

DO YOU KNOW?

Home Inspection

2018

HOW QUALIFIED IS YOUR HOME INSPECTOR?

IN THIS ISSUE

It's no secret - Home Inspectors are coming out of the woodwork. It seems, everyone wants to be a home inspector. Six years ago, there were about 30 home inspectors serving the First Coast and now, we have about 275. Could it be experienced home builders and tradesmen have decided to inspect homes for a living while giving home buyers the benefit of their many years of knowledge? Doubtful, since new construction and remodeling are at near record levels.

Unfortunately, many of our new inspectors are entering the market with no building or trade knowledge whatsoever. They are coming from short term careers in venues far removed from home building. Most have never owned a pair of work boots. Frankly, it is too easy to obtain a home inspector license - no experience needed to qualify and no mentoring after licensing. Many long-term inspectors think this is a problem and most home buyers who hire inspectors and the realtors who refer them are simply unaware of the true experience level of the inspector. Many inspectors hide their inexperience behind fake emblems granted by home inspector associations which are not recognized by the state. When you see emblems promoting Certified Roof Inspector or Mold Inspector, for example, you should know these "credentials" are not recognized by the state for anything more than possible CE credits for a home inspector license. They are designed to make the inspector appear to be more qualified than they are.

NEFAR Affiliate Home Inspectors

Effective July 1, 2010, Florida required anyone who provides a home inspection for a fee to be licensed. Licenses begin with HI. There are 52 affiliate inspectors with NEFAR. A good indication of the inspector's skill level and experience is their license number:

Most Experienced

101-1999: licensed in 2010. 15 inspectors or 29% of the affiliates. **Best!**

2000-4000: licensed in 2011. 3 inspectors or 6% of the affiliates. **Best!**

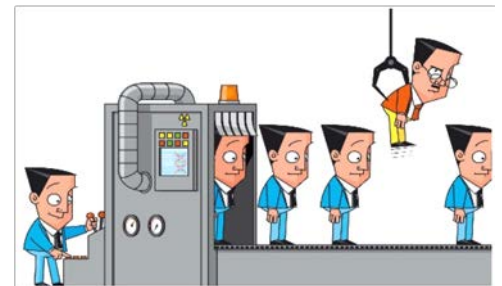
4000-8000: licensed in 2012/2013. 6 inspectors or 11% of the affiliates. **Good.**

Least Experienced

8000-9000: licensed in 2014/2015. 12 inspectors or 23% of the affiliates.

9000-10,500: licensed in 2016/2017. 16 inspectors or 31% of the affiliates.

As you can see, 54% of the NEFAR Affiliate Home Inspectors have less than 2 years of inspection experience. Generally, these are the fresh, smiling faces trying to fill your mailbox with brochures touting their low fee or multiple "certifications". As of now, if their license # is above 4000, you may want to know more about them.



Multi-inspector approach

Many inspection firms use 2-3 inspectors on the job, so they can perform 4-5 inspections per day. Most of these "teams" are built around inspectors having less than a year's experience. One may check the AC while another checks the interior, yet, no one inspector is looking at the house overall to see how one component affects the other. This approach generally has the highest number of claims.

Errors & Omissions Insurance

Unfortunately, based on a recent survey, most home inspectors do not carry E&O coverage - especially, the newer inspectors. The #1 reason cited in the survey, is the cost. Yes, E&O for a new inspector is expensive and for good reason - the incidence of a claim is much higher in the first few years for an independent inspector. What happens if there is a claim due to negligence and the inspector does not carry E&O? As a referring realtor, one thing I can guarantee is, "you don't want to know". **Do you know if the Inspector you refer has E&O?** If so, how much? Do you have a copy of their insurance certificate on file?

The realtor and the home inspector share one common, legal, requirement - we have a fiduciary duty to protect the buyer. That common requirement is written into law and as such, we are both legally bound to do what we can to protect the buyer from making a significant mistake in purchasing a home. In fact, our livelihoods depend upon it. Home inspectors who fail to properly inspect and report on the condition of the home will not be in business long.

Claims against inspectors are on the rise and most industry insiders point to two reasons: 1). inexperience/competence; 2). failure to control expectations. Many newer inspectors falsely believe their job is to simply stroll around the home and take photos of anything which shows visible evidence of damage. Yes, we do that, but we also have an obligation to understand the significance of that visible damage, to understand the cause of the damage and how to accurately report it to the buyer. The inspector must know how to make the buyer understand what is meaningful (costly) and what is normal obsolescence or maintenance. The inspector must be able to communicate and to educate. The inspector can be an expert on home building yet not be an effective communicator or the inspector can be a good communicator yet not have the skill set to understand the significance of what they are trying to report! Neither scenario is good for the buyer or the realtor. Like learning to sell real estate, it simply takes time, education and commitment to find that sweet spot.



What is unique about the home you are showing your buyer? Is it over 30 years old? Is it on a crawlspace? Is it a flip? Does it have EIFS or stucco wall cladding? Is it distressed? All these things are important and should be considered in making your home inspector referral. While you may like the newer inspector and he/she did a great job on that recent condo, you should really consider if their skill set is commensurate to what may be needed for this particular-home. It does no one any good for the inspector to "recommend evaluation of the stucco or foundation (if they are smart enough to recognize the need) when the right inspector would have had the skills needed in the first place. Don't assume your buyer just needs the lowest price.



No inspector can guarantee against root intrusion or piping issues which are not visible or evident during a standard inspection. Leaking water lines or breaks in the sewer line are not always evident. Our SewerGard plan provides up to \$4000 in repair assistance should a problem arise after closing, for up to 90 days. Included for FREE.

The value of gap warranties

by William Chandler

BUYERS LOVE GAP WARRANTIES

We provide a 90-Day warranty with each home inspection to include water/sewer lines from the house to the street!

PROPERTY360
855-932-3784

No inspector can fully anticipate a future mechanical, plumbing or electrical failure. We may advise a component is aged but there is no way to know when something may break, leak or completely die. Even though any reasonable person understands this, it still creates stress on a new homeowner when the dishwasher doesn't work or there is water on the floor. These

moments lead to a frantic phone call to you - their Agent! They are frustrated and often do not have a clue what to do. "The home inspector said it was working...". They often forget the inspector said it was "functional but aged" or something to that effect. Many home warranty plans exclude repairs for the first 30 days. To offset this, we offer repair assistance for the first 90 days. If we

reported it functional, it is covered with No Deductible. Our 90 day warranty provides \$500 in repair assistance for roof leaks, mechanical/plumbing issues and up to \$2000 in structural repair.

Our **SewerGard** plan provides \$4000 to repair water or sewer lines from the house to the street (most home warranty plans exclude this). When it comes to buried piping, no inspector can guarantee anything with a normal home inspection. Yes, we run the water, but we are not "loading" the plumbing system with multiple showers, dishwasher, laundry, etc. Often, drainage problems do not show up until the home is occupied. That big oak tree in the front yard may have compromised the sewer line and it may not show up as a drainage issue until the third day after closing - it happens.

How happy do you think your new buyer will be when the toilets will not flush? It is not covered by the Home Inspector; it is only covered by one home warranty plan: (www.simplehw.net) and it is not covered by homeowner's insurance.

The buyer could have purchased a SewerScope for about \$195 from the home inspector (some offer it) but that would not cover the water line to the house.

The buyer may want to pursue a claim against the Seller for non-disclosure but that is a lengthy battle with no guarantee of winning and it most likely would require the buyer to make the expensive repair while seeking reimbursement. We have an upset buyer, buyer's agent, listing agent, seller and home inspector. **No one wins...unless,**

You refer a home inspector who cares enough to provide a FREE SewerGard policy. Why would you refer an inspector who doesn't?



Not only do we cover roof leaks in the first 90 days, we provide a 5-Year Leak plan. Our plan provides repair assistance for shingle roofs on any roof we inspect and found to be functional at the inspection.

RecallChek
Authorized Dealer

Appliances are checked for manufacturer recall notices - for life. Our clients can add/delete appliances at any time. About 5% of our customers have received free repairs to correct safety issues on dishwashers, washers, ranges and refrigerators. Each year, RecallChek users receive thousands of free repairs simply because they hired a home inspector who cares. Free with every home inspection. **And, our monthly RecallTrak email flyer is branded with YOUR information to keep you in front of the buyer. Your contact information with your photo is sent to the homeowner every month. Call us and we will send you a sample of the monthly report. Our clients love the report and they never cancel. Not only does it report on their appliances, it includes important safety recalls on many other items such as toys, strollers, furniture, cosmetics and food items. Things they buy and use daily.**



We also include a free concierge plan which is especially helpful to buyers relocating from out of the area. We will set up utilities, phone, internet, cable, gas and alarm services. Completely free, no strings attached.

HAR HOMEOWNERS RESOURCE

All home inspection clients receive free technical assistance with any home related question. Simply email your question and include any relevant photos or documents and receive a qualified response within 48 hours.



Property360 provides much more than just a home inspection. Simply, we are the most qualified inspection firm in the area. No firm matches our qualifications and experience. Our staff includes: Certified General Contractor, Licensed Mold Assessor, Certified Pest Control Operator, ICC Commercial/Residential Building Inspector, UF/PMU Certified Termite Expert, Associate Certified Entomologist and a Certified EIFS/Stucco Inspector.

We performed our first fee paid inspection in 1986 and we have served thousands of clients since.

We are Affiliate Members of NEFAR and ORRA with Supra Key access.



TERMITE PROTECTION PLAN

Order a WDO inspection and we will provide a FREE 90-Day warranty should we find no evidence of termites (includes subterranean and drywood). Our staff includes an Associate Certified Entomologist and a University of Florida certified Termite Expert.

www.36opestpro.com

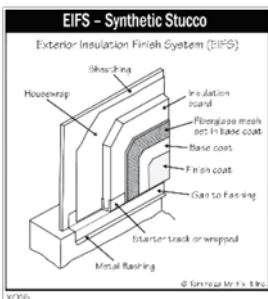
If we do find termites, we can treat the problem too.

YOUR ONE STOP SHOP



EIFS/Stucco Certified Inspection

A significant number of First Coast homes have EIFS or stucco wall cladding, yet the majority of home inspectors in our area have no training or qualifications for this.



Proper inspection requires years of experience and training. How many times has your inspector "recommended evaluation by others"? This is frustrating to your buyer and

the Seller when it holds up closing.

Wouldn't you rather just refer a home inspector who is certified to inspect EIFS/Stucco in the first place?

CONTACT US

"see our ad in Jacksonville Real Producers"

Property360, LLC

Phone: 855-932-3784

www.TheBuildingInspector.net

Not licensed but, doing it anyway

Many home inspectors who conduct WDO inspections are not employed by a licensed pest control operator and you should be very concerned with that. It is against the law. Ask them if they can provide termite treatment? If they say "no", you need to know more before you refer them. You should also understand they often misrepresent WDO findings citing water damaged wood as WDO when it may not be. Often, it is not. Ask for a copy of their pest control license and proof of insurance to include the required E&O insurance.

When is a home inspector simply not good enough?

Who does the inspector work for?

Does the inspector show up in a marked, company vehicle or does he show up in his personal vehicle which may, or may not, have a magnetic sign on the door? Many inspectors are sub-contractors to the inspection company who are paid a percentage of the fee. They are often rewarded with upselling other services such as "mold testing" or finding roof issues which can be referred to a "roofing contractor- preferred partner". Often, the sub-contract inspector is new and inexperienced and lacks proper equipment, licensing and insurance such as E&O or commercial auto. This situation is common among low fee inspectors.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

We provide more second opinions on building related issues than any inspection firm on the First Coast.

WILLIAM CHANDLER
contact@thebuildinginspector.net

I am often asked to provide a second opinion on a home inspection report, WDO concern, or mold test result. In almost all cases, I find the need for a second opinion was related to an inexperienced inspector. Often, the buyer ends up paying me more than the original inspection fee to resolve a specific issue. In all cases, the buyer wishes they had been more aware of the qualifications needed to conduct a qualified home inspection. In most cases, the buyer is perturbed with the realtor who referred the inspector once they understand the level of experience needed for their home. They are outright angry if they find the inspector was not qualified or licensed to inspect for mold or WDO; and they should be.

Too often, I find realtors refer inspectors without doing any due diligence on the inspector's qualifications or insurance coverage. Realtors often refer inspectors based on the lowest fee while assuming "all inspectors are equal". Realtors fail to verify if the inspector is properly licensed to conduct mold or WDO inspections, and that makes them complicit in any possible claims. Some realtors love the quick 45- minute timeframe offered by multi-team inspectors without realizing these inspectors are generally the least qualified! Don't assume inspectors are equally qualified or insured. They are not. And, don't assume because they "offer WDO inspections", they are licensed to do so. You may be putting your client and yourself at risk.

How can a home inspector add value to your brand?

Provide gap warranties to protect your client after closing.

Offer the highest credentials and licenses for the protection of all parties.

Provide E&O insurance for inspections, mold, WDO/termite and EIFS/Stucco.

Promote a professional appearance with uniformed employees and vehicles.

Provide free technical support after the inspection.

