either side. Also, avoid painting over panels as inspectors will need to 'crack' through the paint to open the access.
- Furnace & Hot Water Tanks - Inspectors need to be able to approach and inspect these areas. Remove all items in front and remove belongings to about 1 meter of the sides.
- Crawlspace Access - Best practice is to have this access open for the inspector before they arrive and turn on any lights that may be available. Ensure there is a clear path through the crawl space to any mechanical areas such as furnaces or water shut-offs.
- Garage - Ensure inspectors are able to open and close all garage overhead doors and man doors to the outside and inside and have a walking path to each of them.
- **Attic Access(s) - Leave enough room for safe access with a ladder to all accesses.**
- **Rival Inspection Services won't move occupant belongings and will indicate in the report areas not accessed for inspection, which may require a follow-up inspection or could prevent the buyers from going through with the sale.**

Tenanted Homes/Suites

- 24 hours prior to the scheduled inspection time, the landlord should ensure the tenants and tenanted areas are ready for an inspection. The inspector will then be able to safely and freely access all the mechanical areas, run appliances, and test the bathroom fixtures.
- **Make arrangements, whenever possible, for the tenants to vacate the home for inspection.**