

Inspector's Insider™

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Controlling MOLD Growth

Mold is quite a buzz word these days. More and more, people are hearing about ill effects caused by excessive mold in the home. You can control excessive mold growth in your home by being responsive to any leaks, water intrusion, or elevated moisture in the home. Excessive mold is commonly found in attics, basements, and crawlspaces. Mold is also found in areas with potential leaks such as kitchens and baths. Monthly visual inspections with a flashlight is advisable. If you suffer allergy like symptoms and it's not allergy season, this should tip you off to a problem. Damp musty odors in the aforementioned areas are also clues for you to check things out further. Having the air tested will identify mold spores and how much. A Certified Mold Inspector is the person to call to help with this type of testing.

Are You Licensed?

By Curtis S. Niles CRI, Niles Enterprises Prof. Home Inspections, LLC

Are you licensed, is a question often asked an inspection company when a potential customer is seeking a Professional to inspect their new home.

The answer will vary depending on where this inspector is performing Home Inspections. In Pennsylvania, there is no licensing of Home Inspectors on the State level. Local municipalities such as Philadelphia do require a Business Privilege and Inspector License. However, surrounding counties do not require a Home Inspector license. There is some form of regulation on the legislative books which sets forth a number of prerequisites needed prior to doing business in PA. Participating in 100 fee paid inspections, maintaining professional Errors and Omissions insurance, membership in a National Inspector Association are just some of the few requirements mandated in this legislation, Act 114. There is a problem with this Act, and that



“There is no licensing of Inspectors on the State level.”

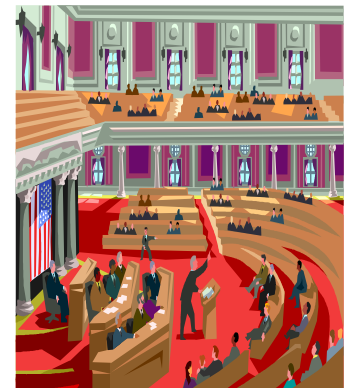


“What can you do to ensure that you are hiring a qualified and law abiding inspector?”

is the lack of enforcement. From it's enactment back in 2001, there has been no State enforcement of this law. As a result, unlawful individuals posing as Home Inspection professionals exist in the marketplace. What can you do to ensure that you are hiring a qualified and law abiding Home Inspector?

1. Check the inspectors credentials.
 - a. Ask for a copy of their Insurance Binder.
 - b. Ask for references and check them.
 - c. Ask for their membership card of the Inspector Organization of which they belong.
 - d. Verify with their Organization that they are still a member in good standing.
2. Determine if the Inspector has past an examination of competency. The NAHI CRI exam, the ASHI certification exam, or the NHIE, just to name a few.
3. Obtain a copy of their

license if applicable. Currently, there is legislation in the Senate and the House regarding Home Inspectors and the need for a Licensure Board.



“There is legislation in the Senate and the House”

SB 359 and HB 1805 respectively, are under review in each of the governmental branches, and there is hope for the passing of an amendment to the original Act soon. A corporate effort, between the Senate and the House, is needed to get this piece of legislation before the Governor for signature. At the end of the day it is our hope that Inspectors in PA will have a good consumer and inspector friendly law which will include the licensing of Home Inspectors throughout the commonwealth. If you would like read either of these bills, you may check them out at: www.legis.state.pa.us

Water In Your Basement?

by Catherine Hall,

President of Value Home Inspection, Inc.

April showers may bring May flowers, but you won't feel much like singing if spring rains also mean you have a new unplanned indoor pool in your basement. And you'll want to cry if a week of downpours turn "a little seepage around the drain" into a three inch deep flood across your new carpets. Now is the time of year when your home is most vulnerable to flooding. About 60 percent of all houses in our country suffer from some form of below ground wetness. Even in homes without basements or crawl spaces, excessive moisture can adversely affect ground floor levels.

The task of making and keeping your basement dry depends a lot on your particular situation but often the remedy is quite simple and you can make your basement a comfortable place for recreation, extra living space and storage. The most important thing to understand about keeping your basement dry is how the wetness developed. There are three basic descriptions of how water enters a home; direct leakage, seepage, and condensation.

Many times people put off dealing with their basement or crawl space water problems because they think it's going to be too expensive or too difficult to fix but once the reason for the water or moisture is discovered, simple remedies may offer relief from the problem. Start by trying these solutions:

1. Slope the ground around the foundation away from the house so that rainwater flows down and away. This is called re-grading. Poor grading is the most common cause of water penetration.
2. Gutters and down spouts play an important role in diverting water away from foundation walls. Clean them each spring and fall, or as often as needed, particularly if large trees overhang the roof. Make sure the gutters drain and slope properly toward the down spouts. Maintain and repair them periodically, as needed.
3. Prevent sweating or dripping from condensation by wrapping cold water pipes, well pressure tanks, and

air conditioning ducts with insulation.

4. Vent any below-grade level bathrooms or laundry areas to the outside to control moisture accumulation.

Remember, there are no miracle cures for wet basements. Before trying any major remedy, look closely at your basement or crawl space and the area around your house to see if a simple solution, like re-grading low areas, will solve the problem. If you need advice, a home inspector is someone who can give you an objective, professional diagnosis before you decide to make a substantial investment. Home inspectors do not perform repair work on properties they inspect, so you can be assured that their opinion is not biased in any way.

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Chapter News

It's 2008 and there is so much to cover. First, I'd like to recognize our leadership; President; Curtis S Niles Sr., V. President; Jim Makara, Secretary; John McQuiggan, Treasurer; Cathy Hall, Board Member; George Greober, Board Member; Bruce Ber- man. Thanks to all that participated in the recent elections.

Despite the real estate climate we anticipate a good year for the chapter. Membership involvement and participation has never been greater. The Affiliate membership is still available to individuals and companies in related professions. Additionally, Associate memberships are also being offered to inspectors located far from our meeting site but still want to be part of a vibrant chapter. See our website for more information.

A summer inspector family activity/picnic is being planned that you will not want to miss. Competitive games and contests with awards and trophies are on the agenda so plan to be there, if you dare. In years past this event has been the highlight of the summer for many. This year has the potential to be the best yet. Bring the family, relax, and unwind.

Monthly continuing educational speakers are being scheduled to keep us up to date on the latest and the greatest in residential construction. Plan to come and sharpen your skills, increase your knowledge, and learn from other inspectors who are always willing to share.

Our website has been revamped and is better than ever. Consumers were our focus in the development of the new site. One look and you'll agree that our website committee was successful in their goal. When you have a chance, check it out.

This fall our National Conference is scheduled to be held in the Philadelphia region. All inspectors are encouraged to attend and receive any necessary educational credits, meet leaders of the National Association of Home Inspectors, and find out all the latest in inspector equipment.

Other Inspector Services

There are various services that Home Inspectors offer that you may not be aware of. Home inspectors perform evaluations of a specific scope, thereby limiting the inspection to those perimeters. Roofs, HVAC, structure, or additions are just samples of Limited Inspections that are available. New construction phase inspections and commercial inspections are other consulting services that are also available through the home inspection community. Radon measurement, radon mitigation, mold inspections/assessments, mold remediation, termite inspections, lead and asbestos testing are just a few of the additional services that you can obtain from a qualified home inspection company.

Some veteran inspectors offer expert witnessing services to customers that are in the process of, or are considering litigation. Members of our chapter provide these services and more. Feel free to visit our website at www.nahipa.org and consider a professional inspector to meet your specific needs.



“Membership involvement and participation has never been greater.”



Have a seminar coming up? Let us know, we'll be sure to be there.



www.nahipa.org

Chapter meetings are held every 3rd Monday of the month, 6:00 pm at the Best Western Inn in Lansdale, PA. New inspectors are invited to attend. Contact Bill Dare, Membership Coordinator, at 215-487-3599 or visit NAHIPA.org for additional information.



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