

From the Home Inspection Committee:

Pre-Listing Inspections A REALTOR®'s Perspective

Increasingly, REALTORS® may find that pre-listing inspections are a necessary tool in today's housing market. With a pre-listing inspection, sellers have the opportunity to address any defects an inspector may find before the home is even placed on the market. This eliminates any future surprises and may have the added benefit of decreasing the time the home remains on the market and/or the time from contract to closing.

A pre-listing inspection attests to the reputability of the listing agent and the serious intent of the seller. However, by having the home inspected prior to listing the home, the seller may become aware of new information about defects. Such new information may have to be disclosed to any potential buyer. Sellers are advised to consult with their attorneys about applicable disclosure laws, and how those laws apply to the information gained from a pre-listing inspection.

The purpose of the pre-listing inspection is not to eliminate the need for an inspection performed at the request of the buyer. Despite the existence of a pre-listing inspection report, many buyers may want an "unbiased" report or they may want specific concerns addressed, such as modification of the home for different uses. The pre-listing inspection should be seen as a way for sellers and their listing agents to become informed about any property defects prior to marketing the property.

Listing agents should strongly consider attending the pre-listing inspection, just as buyer's agents should attend later inspections. Two primary benefits are the home can be better secured (so stray children do not damage anything nor do fleet footed pets attempt their escape,) and all parties will hear the information firsthand. John Cosgrove, an experienced REALTOR®, writes, "If we, as agents, are so busy that we cannot attend the home inspection, then we must be making enough money to pay someone else to be there for us. I personally enjoy (well, tolerate) home inspections. I get to bond with my clients, get firsthand info on the condition of the home, almost always learn something new about some home system, and put myself in a better position to negotiate repairs with the seller's agent."

If you have questions about pre-listing inspections, or any home inspection concern, question or complaint, please email Susan Jester, sjester@wsrar.com. You will receive an answer/response from the WSRAR Home Inspection Committee, a committee dedicated to improving communications and relations between Home Inspectors and REALTORS®.

