

## ***Home Inspectors***

### **FACTS FOR CONSUMERS**

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Office of Consumer Affairs Division of Professional Licensure  
*Mitt Romney, Governor*

Board of Registration of Home Inspectors  
[www.state.ma.us/reg/boards/hi](http://www.state.ma.us/reg/boards/hi)

Board of Registration of Home Inspectors is charged with evaluating the qualifications of applicants and granting licensure to those who qualify. It establishes rules and regulations to ensure the integrity and competence of licenses. The Board protects the public health and welfare through regulation of the profession in accordance with the state statutes and board regulations.

The Board is responsible for insuring that licensed home inspectors have proper training and experience through an education program and meet minimum inspection requirements in each inspection performed. Applicants are required to pass a board approved examination prior to licensure and fulfill continuing education requirements for license renewal.

The Board publishes a Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics for home inspectors.

### **About Home Inspections**

A standard home inspection is a visual examination of the physical structure and major interior systems of a residential building consisting of one to four dwelling units. An inspection can be likened to a physical exam by a physician; however, it should be clearly understood that a home inspection is not to be confused with an appraisal, a building code inspection, a guarantee of any kind, and/or an insurance policy on the condition of the property.

During an inspection, the inspector will review the readily accessible exposed portions of the structure of the home, including the roof, the attic, walls, ceilings, floors, windows, doors, basement, and foundation as well as the heating/air-conditioning systems, interior plumbing and electrical systems for potential problems.

Home inspections are not intended to point out every small problem or any invisible or latent defect in a home. Most minor or cosmetic flaws, for example, should be apparent to the buyer without the aid of a professional.

### **Timing of the Home Inspection**

A home inspector is typically hired by a potential homebuyer right after the offer to purchase contract is signed, prior to executing the final purchase and sale agreement. However, before the potential buyer signs the offer to purchase contract, he/she should be sure that there is an inspection clause in the contract making the purchase obligation contingent upon the findings of a professional home inspection. This clause should specify the terms to which both the buyer and seller are obligated.

A current homeowner may also want to get a home inspection to identify any problems, especially if the owner plans to sell the home in the near future.

### **Selecting a Home Inspector**

Good referral sources for home inspection services are friends, neighbors, or business acquaintances who have been satisfied with a home inspector. In addition, lawyers and mortgage brokers may also recommend a home inspector. The names of local inspectors can be found by searching the Division of Professional Licensure website or in the Yellow Pages where many advertised under "Building Inspection Service" or "Home Inspection Service."

Real estate brokers and salesmen may not directly recommend a specific home inspection company or home inspector unless representing the buyer as a buyer's broker. Brokers, however, may provide assistance to buyers in accessing information on licensed home inspectors.

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