

## Seller's Preparation for Home Inspection

The inspector's goal is to make a complete and unbiased inspection within the NC mandated standard of practice; there is a copy of the NC S.O.P on our website for your convenience. The property owner can facilitate the inspection goal, and improve their home's inspection report by considering the following.

Seller should put away valuable or sensitive items and make plans to be away, and children should be absent from the home during the inspection. Our standard of practice is very clear regarding not working in rooms where children are present. The inspector has hundreds of items to inspect and distraction will only prolong or postpone the inspection, and can result "false-failed items" in the report.

By law / ethics, the home inspector can only share findings with his client; inspectors should not interact with the seller (non-client) or explain discoveries to the seller. Of course, if you feel your home has been physically damaged by the inspection, we want to hear from you or your agent.

### Sinks & Dishwasher

Clear all sinks and access under each sink. Inspectors should not move personal items such as dishes, or stored items under sinks. If an area is inaccessible it will be noted as "not inspected"; many buyers see this as a "failed area." We will run your dishwasher through a full cycle, full or empty, with soap or without. However we find it, we will run it.

### HVAC and Water Heaters

Clear area around water heaters and HVAC compressors and air handlers where ever they are located (outside, inside, closets, attics, crawl space, etc.). If a component is inaccessible it will be noted as "not inspected"; many buyers see this as a "failed component."

### Attic Access

The inspector will need to enter the attic; often access is blocked by personal property such as laundry and soap when the attic access is in a laundry room. If an area is inaccessible it will be noted as "not inspected"; many buyers see this as a "failed area."

### Electric Panels

The inspector will need to open all electric panels; often panels are blocked by personal property or plants, or located in unsafe areas. If the inspector feels the access is insufficient or dangerous (wet conditions, it will be noted as "not inspected"; many buyers see this as a "failed component."

### GFI Circuits & Outlets

The inspector will test all GFI circuits and outlets, including causing the circuits to trip. The GFI outlets or breakers should be clearly visible and accessible, and any sensitive equipment should be unplugged. Feel free to leave a note identifying the locations of GFI re-sets if they are not apparent. Outlets in each room are also tested. Please have at least 50% of outlets accessible to the inspector without requiring the inspector to move personal property, couch, bed, table, etc.

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## Switches and Lights

Switches should be accessible and anything they operate should be functional. When switched outlets are present, have a lamp plugged in so it operates when the switch is activated. All bulbs should function in all permanently mounted light fixtures; if the bulb is out, replace it before the inspection. If a switch has no apparent function or a bulb is not working, the inspector must fail the circuit of fixture.

## Notes and Disabled Items

Some families leave notes instructing children to “do not touch thermostat!” An inspector must assume this note refers to a dangerous or non-working appliance or condition. The state (NC) does not want us to employ common sense in these situations; we are instructed to obey the note and “fail the system.”

If an item is disabled by a breaker, valve, gas shut-off, lock, etc., an inspector cannot operate the item and must “fail” it. If an item is operational, enable it so that it can be inspected.

## Normal Operating Controls

All items should operate from “normal operating controls.” Gas fireplaces are good examples; many homeowners turn off the little gas valve right beside the “on” knob. An inspector should be able to push the “on” button and the fire springs to life. We cannot turn on a cut-off valve or light the pilot on any gas appliance.

Another good example is ceiling fans; sometimes homeowners turn the light or fan off at the fixture. The fan should operate by the wall switch, the inspector does not try to “fix or diagnose” why something does not work. Make sure all ceiling fan components work by turning on the wall switch. Items either work by normal controls or they are reported as non-functional, there is no grey area in home inspection reporting.

## Personal Property and Dangerous Conditions

You likely know where this is going by now... Inspectors do not move personal property or expose themselves to dangerous conditions. If large sections of wall, garage, closets, cabinetry, etc. is blocked from view, it will be noted in the report as “not inspected.” Of course, we will note the home is occupied or vacant, and there is the expectation that occupied homes will have some obstructions. With that said, it's in the best interest of all parties to have as few “not inspected” areas / remarks as possible.

Some example of Dangerous Conditions: (1) Roof is covered with pine straw; (2) Crawl space w/ wires hanging down, debris, wet conditions, and boards on ground that may have nails, etc.; (3) Attic does not have safe and clear walking area; (4) Vegetation close to house can conceal snakes or boards with nails. Keep in mind that we are alone when inspecting your property and cannot can't take chances with our personal safety.

I hope this is helpful, and “Thank you” for opening your home, Jeff Terry