

September
2002



Volume #1

Guy's Home Inspection Services E-Newsletter

John Guy (336) 889-4897 NC Licensed Home Inspector #1615

Greetings!

Welcome to the 1st edition of my e-newsletter. In this and subsequent newsletters, I will attempt to provide information that members of the real estate community will find worthwhile. If you prefer not to receive this, simply reply with "unsubscribe" in the subject line of an e-mail. If you would like to read information on a particular topic, let me know & I will attempt to provide pertinent information in an upcoming newsletter. Finally, if you would like to submit something to be included, please let me know. I will identify you as the author or source (unless you prefer to remain anonymous).

Office of the Month:

Congratulations to Coldwell Banker Triad, Eastchester Dr. High Point

Congratulations to **Sharon Sink** with Ed Price & Associates. Sharon was the winner of the framed print at the vendor fair.

Following are a few suggested questions for a potential home inspector:

1. Are you a licensed home inspector? (Required in NC)
2. Are you a licensed general contractor?
3. Do you carry Errors and Omissions Insurance (E&O)?
4. Who is covered under your E&O?
5. Do you carry general liability insurance?
6. Do you carry worker's compensation insurance?
7. How many inspections do you do schedule in one day?
8. Are your reports computerized?
9. When do you typically deliver (via e-mail, fax or US Mail) reports?
10. What is your background and experience?
11. Do you belong to any professional home inspection societies (American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI), NCLHIA (North Carolina Licensed Home Inspector Association)?
12. Are you full time?
13. Do you have any other businesses (remodeling, roofing, etc.)?
14. What is your fee structure? (the goal is not to find the cheapest but to verify that there is a structure and how does the structure compare to other inspectors)?
15. Do you meet all (any excluded as a rule) the standards of practice of the NC Home Inspection Licensure Board?
16. Do you require payment at the inspection?
17. Who will be doing the inspection (the owner or an employee)?
18. Are you certified by a national organization (NRSB, NEHA or EPA) or to do radon testing?
19. Are you a member of the local board of Realtors®?
20. Are you a member of the Better Business Bureau (BBB)?

Mold Information

Everyone seems to be asking about mold recently. Following are some comments Medallion Healthy Homes (reprinted with permission).

Some mold species are toxic. If mold is present, as a safety precaution, you should:

Wear protective gloves (plastic or latex)

Wear long sleeves

Use a respirator

If any health effects are observed, contact a doctor immediately.

Mold and mildew can have an adverse effect on people. Many fungi will seriously irritate and inflame lungs. Some fungi can cause skin and eye irritations and infections.

Prolonged exposure to active mold in an enclosed area can damage the lungs, mucous membrane, cornea, respiratory tract, stomach, intestines, and skin.

Before you treat mold outbreaks, try to determine what has caused it in the first place. You need to pinpoint whatever caused the mold to develop and then fix it, because until you solve that problem, mold will continue to grow no matter how often you treat the affected material.

Look for a source of water, such as an unnoticed leak, broken window, or moisture along outside walls.

Check the heat-exchange coils in the heating/air conditioning system. They are a prime area for fungus growth and spore distribution. Clean with a normal fungus-killing household cleaner.

Active mold looks fuzzy and has a musty odor. Do not attempt to remove active mold, it must be dormant for removal. Attempting to clean active mold will result in stains that are often impossible to remove.

Increasing the air circulation will dry most books and active mold efficiently. It would be ideal to have several fans circulating the area to accelerate the evaporation and drying process.

Do not shelve or store books directly against an outside wall. Due to temperature and humidity differences between inside and outside environments, moisture may develop along walls.

Install or adjust outside gutters and drains so that water does not collect near the outside walls. Check gutters and drains regularly to avoid clogs.

Waterproof basements and walls below ground level. Use water-sealant paint on floors and walls. Allowing air to circulate against

the walls will enable the moisture to evaporate.

Freezing the moldy book may be an option for halting the spread of mold while you evaluate other methods for killing the active mold. Freezing will stop the growth, but it must still be cleaned.

Dormant mold is dry and powdery in appearance. It may also have a musty smell. It can be removed using a vacuum cleaner and a soft brush or a brush attachment. Clean brushes and dispose of vacuum bag to prevent spreading the mold spores.

Charcoal and/or baking soda can be used to remove the odor of mold. Place briquettes and/or bowls of baking soda in the area to absorb the odor.

Damp books are more susceptible to mold than wet volumes.

Mold will start on covers and work inward on a book. Many molds prefer the starch in cloth-coverings on books. Mold is often noted on the bindings long before it grows on the textblocks.

Low temperatures (below 68 degrees F) and humidity levels as low as possible below 75% will stop most mold growth.

In warm and humid conditions, mold can begin to grow within 24-48 hours after the materials have gotten wet.

The spores of fungi that become mold or mildew are always present in the air and on objects. When the temperature and moisture in the environment are suitable for germination, the fungus spore bursts and growth begins.

Some Tips On How To Protect Yourself

Be aware of any noxious odors. When a mold colony is growing, it can give off distinctive odors that are the by-product of its metabolism.

Be familiar with the symptoms of a mold-related illness. Different mold species can produce different health effects. Some of the common symptoms of mold allergy include a runny nose, itching of the eyes & nose, congestion, fatigue & general malaise. Ask yourself, "Do my symptoms get better when I'm away from home for any length of time?"

Perform a visual inspection of your home. Check out some of the more common places where mold could be growing in your home. Look for any signs of past water leakage, check under sinks, in and around bathrooms, check out your basement (don't forget to look at your sump basket!). If you don't have a sealed cover over your sump basket, get one.

Contact a heating/cooling specialist to inspect and clean out your AC condensate tray, clean out and service your furnace humidifier, clean out and service the drip-pan under your refrigerator, etc.

Allow for good air flow throughout the interior of your house. Keep furniture away from walls. Allow for adequate air-flow over your windows & doors, as they will be the largest condensing surfaces in your house and air-flow is needed to help evaporate moisture buildup.

Check your attic (roof decking, rafters, etc.) for any signs of darkening that could indicate mold growth. If you notice any

suspicious areas, contact a ventilation specialist for advice.

Check for any discoloration on walls or ceilings. Often, this can be an indicator of moisture buildup, insulation problems, or ventilation problems that could be associated with future mold growth.

Be on the lookout for signs of excess moisture. Do your windows frequently have moisture on them in the winter time? Excess moisture is the single largest contributor to mold growth.

Is your heating/cooling duct work clean? When was the last time you had your heat vents professionally?

Also, check out North Carolina's web site on mold at <http://www.epi.state.nc.us/epi/oii/mold/>

Why am I always taking a cold shower? Maybe you don't have the proper type/size water heater....

Water Heater Sizing

A. Calculated Method

Full Bathrooms	Sum of tank capacity plus recovery rate*
1	70
2	90
3	105
4	115

***Recovery rate = gallons of water raised 100 deg F per hour**

Gas

1. On data plate or
2. Input BTU (from data plate) / 1000 x .85

Electric

1. Get wattage of upper and lower element from data plate.
2. Each 250 watts heats one gallon 100 deg F in one hour

B. "General Rule of Thumb"

a. Electric Water Heater:

50 Gallon	Family of 4
65 Gallon	Family of 6
80 Gallon	Family of 8

b. Gas Water Heater:

30 Gallon	Family of 4
40 Gallon	Family of 6
50 Gallon	Family of 8

Just bought a new water heater or new water heater not in the budget right now? Try using the delay timer on the dishwasher to wash dishes well before or after bath times. Wash clothes in cold water as they are probably not heavily soiled anyway.

Have a good month and hope to see you soon!

John