

Checking Out Radon

The EPA advises home buyers to test for radon and learn whether the house has a radon-reduction system when purchasing a house.

The EPA also is recommending that home sellers test a home for radon before putting it on the market and take steps to reduce radon levels if necessary. Also, they are suggesting that the sales contract should identify who should conduct the test, the type of test and when to test, if no test has been conducted.

In a related action, the EPA has proposed a set of standards and techniques for controlling radon before the construction of a new house is completed. These standards intend to serve as a model for state and local organizations as they develop and enforce building codes.

Reducing Risk Through A Home Inspection

One of the best ways to reduce the risk of problems involving real estate transactions is to recommend a professional home inspection. A qualified home inspector can provide useful information about positive aspects of a home and maintenance tips, along with any defects that may exist. It is important to include positive aspects about a home to the home-buyer so that the real estate agent does not have to “resell” the home.

There are several important factors to consider when recommending a home inspection company:

- Who performs the inspections?
- What are the inspector’s credentials? The company’s credentials may be different from those of the individual inspectors.
- What type of report is prepared and when does the customer receive it?
- Are the company’s inspectors members of the American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI), the most widely recognized authority in the home inspection profession?
- Does the company carry errors and omissions insurance?
- Does the company offer to perform repair work? This is a conflict of interest and should not be allowed.

These are just some of the factors that should be considered when choosing a home inspection company. Some other important points to consider are:

- **Preparing for a home inspection**—it is important to discuss the inspection with your buyers or sellers to make them aware of the responsibilities of the inspector. The inspection and report should be based on the ASHI Standards of Practice (copy available on request).

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Help to Seal the Deal

If you are giving advice to your client on sealing his or her driveway, then consider this...

Make sure you advise your clients to seal their new driveways after one year, so the asphalt can cure. In general, sealing every two to four years is adequate for most driveways. Any more may result in peeling or slickness.

For sloping driveways, it is best to use a sealer containing filler. The filler is a very fine aggregate or grit that helps fill small cracks and improves traction.

Several types of sealers are available, some fortified with rubber or latex. Good results can also be realized with coal-tar emulsion, a widely used a relatively inexpensive sealer. Coal-tar emulsion requires some brisk mixing before used, but applies easily with a long-handled brush and squeegee.

Reducing Risk (continued from front)

- **Disclosure**—the seller’s disclosure should be discussed with the buyers. It is also a good idea to discuss this with the home inspector. Most inspectors can provide a more detailed explanation of problems, along with possible solutions.
- **Home Warranties**—these can offer additional protection for the homebuyer. Since most warranties have limitations on coverage, a warranty should be used in addition to a professional home inspection.
- **Listing inspections**—by recommending that sellers have their home inspected at the time of listing, the likelihood of a problem occurring after receiving an offer is greatly reduced. Also in today’s competitive market, a favorable inspection report can be used as a marketing tool to provide an advantage over other comparable properties. If the homeowner chooses to fix repairs found in the report, the paid receipt for the repair should be available for future buyers to review.

Life’s moments... Life is meant to be enjoyed!

Raising teenagers is like nailing Jell-o to a tree.

Life’s golden age is when the kids are too old to need babysitters and too young to borrow the family car.

Never get too busy making a living, that you forget to make a life.



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