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Opinion

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Home Inspections
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Seller Ready Inspection

1. Clean the House

Before the day of the inspection, be sure to give the home a thorough cleaning.

This sounds so simple yet home owners often overlook this tactic. Home inspectors are people first and inspectors second. As people, they carry preconceived ideas of how well a home has been maintained. Clean homes say you care and take care of the house.

2. Leave the Utilities Connected

The home inspector will need to turn on the stove, run the dishwasher, test the furnace and air conditioning, so leave the utilities on, especially if the house is vacant. It's impossible to check receptacles for grounding and reverse polarity if the power is turned off. Without utilities, the inspector will have to reschedule, which could delay the closing of your transaction and the removal of the buyer's home inspection contingency.

4. Provide Workspace Around Furnace and Water Heaters

In your preparation, be sure that the inspector has easy access. Remove boxes, bookcases, furniture and anything else blocking access to your furnace, air conditioner, electrical panels and water heater.

5. Testing of Utilities

Part of the home inspection will include testing of the utilities. Before the inspection, make sure that you leave all utilities on, such as, gas, light, water and any other types of utilities that you have. Many home inspectors will refuse to light pilot lights because they are not covered for that type of liability. If your pilot lights are not lit, then important items such as the water heater, gas stove, furnace or fireplace will not be inspected and the buyer could delay closing until those inspections are completed.

6. Provide Access to Attic and Garage

The inspector will need to get into your basement, crawl space and / or attic as well, so keep a path cleared (often times located in closets). Move boxes away from the walls.

7. Leave Keys for Outbuildings & Electrical Boxes

Leave the remote controls for your garage door opener or a key if the garage is unattached to the house. Unlock the covers for your sprinkler system and electrical box. Leave a key for exterior building access.

9. Provide Repair Documents

Make available to the home inspector all invoices and documents regarding remodeling projects or new items such as a roof or furnace. If you've upgraded the electrical from ungrounded to grounded, installed a new dishwasher or repaired a leaky faucet, find the paperwork. It will give the buyer peace of mind to know those items were reinspected.

10. Smoke Detectors & Emergency Lighting

It is also important that you test the smoke detectors and emergency lighting (if present) in your home before the inspection. Replace defective ones or replace batteries if needed.

11. Should a Seller Be Present for the Inspection? Generally, no. There are some things that work, and then there are some things that don't work. Having the Seller present during an Inspection is something that often does not work! A professional Home Inspection, by its very design, is intended to be thorough and complete. Often times a Seller can become defensive because he feels the privacy of his home is being invaded. Sometimes a Seller can even become angry, if defects are found, or areas of "do-it-yourself" renovations are noted.

12. Prepare to be Away for Two Hours Minimum

Often the buyer will accompany the home inspector, and buyers feel uncomfortable asking questions if the owner is present. Try to schedule a time for the inspection when you can be out of the house, and take the children with you. Crate your pets if you cannot remove them from the premises

13. What about after the inspection?

Sit back and relax. Your agent or representative will assist you in the process after the inspection. Remember, competent professional home inspectors provide their customers with unbiased and clear information. They put the conditions noted in the course of their inspections in perspective. This allows buyers to make calm and informed decisions about the information in the inspection report.

Experience has shown that most buyers aren't obsessive perfectionists. Unless there are significant conditions which require immediate modifications or corrective measures, they typically understand that your home is where people just like them live and they anticipate a reasonable amount "normal wear and tear" and minor deferred maintenance.