



Winston-Salem Regional Association of REALTORS®, Inc.  
**From The Home Inspector:**

## **Preparing Your Home for a Home Inspection**

Spring is a busy time of year for real estate. Home sellers can help reduce some of the anxiety associated with preparing a home to have a home inspection performed for a potential buyer. If the home is still occupied some of the items discussed here would go without saying, such as verifying the electricity is "on". Most home inspectors are methodical with their inspection technique. So the better prepared the home is the more likely the inspection procedure will proceed with fewer interruptions (such as searching for keys to a detached garage). A home inspector should make every effort to leave your home exactly as it was found. Since all areas of the home is accessed, some of your personal belongings may have been moved. Inspection of the electrical system may have interrupted some circuits so be sure to check clocks, timers, alarms, refrigerators, freezers, etc. for proper operation. All of your HVAC thermostats have been operated. It would be wise to check them and be sure they are set to your preferences. Dishwashers are operated, without soap, so any dishes in it are just wet, not clean. All exterior entry doors and most of your windows were operated during the inspection. Please verify that your home security has been properly restored. Any child-proofing devices you may have should also be checked to assure they are in place. It's also a good idea to assemble any house records that could be used to answer questions that can arise from a buyer and/or home inspector. Allow the inspector ample time (2-5 hours for most homes) to complete the inspection and answer questions from the buyers before returning home.

The following list is prepared from a number of home inspectors' input with the hopes to help to facilitate the inspection process and reduce potential anxiety for parties on both sides of the transaction.

- Verify that the water supply is "ON" at the kitchen or bathroom faucets by running water for one minute. The flow should be strong and steady. Also, verify that hot water is available.
- Verify that electric power is "ON" and that all circuit breakers are in the "ON" position (HINT: Turn on one of the electric range's cook-top elements to HIGH. If the house is fully powered, the element will get hot.)
- Verify that the heating equipment has fuel---natural gas service "ON", or there is sufficient LP gas or oil in the tank to operate equipment. If the home has a heat pump-in cold weather the outside unit needs power "ON" 24 hours prior to operating the unit.
- Remove all obstacles to the attic access scuttle door and provide protection from falling insulation over clothes.
- Remove stored items from the attic and crawl space entries to allow access and reasonable viewing.
- Ensure that all gas pilot lights for furnaces, water heaters and fireplace logs are burning. Home inspectors' insurance prohibit from lighting pilots or starting any components that is shut down.

- Provide clear access to electrical panels, water heater, the main water disconnect, plumbing fixtures, and furnace or air handlers. (Is there a wall picture covering the electrical panel?)
- Replace burned out light bulbs so that the inspector won't assume the fixture does not operate.
- Turn off computers as power supply to some circuits could be temporarily interrupted.
- Remove storage from under bathroom kitchen sink cabinets to allow viewing of the plumbing, water, and waste lines. The inspector will open every cabinet under sinks to look for leaks and inspect the piping.
- Stack packing boxes away from walls so as not to block access to windows, doors, HVAC registers, electrical outlets, etc.
- Remove personal items set on or hanging from window sashes to allow for window operation. The inspector will need to operate a representative number of windows.
- Remove all stored items from tubs and shower stalls.
- Clear kitchen countertops, other than typical countertop appliances.
- Remove pets (dogs and cats), at least those not kenneled, from the home. This would include the garage and a fenced in yard. Inspectors go into every room and space, including the yard.
- Unlock all storage closets, buildings and crawl space doors or leave keys on the kitchen countertop with a note.
- Leaving a note of any appliances, plumbing, electrical or mechanical items that are inoperative, shut down or could pose a safety hazard if operated would be wise. It would be helpful if the following information is available:
  - ✓ Information on any modifications to the home, whether building permits were required or not.
  - ✓ Appliance receipts, service records and warranties.
  - ✓ Information on the age of major components, such as the heater, air conditioner and roofing.
  - ✓ Major component warranties (carpeting/flooring, siding, windows, roofing, etc.)
  - ✓ Information on retired well, septic system, oil tank and/or structural repairs.

Prepared by the Winston-Salem Regional Association of Realtors Home Inspection Committee  
Co-Chairs: Bob Merritt-Keller Williams Realty & Andy Hilton-Hilton Home Inspection