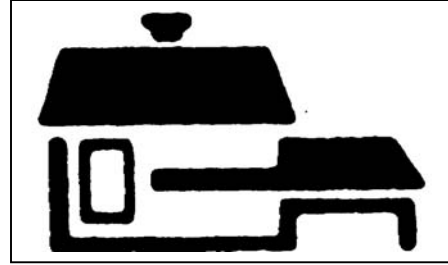


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# Professional Home Inspection Service



Sample Home Inspection Report  
Prepared for:

Property Owner

Site:  
Owner's address



Inspection Date: 2/7/2000

Job Number: 00001

1278 Vestal Avenue, Binghamton, NY 13903  
(607) 773-1519 fax (607) 773-4731  
office@professionalhome.com www.professionalhome.com

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## Professional Home Inspection Service

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Binghamton, NY 13903

Voice (607) 773-1519

Fax (607) 773-4731

[www.professionalhome.com](http://www.professionalhome.com)

[phinspection@stny.rr.com](mailto:phinspection@stny.rr.com)



Dear Property Owner,

Thank you for using Professional Home Inspection Service. We hope that our inspection and testing services have been helpful to you. If you have any questions about your report or need further information, please call us at (607) 773-1519.

We would like to take this opportunity to suggest that a periodic reinspection of the dwelling's structural and mechanical systems can help you efficiently maintain the building and prevent minor deficiencies from becoming serious and expensive problems.

Our satisfied customers are our best referral networks. If you feel that our services have been beneficial, please inform your Realtor, lawyer, banker, or anyone you may know who is purchasing a new home or commercial building. Thank you for your help and best wishes for your new purchase.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gregg M. Harwood". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gregg M. Harwood

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Binghamton, NY 13903

Voice (607) 773-1519 Fax (607) 773-4731  
www.professionalhome.com phis@clarityconnect.com



Date of Inspection: 2/7/2000,

Job number 00001

Client: Property Owner  
Address

Site: Property Owner's address

The information provided below may include minor repairs, maintenance suggestions, recommended improvements to increase the comfort, efficiency or longevity of the subject property and other points of interest to a prospective buyer, in addition to the condition of the major components and systems of the building.

The intent, beyond noting any observed major defects, is to be generally informative concerning the physical and mechanical aspects of the property. If any deficiency uncovered in this report is a concern for you, we recommend that the issue be further investigated and evaluated prior to closing. Any deficiencies observed involving personal safety may be indicated as minor in terms of cost to repair, but could nonetheless result in serious injury.

No appraisal of the market value of the property is included in this report. A finding of defects or deficiencies concerning the property or the existence of suggested improvements to the property within the body of this report does not necessarily reflect any change in the market value. Any projected repair costs included in this report are intended to present a rough guide or range only. Appropriate contractors are recommended if true estimates of cost are needed.

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### **TABLE OF CONTENTS** (The inspected components are reported in the following order, as applicable)

- |                     |                              |                          |
|---------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ➤ FOUNDATION        | ➤ WINDOWS                    | ➤ HEATING EQUIPMENT      |
| ➤ WATER ENTRY       | ➤ EXTERIOR FINISHES          | ➤ ELECTRIC SERVICE       |
| ➤ FRAMING           | ➤ FIREPLACES & WOODSTOVES    | ➤ ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION  |
| ➤ ROOF COVERINGS    | ➤ MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS        | ➤ AIR CONDITIONING       |
| ➤ INSULATION        | ➤ GARAGES                    | ➤ MECHANICAL VENTILATION |
| ➤ ATTIC VENTILATION | ➤ WASTE, WATER & VENT PIPING | ➤ APPLIANCES             |
| ➤ WALLS & CEILINGS  | ➤ PLUMBING FIXTURES          | ➤ SMOKE DETECTORS        |
| ➤ FLOORS            | ➤ WATER HEATER               | ➤ FRIABLE ASBESTOS       |

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## **Inspection Summary**

### **Structural/Finishes**

**FOUNDATION** - The visible foundation appeared to be in adequate condition, but with observations as follows.

#### **OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **One or more cracks indicating settling were noted on the left exterior of the house. The amount of movement appears to be relatively minor, with no indications of compromised support observed. While we cannot predict future performance, this type of movement is often associated with the excavated soil not being fully compacted. If this is the case, the settling typically stops within a few years of construction as the soil fully compacts. We recommend sealing these cracks and monitoring for any future movement.**
- **There is evidence of some inward movement associated with one or more observed cracks in the first floor bedroom/office crawlspace foundation. This is often the result of excess moisture and frost in the adjacent soil. Reducing the concentration of water in the adjacent soil should help prevent further movement. Installing a gutter downspout extension in this area should be helpful. No evidence of significantly compromised support was found in relation to the movement noted. Sealing and monitoring of the crack(s) is recommended.**

**GENERAL COMMENTS** - Any small width cracks in masonry foundation walls which may be referenced in the inspection checklist that do not show evidence of offset or other significant movement are believed to be primarily shrinkage related due to the curing process or thermal expansion and contraction. These are considered normal and are unlikely to result in cause for concern. Monitoring of any cracks is suggested.

Portions of the foundation walls may be covered on the interior, preventing a full inspection of the enclosed areas.

*Foundation observations are recorded on the field checklist as follows: Basement interior view, page 9; Crawlspace interior views, pages 10 & 16; Attached Garage, page 12; Detached Garage, page 16; Exterior views, pages 13 through 14.*

**WATER ENTRY CONTROL**- The basement was dry at the time of inspection. However, evidence of previous water entry has been noted.

#### **OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **The crawlspace was damp at the time of inspection.**
- **To help reduce or prevent any future water entry in the crawlspace or basement, we recommend repairing and adjusting the gutters where sagging at the front of the house and repairing or relocating gutter downspouts, or adding tailpiece extensions where needed to improve drainage.**

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- **One or more of the gutter downspouts discharge into an underground drainage system. The effectiveness of this system is not known. The installation of aluminum screens at the gutters will help reduce the amount of debris entering the system. Monitoring for any backup during heavy rains is recommended. If this system does not adequately handle the roof run off, extensions can be added to the downspouts to discharge water well away from the foundation.**
- **To reduce crawlspace moisture buildup, we also recommend improving the present plastic vapor barrier.**

GENERAL COMMENTS – Not all occurrences of past water entry will be found and reported. The property is typically inspected under one set of weather conditions only. Water entry may be different under differing conditions. Significant amounts of clear water can enter a building and, once dry, leave no telltale damage. It is often impossible to determine the amount of water entry or dampness that occurred from observing damage that is left behind. Any comments as to water entry represent the inspector's best estimation of past conditions.

Regular maintenance of the roof gutters and a proper grade around the building will help guard against future water entry. As with all basements, water entry can occur during adverse conditions and dehumidification may be beneficial.

Exterior conditions may change suddenly, drains may become clogged and water may enter from locations that have previously been dry.

The adequacy of any floor drains is not determined.

*Water entry observations are recorded in the field checklist as follows: Basement, page 9; Gutters and Grading pages 13 through 16.*

**FRAMING - Visible wall, floor, ceiling and roof framing appeared to be in adequate functional condition. No deficiencies resulting in significant settling or other movement were observed.**

#### **OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **The roof construction includes cathedral ceilings. A full inspection of the framing, insulation, and ventilation systems is not possible due to the inherent lack of access. No visible external evidence of framing deficiencies was observed. We recommend continued monitoring of all cathedral ceilings for cracking of finishes, staining, or other indicators of hidden defects.**
- **One or more unfinished attic areas is inaccessible, preventing a full inspection. This condition was found at the garage and first floor bedroom attic. No external evidence of framing deficiencies was observed. We suggest creating access to periodically assess conditions.**

GENERAL COMMENTS - Most framing is covered by finish materials, preventing a direct inspection. The condition of the covered framing must be inferred from an inspection of the finishes, and is therefore necessarily limited. Evidence of hidden framing deficiencies is unlikely to be apparent early in the life of any building.

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Minor sagging of floors, or cracking of ceiling or wall finishes, may be noted in the inspection checklist. Unless otherwise noted, these are believed to be within the range typically found in a building of this age and style, and are believed to be the result of initial movement as wood members dry and loads are applied, or are the result of normal deflection of joists over span. Such movement may be slowly ongoing, but is unlikely to result in a deficiency requiring structural correction. Indications of movement should always be monitored for any evidence of significant further movement.

Any repair procedures recommended regarding the structural framing are generic in nature. Further evaluation and proper specifications for any structural repairs should be obtained from a licensed professional.

Crawlspaces provide inherently limited access. We reserve the right to determine the accessibility of any space for inspection based on our assessment of acceptable clearances and any objectionable or hazardous conditions and will report on the conditions observed from whatever vantage point was obtained.

*Framing observations are recorded in the field checklist as follows: Attic, page 7; Basement, page 9; Crawlspace, pages 10 & 16; Attached Garage, page 12; Detached Garage, page 16.*

**ROOF COVERINGS** - The present roof coverings appeared to be in adequate condition, except as follows.

#### **OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Stains on the skylight moldings are indications of likely leakage in the past. While these stains appeared to be dry at the time of inspection, the skylight frames have been heavily caulked and shingles have been piled at the top edge of the skylights, possibly to help divert water. We recommend repairs or installation of permanent flashings as necessary.**
- **No indications of significant wear, such as advanced grit loss or cracking, were found on the roof coverings. The present layer of roofing material appears to have a remaining effective life of approximately twenty five years.**
- **The roof slope appears to be less than the generally accepted minimum for shingle application over the hot tub room. We were unable to determine if the proper water and ice barrier membrane was installed under these shingles. Monitoring is advised.**

**GENERAL COMMENTS** - Any life expectancies for roofing materials given in the checklist or report are rough estimates only. Actual useful life of these components may vary. Life expectancies are based on the assumption that normal routine maintenance will be performed. This maintenance includes removing debris, and minor repairs. Typically all portions of a roof will not wear out at the same time. In our area, south and west facing slopes, along with valleys, often need replacement before the rest of the roof. Roof cement (tar) flashings typically will not last for the life of the roof and should be periodically inspected and resealed.

Many roofs in our climate experience ice dams and resultant water entry during periods of extreme winter weather conditions. While we look for ceiling damage and staining, we may be unable to determine the likelihood of future excessive ice dams in any individual building that we inspect. If unacceptable ice dams are experienced, reducing heat loss into the attic, and increasing ventilation along the underside of the roof sheathing, are common remedial strategies. Also, specialized ice and water barrier membranes are available which can be applied under shingles when reroofing.

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Any overhanging trees noted in the checklist may reduce the life of the roof covering through abrasion or depositing of debris and may encourage moss or lichen growth.

*Roof covering observations are recorded in the field checklist as follows: House & Garage, page 15; Detached Garage, page 16.*

**INSULATION** - The visible insulation appeared to approximate recently accepted standards.

**OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- The average or approximate amount of insulation observed in the attic areas was nine inches. The discrepancy between the present installation and modern standards is relatively small.
- Exterior walls are believed to be insulated with 3 1/2" fiberglass batts. This is based on the age of the house and wall thickness, and limited visual verification, if any.
- Insulation has been installed backwards in the crawlspace floor. Installation of insulation with the vapor barrier away from the living space can result in condensation buildup and reduced R-value as well as provide ideal rodent habitat. In addition, the Kraft-face of the fiberglass insulation is uncovered in the crawlspace and the basement work room. The manufacturer recommends covering the insulation to provide fire resistance. The most concern would be in areas near potential ignition sources, such as bare light bulbs.

GENERAL COMMENTS - Established modern standards for residential attic/ceiling insulation is roughly 15" to 18", or R-49, depending on heat type. This amount of insulation or more is considered cost effective in most instances. Any inaccessible areas are likely to be insulated to the standards of the period of construction.

The adequacy of vapor barriers on installed insulation, if any, is generally not determinable. Moisture buildup in the attic areas may result. Any such evidence of moisture buildup or damage noted during the inspection is discussed under attic ventilation.

Wall insulation is not generally observable in the course of a general home inspection. Any observations may not be representative. The quality of any installation is undetermined.

Established modern standards for residential wall insulation is generally R-19, or the equivalent of 6" of fiber insulation since 1980. Established modern standards for basement insulation is generally R-19 above grade and R-11 below grade, installed on exterior walls or the ceiling.

*Insulation observations are recorded in the field checklist as follows: Attic, page 7; Walls & Basement, page 9.*

**ATTIC VENTILATION** – Ventilation of the accessible attic area(s) appeared to be adequate to prevent excessive moisture buildup.

**OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Ridge, soffit and gable vents were observed.

GENERAL COMMENTS - Adequate ventilation is necessary in attics to prevent damaging moisture

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buildup and to keep the attic as cool as possible. This minimizes the risk of ice dams and increases the life expectancy of roof coverings. Attic ventilation should be balanced, with equal amounts of ventilation air moving in at the lower portions of the attic space to replace air rising out of vents near the peak.

Household humidity is affected by the life style of the occupants. Condensation in the attic should be monitored in winter and additional vents installed, if necessary. Also, any areas of thermal bypass, which may carry excess moisture from the living space to the attic, should be investigated and corrected. These may include poor seals at attic access doors, plumbing and chimney chaseways, wiring penetrations, etc. Added insulation often increases the need for better ventilation.

*Ventilation observations are recorded in the field checklist as follows: Interior Views, page 7; Exterior Views, page 15.*

## **INTERIOR SURFACES**

**WALLS AND CEILINGS** - Walls and ceilings generally appeared to be in adequate serviceable condition, however the following conditions were observed.

### **OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- A relatively small amount of water damage was observed on the walls adjacent to the clothes washer.
- A small amount of staining was observed on the patched wall and ceiling at the rear of the basement rec. room. Possible water sources include past leakage from the kitchen, the rear deck or from a window that used to be in this location. The area appeared to be dry at inspection. Monitoring is advised.

**FLOORS** - Floor decking and coverings appeared to be in adequate serviceable condition.

### **OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- The finish on some of the wood floors is worn. Stains as noted in the wood flooring do not typically sand out, but can usually be masked with application of a dark stain to the floor during refinishing, if desired. This condition was found in one of the second floor bedrooms.

**GENERAL COMMENTS** - Any minor looseness or cracking in the wall and ceiling finishes, unless indicated otherwise, are believed to represent normal shrinkage, deflection, or settlement and are unlikely to significantly worsen.

Any water stains that were observed that are not addressed in the "Observations" section are presumed to be inactive. A source of active or potential leakage was not determined. We are unable to certify that leakage may not re-occur. Conditions conducive to leakage may change due to numerous causes beyond the ability of the inspector to discover.

Leaded paint may exist in any older building. Well-maintained interior finishes and due diligence during any repairs or remodeling can reduce associated hazards. Testing is available at additional cost, if desired.

*Interior surfaces observations are recorded in the field checklist as follows: Living Space, pages 2 through 9; Attached Garage, page 12.*



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**WINDOWS** - The windows or glazed openings appeared to be in adequate operational condition. However, the following observations were made.

**OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Due to inadequate size, height off the floor, or other reasons, windows do not meet emergency egress requirements in the second floor bedrooms. This condition is locally common in homes of this age and style. These windows will be difficult, or impossible, to use as an escape route in the event of a fire.**
- **Many of the windows have been upgraded to insulated vinyl types.**

**GENERAL COMMENTS** – Windows are randomly tested.

We cannot reliably determine the presence of safety glass in all locations where warranted. Safety glass is recommended or required at storm doors, patio doors, stair landing windows, windows less than 18" above the floor, shower doors, and windows in shower or tub areas. Fall protection may also be appropriate for some window locations.

The adequacy of any window dimensions or function for emergency egress has not been determined. All instances of fogged window glass may not have been identified during the inspection.

*Window observations are recorded in the field checklist as follows: Interior Views, pages 2 through 9; Exterior Views, pages 13 through 16.*

**EXTERIOR FINISHES** - The exterior finishes appeared to be adequately installed and in acceptable functional condition, with minor deficiencies observed as follows..

**OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Exterior finishes were observed close to, or in contact with, the ground at the front and right sides. Siding and trim should be a minimum of 6" above grade to help ensure against moisture entry and decay to the siding or materials behind the siding.**
- **Trees, shrubs, or vines were observed close to, or overhanging the house. Vegetation that touches the house can create pest conducive conditions as well as abrasion. Overhanging trees can damage the roof.**
- **Areas of peeling paint were observed on the wooden trim. Periodic repainting is advised.**
- **A small amount of damaged aluminum siding was observed adjacent to the garage door opening.**
- **No weep holes have been installed at the bottom of the brick veneer walls, as is recommended, to allow trapped water to escape. No related damage was found. Typically the presence or condition of water resistant house wrap and flashings used to reduce such damage cannot be determined. Regular monitoring and maintenance of caulking at wall openings and any visible flashings is advised. This is a locally common condition.**

**GENERAL COMMENTS** - The adequacy of any siding installation for the prevention of water entry may be difficult to assess without intrusive methods. We recommend annual inspection and repair of all

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caulking and monitoring of flashings at windows, doors, roof intersections, etc., for evidence of moisture behind the siding.

Any vegetation, which touches the building can create pest conducive conditions as well as abrasion and may promote decay.

*Exterior finish observations are recorded in the field checklist on pages 13 through 14.*

**FIREPLACES AND WOODSTOVES - While no testing was performed, solid fuel appliance installation generally appeared to be adequate, with minor deficiencies observed as follows.**

**OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Deterioration and/or cracking of the crown has been noted at the masonry chimney. This can result in moisture entry into the masonry and subsequent damage. Recoating the stucco on this crown is recommended.**
- **A gas insert has been installed in the fireplace, preventing inspection of the fireplace for use with solid fuel. See HEATING EQUIPMENT.**

**GENERAL COMMENTS** - Woodstove and fireplace flues are not fully viewable without specialized equipment. Any comments concerning the condition of flues are derived from a limited inspection. This report does not include calculations of proper sizing and draft. A full determination of the condition of any unit or flue, or of compliance with fire and safety codes, is not within the scope of this inspection. Comprehensive inspections of chimney flues are available from professional chimney services with specialized equipment. Relining of chimneys, if necessary, typically costs approximately \$1,600 or more. If of concern, we suggest calling in a chimney specialist prior to closing. For guidelines to proper construction, clearances and requirements for solid fuel appliances, refer to NFPA 211. Almost all installations include at least some deviations from recommended practices. Unless the conditions are deemed to be abnormal from the standard practices of the area, and of particular hazard, they may not be referenced in the report.

Care should be exercised when operating any woodburning equipment and chimneys should be cleaned and inspected regularly.

*Fireplace and woodstove observations are recorded in the field checklist on page 12. Chimneys are covered on page 15.*

**OTHER MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS WERE NOTED AS FOLLOWS -**

- **A corner roof support post has been removed at the front porch. Resultant sagging was observed at this roof. Repair is advised.**
- **Safety railings are missing at both interior stairs and at the front porch. An open side without a handrail installed for improved safety was also observed at the interior stairs.**
- **Settling, resulting in an excessive rise and possible trip hazard, has occurred where the front walk meets the porch steps.**
- **Evidence of past or present small rodent activity was observed. A dead mouse was observed in the basement near the utility sink.**
- **No continuous flashing has been installed from behind the siding over or behind the adjacent deck framing to prevent water entry to behind the siding below the deck. Stains that were observed on the**

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rec. room ceiling could be the result. Installing adequate flashing is advised.

- **Some minor settling has occurred in the concrete footers at the rear deck support posts. While this settling has moved the posts somewhat out of plumb, no indications of significantly compromised support was observed. Monitoring for any future movement is advised.**

**GARAGE** - The garage components appeared to be in adequate functional condition, except as follows.

#### **OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **The overhead door automatic operator did not readily reverse when striking an object. We recommend that this safety feature be incorporated into the door function. Adjustment may suffice to correct this safety function.**
- **Modern standards for fire-resistance between the garage and house are not being met. The garage-house door is not a labeled fire resistant type.**
- **Framing was observed to be set to below the adjacent grade at the garage. This is a locally common condition. However, this can result in chronic moisture and resultant damage to the wood. No damage was observed, but visibility is limited.**

**GENERAL COMMENTS** – Modern building standards require fire-resistance between the garage and living space. This normally includes specially designed and labeled self-closing doors in separating walls and fire-rated sheetrock on separating walls and ceilings. Requirements vary depending on the age and location of the building. Therefore, a strict determination of fire-resistance adequacy is not a part of this inspection.

Testing of overhead door safety features is limited. We recommend periodic evaluation of overhead door function and safety features. Present codes require that when any professional repair is made to an overhead door or door operation, the system must be fully upgraded to modern safety requirements. Typically newer automatic garage door openers have better safety features than older units.

*Garage observations are recorded in the field checklist as follows: Attached Garage, page 12; Detached Garage, page 16.*

## **Mechanical/Fixtures**

### **PLUMBING**

**WASTE, WATER, & VENT PIPING** - Visible piping appeared to be in adequate functional condition , except as follows.

#### **OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Water was observed on the basement floor adjacent to the water meter and water softener. The exact location of the leak was not determined. Further professional evaluation is recommended with repairs as necessary.**
- **The water heater has not received an appropriate add-on expansion tank subsequent to the installation of a backflow preventer on the municipal water supply. This results in excessive water**

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pressure under certain conditions that can cause leakage from the pressure relief valve.

**PLUMBING FIXTURES** - Visible piping appeared to be in adequate functional condition.

**OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- While no active leakage was observed, chrome waste fittings below one or more fixtures are corroding and may begin leaking. Normal maintenance may require periodic replacement.
- One or more exterior spigots have been left in service and may be susceptible to freezing and bursting.

GENERAL COMMENTS - Plumbing fixtures are not typically tested for leakage beyond quick normal operation. Testing tubs and showers with standing water may reveal potential leakage not observed during normal operation. In particular, older tile shower pans may leak when tested with standing water. Tests of this type may result in water damage to finished surfaces.

Any water filter, conditioner, etc. may become contaminated. Regular replacement or other maintenance is recommended.

Determining the type of wastewater disposal system is not included in the general home inspection. Testing or inspection of any septic systems is not included. Some older buildings presently served by municipal sewers may include abandoned septic systems. Homeowners should be alert to any areas of subsiding soil indicating collapsing tanks or cesspools. Often gray water from laundries and sinks drain into drywells, even after the rest of the building has been connected to sewers, in violation of municipal codes.

The function and condition of buried supply and waste piping is not included in the general home inspection.

*Waste, water and vent piping observations are recorded in the field checklist as follows: Supply and Waste Lines, page 10; Vent Piping, pages 7 & 15. Plumbing fixtures are covered on pages 2 through 9.*

**WATER HEATER** - The domestic water heating equipment appeared to be in adequate functional condition when operated, except as follows.

**OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- The single wall vent connector does not maintain adequate clearance to combustible materials. The minimum accepted clearance for gas fired equipment is 6" unless otherwise indicated on the equipment or installation guide. About two inch clearance was observed between the connector and wood floor joists. We suggest installing double wall vent piping or heat shielding in the affected area as appropriate for increased safety.
- The heating equipment has been removed from the previously shared chimney, leaving the water heaters as the only appliances at the exterior masonry chimney. While no damage was observed, this arrangement can create excess condensation within the flue and damage to the chimney and vent connector. The chimney flue should be evaluated and downsized per accepted proper practice to retain adequate draft and prevent condensation buildup and resultant damage. Under the present circumstances, upgrading to modern equipment designed to be horizontally vented when time comes to replace the water heaters, may be the best approach.
- The age of the water heating equipment is believed to be approximately thirteen years.

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GENERAL COMMENTS - The hot water temperature was not measured. Temperatures over 125 degrees can cause scalding. We recommend adjusting the temperature to a safe level, if necessary.

Water heaters often leak large amounts of water when they fail. A floor drain located nearby can minimize damage.

The normal life expectancy of a water heater is from 8 - 15 years. The longevity of any older water heater is unpredictable.

Pressure relief valves prevent explosions in water heating equipment. The manufacturer recommends that pressure relief valves be replaced every 3 years to reduce the likelihood of malfunction. We recommend that homeowner's test these valves annually for basic function and replace any that fail to release water or fail to shut off after testing.

*Water heater observations are recorded in the field checklist on page 10.*

**HEATING EQUIPMENT - The heating equipment appeared to be in generally adequate functional condition when operated, with minor deficiencies noted as follows.**

**OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Condensate leakage was observed at one or more locations in the exhaust system. This condition was found at the first PVC fitting adjacent to the furnace and as corrosion within the furnace cabinet. Servicing to correct these leaks is advised.**
- **The suitability of the present horizontal venting system can only be determined by reference to the installation manual and any service records. This review is not included in the inspection. We recommend obtaining these materials if not already on site. They should remain with the equipment.**
- **Gas meter equipment as observed in the driveway area is subject to potential impact damage. Relocation or protection is recommended.**
- **The age of the heating unit is believed to be approximately fifteen years. The heat exchanger is an essentially sealed type, preventing any visual inspection. No other indicators of a deficiency were observed.**

GENERAL COMMENTS - Sealed type humidifiers, and electronic air cleaners, if applicable, cannot be fully inspected within the scope of a general home inspection. Covers are not removed from humidifiers due to the risk of creating leakage.

Periodic inspection of heating equipment and all safety features is recommended. The longevity of older heating equipment is unpredictable, although age alone is not a good indicator of remaining life. Older equipment is generally less efficient. Safety controls are not typically tested in the course of a general home inspection. Relatively minor deficiencies may result in a recommendation for replacement from some heating contractors.

Heat sources were located in rooms as identified on the field checklist. However, the adequacy of the heat supply to any particular area of the building cannot be determined during a general home inspection.

Any fossil fuel burning equipment is checked for adequate draft, if feasible, under the conditions present during the inspection. An exhaustive draft test, which would involve testing under a "worst case" scenario, i.e. all doors and windows closed and all mechanical exhaust fans operating, was not performed as part of this general home inspection. Adequate draft is necessary in order to ensure that combustion products, including carbon monoxide are properly exhausted from the building.

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Fossil fuel-fired equipment is capable of producing difficult to detect, but potentially lethal quantities of carbon monoxide, if certain malfunctions, such as blocked chimneys or breached heat exchangers, should occur. Any indications of combustion gas spillage, such as odors near the equipment, corrosion around the "stove pipe" connections, or draft hood, wintertime moisture buildup on windows, or unexplained headaches and flu-like symptoms, should be immediately investigated. Periodic reinspection of all gas-fired equipment is recommended to ensure that conditions conducive to carbon monoxide poisoning do not occur.

Vent connectors and chimney flues, if applicable, were not fully inspected since dismantling would be required. Regular inspection is recommended to ensure against any future hazardous blockage or other defects.

Any defects that are noted in this report that concern the supply, usage or venting of natural gas or propane are probably also gas code issues. The local utility may "red tag" these defects if any significant health risk is associated with these issues, and require repair in order to maintain gas service.

*Heating equipment observations are recorded in the field checklist as follows: Equipment and Venting, pages 11 & 15; Heat Distribution, pages 2 through 9.*

## **ELECTRICAL**

**ELECTRIC SERVICE EQUIPMENT** - Service equipment and panel(s) appeared to be in adequate functional condition.

**ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION EQUIPMENT** - The distribution system appeared to be in generally adequate functional condition, with minor deficiencies noted as follows.

### **OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Electrical receptacles with reversed polarity were revealed by random testing as delineated in the checklist. Reversed polarity can result in improper function of some equipment and reduced shock hazard resistance. Correction is advised. We recommend testing of all of the receptacles when repairs are made. This condition was found in the upper hall.**
- **Electrical cable is subject to possible mechanical damage as noted in the field checklist. We suggest re-routing, protecting, or replacing the wiring with the appropriate type. This condition was found in the kitchen sink cabinet.**
- **Incandescent light fixtures, as noted in some closets, can pose a fire hazard if combustible materials are placed in close proximity. Changing to low heat bulbs is suggested.**
- **One porcelain light fixture located above the basement workbench is damaged. Replacement is advised.**

**GENERAL COMMENTS** - While electrical deficiencies may be listed as minor defects and are usually easily corrected, an increased risk of shock or fire hazard is associated with these electrical issues, and correction is always recommended.

Receptacles and lighting fixtures are inspected by random operation, typically one in each room. Defects may exist in untested devices. Testing of each device may be warranted. Fixtures with light or motion sensors are not readily testable.

Circuit breakers and fuses are inspected as feasible but are not tested. The size or condition of cartridge fuses is not determined. Circuit breakers may fail to trip at their designated maximum loads. Periodic manual

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tripping of all breakers is recommended to test their function.

GFI receptacles and breakers are designed to protect the user from shock hazard. While they may not be required depending on age, we recommend updating any older "wet area" receptacles to GFI type as found in NEW construction in order to better protect occupants from potential shock hazard. GFI devices should be tested monthly by operating the manual trip and reset buttons.

Any non-functioning light fixtures as noted in the checklist, unless indicated otherwise, are presumed (but not confirmed) to be due to burned out bulbs.

Some recessed lights can build up excess heat and create a fire hazard, if insulated too closely or if too large a bulb is installed. Verifying these conditions is beyond the scope of this inspection.

Paddle fans require a special heavy duty mounting box for adequate support. Often these boxes have not been installed in older installations or where amateurs have done the work. The adequacy of any paddle fan support system cannot be determined in the course of a general home inspection.

A qualified electrician is recommended for all corrections and for further investigation of electrical safety issues, as appropriate, prior to closing.

*Electric service equipment observations are recorded on the field checklist as follows: Interior Equipment, page 11; Exterior equipment, page 14. Electric distribution equipment observations are covered as follows: Interior, pages 2 through 9; Attached garage, 12; Exterior, pages 13 through 14; Detached garage, page 16.*

**CENTRAL AIR CONDITIONING - The air conditioning system was not operated due to being shut-down, or due to low outside temperatures, per the manufacturer's recommendations. A qualified AC technician can perform tests on a shut down system, which can provide further information, if desired.**

#### **OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **The condenser is out of level. Leveling is recommended to ensure proper longevity of the unit.**
- **The AC system appears to be about thirteen years old.**

**GENERAL COMMENTS** - Homeowner maintenance of A.C. systems includes regular cleaning of air handler filters. Condensers should be kept clear of shrubs and debris, which will impede airflow. Any indications of water leakage at the air handler should be further investigated. Periodic professional servicing is recommended.

*Air conditioning observations are recorded in the field checklist as follows: Interior Equipment, page 11; Exterior Equipment, page 14.*

**MECHANICAL VENTILATION - The mechanical ventilation systems appeared to be in generally adequate functional condition, with the following minor deficiencies noted.**

#### **OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **The exhaust duct from one bathroom fan is apart in the attic. Minor repair should suffice. We were unable to determine if the rest of the exhaust fans vent to the exterior.**
- **The whole house fan functioned adequately when tested. The attic fans were not tested, due to cold**

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weather conditions.

GENERAL COMMENTS - It is generally recommended that any flexible plastic clothes dryer exhaust tubing, if observed, be updated to the metal type for safer operation. Dryer exhaust tubing should be monitored for lint buildup and clogging.

All exhaust outlets should be monitored for adequate flapper operation to ensure adequate airflow and to prevent cold air or pest entry.

*Mechanical ventilation observations are recorded in the field checklist as follows: Interior, pages 2 through 9; Exterior, page 14.*

**APPLIANCES - Kitchen appliances were briefly tested for basic function where appropriate. No significant deficiencies were found.**

GENERAL COMMENTS-Appliances are briefly tested for basic function only. Inspection is typically restricted to kitchen appliances only.

*Appliance observations are recorded in the field checklist on page 3.*

**SAFETY ALARMS - Bedroom area smoke and carbon monoxide detectors functioned when tested.**

GENERAL COMMENTS – Safety alarms are tested by using the test button only.

One functioning smoke detector is required for residential real estate sales in New York State. We recommend smoke detectors on every level and in every bedroom hallway. New construction requirements include integrated detectors installed in each bedroom. It is generally recommended in the industry that smoke detectors be replaced at least every 10 years.

One functioning carbon monoxide detector, placed in the vicinity of the lowest level bedroom, is a requirement for residential real estate sales in New York State. We recommend the installation of carbon monoxide detectors outside any bedroom areas.

**FRIABLE ASBESTOS - A quantity of suspected friable asbestos containing material has been noted in the basement.**

#### **OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Suspected asbestos containing duct wrap and/or tape was observed in several locations in the basement. If of concern, we suggest testing for verification and encapsulation in a paint or lag cloth, if feasible, or removal.**

GENERAL COMMENTS - Asbestos may be contained in many materials throughout any older building. The potential existence of asbestos in other materials within the building is not addressed in this report.

Older furnaces and boilers may contain concealed friable asbestos. Verification typically requires disassembly. In furnaces this material was often used as insulation in the jacket and, if present, poses the potential to release fibers into the heated air.



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Professional removal or encapsulation may result in considerable expense. Further professional advice may be warranted. Non-professional removal may result in extensive contamination of the workplace and increased health risk.

An EPA informational web site regarding asbestos is included at the end of this report.

*Friable asbestos observations are recorded in the field checklist on page 9.*

The above observations, recommendations, and rough estimates, if any, are offered on an opinion only basis. Defects and deficiencies as noted are not necessarily inclusive. In-depth evaluations of individual components of the building, which are beyond the scope of a general home inspection, are available from local specialists.

Some of the common building components which can be further evaluated by professionals using specialized tools and knowledge, and typically involving disassembly or sampling include: the heating/air conditioning systems, fireplaces and chimneys, the electrical system, asbestos, water systems, on-site waste systems, structural systems, and environmental issues.

The final judgment concerning the seriousness of any perceived defect, or the appropriateness of any proposed remedial action, or the advisability of employing a specialist for further evaluation, is the responsibility of the client. The final judgment on any issues involving fire or building codes should be deferred to the appropriate code officials. We recommend that no indicated repairs be performed without providing a copy of the pertinent portions of this report to any service personnel. Repair personnel brought in to address deficiencies noted in the report should be requested to further evaluate the condition of the components within their area of expertise and to correct any deficiencies noted that are beyond those included in the report, or to advise the client regarding these deficiencies.

This company assumes no liability and shall not be liable for any mistakes, omissions, or errors in judgment, beyond the cost of the report. Furthermore, this company is not responsible for any third party reliance on this report.

**We strongly recommend that you perform a comprehensive “walk-through” inspection immediately prior to closing to assure yourself that all systems and components are functioning as expected. This is typically your last chance to verify that the condition of the building components is as indicated in this report and that the condition meets with your satisfaction.**

Please note that this is primarily a list of items for which we are suggesting improvement or repair. The good points and advantages of the property are not necessarily included. For further information, please see the field report checklist. Please feel free to call Professional Home Inspection Service for any clarification.



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for Professional Home Inspection Service.  
Gregg M. Harwood

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***SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT INFORMATION***

*The following links have been selected to provide additional information on some of the complex issues that are discussed during a home inspection. These items may or may not appear in your report. This list is included in every report. If you have any questions concerning your inspection, please give us a call.*

**Aluminum Wiring:** Aluminum wiring has been linked to home fires. This information from the Consumer Product Safety Commission gives a brief history of its use and discusses some of the typical repair methods. However, the recommended repair, called a CopAlum crimp connection typically is not feasible for residential construction. We therefore always recommend consulting a qualified electrician when aluminum wiring is found in 15 and 20 amp branch circuits.

<http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PUBS/516.pdf>

**Asbestos:** Asbestos fibers can cause lung disease. This guide from the EPA discusses the issue and possible abatement methods.

<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs/asbestos.html>

**Carbon Monoxide:** Information from the EPA and the Consumer Product Safety Commission

<http://www.epa.gov/ebtpages/airindoorcarbonmonoxide.html>

<http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PUBS/5010.html>

**Flexible Brass Connectors:** These connectors are often used to connect gas ranges, water heaters, etc. to the solid gas piping. These older connectors have been linked to numerous fires and deaths. Information from the Consumer Products Safety Commission.

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/gasconn.html>

**Fuel Oil Tanks:** Fuel oil tanks can pose an environmental hazard if not properly maintained. This article from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation discusses tank maintenance and the particular concern over buried fuel tanks.

<http://www.professionalhome.com/fueltank.html>

**GFCI's:** Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI's) are inexpensive devices that greatly reduce the risk of shocks and electrocution. These devices are required by code in all "damp" areas of newly constructed homes including the kitchen, bath, exterior, etc. While not required in older homes, these devices are a recommended upgrade in any home. This fact sheet from the Consumer Products Safety Commission further explains the benefits of GFCI's. <http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PUBS/99.html>

**Heat Tapes:** Heat tapes are used in many homes to help prevent freezing pipes. Once installed, these devices are easily forgotten. This Fact sheet from the Consumer Product Safety Commission reminds us that heat tapes should be properly installed and periodically replaced to reduce fire risks. <http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PUBS/5045.html>

**HTPV vents:** Some gas fired furnaces and boilers were installed in the '80's and '90's with a gray to black plastic vent pipe called High Temperature Plastic Vent (HTPV). This material was recalled by the



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## PHOTOS

The following photos are included to provide clarification. Please remember that not all issues that may be raised in a home inspection can be illustrated in a photo. We recommend careful review of all systems covered in the typed inspection report.



Suspected asbestos duct tape in basement



Example of missing rails and an open side at stairs



Unprotected wire to garbage disposal



Stains at skylight trim



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Water on basement floor near water softener	Bath fan duct apart in attic
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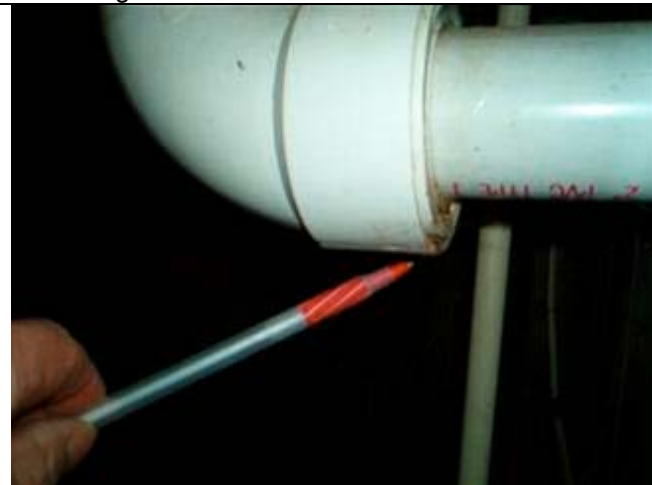
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Broken light fixture above basement workbench



Inadequate clearance from water heater vent to joists



Active leak at furnace vent piping



Corrosion in furnace cabinet



Missing corner post at porch roof, missing rails, excessive rise at step



Example of soil/siding contact

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Example of peeling exterior paint



Insulation upside down in crawlspace with paper exposed



Damp conditions in crawlspace



Crack and offset in crawlspace foundation



Settled footer, post out of plumb under deck



Air conditioner unit out of level



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Gas meter unprotected at driveway



Caulk applied to skylight



Shingles piled above skylight



Deterioration on chimney crown



Example of downspout discharging adjacent to house

