

Inspections for New Homes

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Independent Home Inspector

Have you ever wondered why the Leaning Tower of Pisa is actually leaning? This famous structure is a good example of how buildings shift, along with their surroundings. Newer buildings actually do so more than others. The initial settling can stress a structure, and cause foundation wall and floor cracks, cladding separation, plus a host of unforeseen problems.

Most builders provide their customers with extended warranty coverage through the Tarion Warranty Corporation. Under this program new homeowners are protected for up to two years against work-related defects and materials, and up to seven years for major structural defects. New homeowners have several critical anniversaries that provide the

opportunity to record and report problems. A pre-delivery (PDI) inspection with the builders' representative is common practice before taking

possession of the house. There are two other opportunities to document and report concerns -- 30 days after taking possession, and prior to the one-year anniversary. The one-year inspection is the most important, and a detailed report documenting any

concerns must be presented to Tarion, and the builder.

A thorough inspection of a home within the first year is essential in order to pre-empt costly problems in the future. Hiring a professional home inspector to help is one of the best investments a homeowner can make. Home inspectors are specifically trained to look for problem areas in the buildings construction that you could easily miss. Deficiencies and defects in the new home will be reported in a professional and concise format.

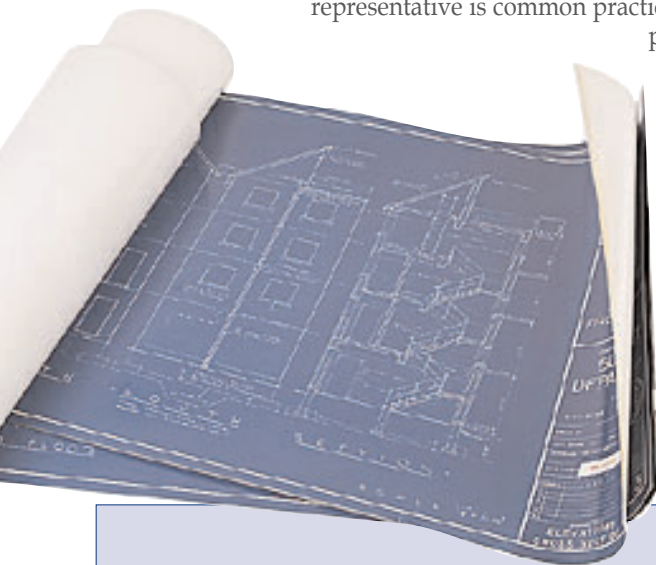
FACT: Large-scale builders can use up to 30 different companies in the construction of a single home. Builders often have difficulty supervising trades when so many homes are built at the same time. It's common for things to be missed or overlooked, and the quality of workmanship can suffer. Along with the normal settling of a building, many homeowners are unaware of other problems that can arise. An inspector will investigate all of the major components of a new home and look beyond the cosmetics, and focus on the building as a functioning system. The process is designed to help determine what defects are covered by your warranty in preparation for submitting the results to Tarion. The one-year warranty inspection is an extensive assessment of the house, and the report also serves as a valuable tool for resale.

Many people who rely on their own observations don't get the benefit from the objective assessment of an independent home inspector for their one-year warranty. Choose a home inspection professional based on education, professional affiliations and practical experience in the field. In Ontario, the Ontario Association of Home Inspectors (OAHII) is the recognized source for qualified inspectors. www.oahi.com

In subsequent columns we'll look at the heart of your home. Send your comments and questions to: info@bookahomeinspection.com.

HOUSE TIPS

➔ **Having your heating ducts cleaned by a professional can reduce airborne contaminants, improve indoor air quality, and improve airflow**



Our readers asked us...

Q... I read your recent article on roof inspections and was wondering why the surface of our asphalt shingles seem to be disintegrating in certain places. When I cleaned our eave troughs this spring they were full of the shingle granules. We replaced the roof about 10 years ago and the shingles are supposed to be guaranteed for 25 years.

A... Shingles can suffer pre-mature wear depending on how they are installed, the condition of the attic ventilation, and the direction that each roof surface faces. Check the manufacturer's warranty to make certain that your roofing contractor has followed the installation guidelines. Also, try to determine if there is adequate ventilation in your attic. Ventilation requirements for the roof surface size in your area can be determined by contacting your local building department. If everything checks out, contact the shingle manufacturer for recommendations, or to arrange an inspection.

Q... We recently hired an inspector to help us with the pre-delivery inspection on our new home. The builders' representative was also on-site with us, but was not happy with some of the recommendations our inspector made. The builder rep said that having a home inspector with us was not a normal practice. Is this true?

A... Hiring a home inspector to perform a PDI inspection is an acceptable practice. For the most part the Building Industry recognizes the consumers' need for this service and is working with the home inspection industry to make the process easier. A home inspector approaches a PDI inspection from a somewhat different perspective than the builders' representative. We look beyond cosmetic scuffs and scrapes and assess the overall quality of construction and deficiencies that can affect the occupants. Our inspection process is generally longer than a traditional PDI, so make sure the builder knows that your inspectors will be with you ahead of time.

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