

Home Inspection Report

Inspection Date:
January, 2012

Inspection Address:
923 Summit Road, Anytown, CA

Prepared For:
Our Client

Prepared By:
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Inspections
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Report Number:
BXXXX

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Table of Contents

CLIENT ADVISORY	3
INSPECTION OVERVIEW	4
STRUCTURE	7
BUILDING EXTERIOR & SITE	12
ROOF SURFACE	16
PLUMBING SYSTEM	20
ELECTRICAL SYSTEM	24
HEATING SYSTEM	27
INTERIOR COMPONENTS	31

Client Advisory

Please note: This Advisory is **not** a “summary” of the inspection report. That is why we urge you to **read** the *entire* inspection report *before* you review this section. As an additional service to our Clients and their Real Estate Professionals, we have provided this listing of the items which, in the professional opinion of your Inspector, merit further attention, investigation, or improvement at this time. Some of these conditions may be of such a nature as to require repair or modification by a skilled craftsman, technician or other specialist. A homeowner such as you can easily handle others. In listing these items, your Inspector is not offering any opinion as to who, among the parties to your transaction, should take responsibility for addressing any of these concerns. As with most other facets of your transaction, we recommend consultation with your Real Estate Professional, Attorney or Home Builder for further advice with regards to the items listed below.

Finally, we remind you that following the Inspector’s advice will often result in enhanced safety for the occupants of the home or improved performance and/or extended life for the component in question.

PLUMBING SYSTEM

- 1. The seismic restraint for the water heater tank was minimal and was not installed in a professional manner. The lack of proper restraint could result in unnecessary damage in the event of a major earthquake. We recommend immediate installation of proper restraint in accordance with current industry standards, local trade practice and applicable jurisdictional requirements.**

HEATING SYSTEM

- 2. A joint at a ‘Y’ fitting in the ductwork had come apart. This was resulting in a waste of energy. We recommend re-securing of all loose joints in the ductwork.**
- 3. For attention to the items noted, a competent, licensed Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning contractor or service company should be contacted for further evaluation and/or cost estimates for the adjustments, modifications, repairs or replacements recommended in this report.**

Inspection Overview

DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Weather Conditions:	• Partly Cloudy Skies
Temperature at Start:	• 50 - 60 Degrees F
Orientation of the Dwelling:	• The front entrance faced the street
Age of the Dwelling:	• Estimated at 72 years, based upon the Inspector's observation
Age of Remodel:	• 12 or more years ago, as estimated by the Inspector
Age of Addition:	• The age of the addition could not be established
Main Water Shutoff Location:	• On the exterior in the front
Sewer Cleanout Location:	• On the exterior right side
Electrical Panel Location:	• At the right-front corner of the exterior
Main Disconnect Location:	• Inside the main distribution panel
Main Gas Shut-Off Location:	• On the exterior on the right side
Persons in Attendance:	• The owner's agent

ADVICE, PRECAUTIONS & CONDITIONS AFFECTING THE SCOPE OF THE INSPECTION

IMPORTANT NOTICE

We performed this Home Inspection for the *exclusive* use of the Client(s) named in this Report. If anyone other than our Client for this inspection reads this Report, we wish to emphasize that by contract, **our sole responsibility is to our Client(s)** and **no third party may rely** on this report for any purpose. If anyone else wishes to obtain current information on the condition of this home, we can arrange to perform, for a fee, a follow-up inspection on their behalf.

Location/Direction Conventions Used In This Report

Over the years, our clients have told us time and again how much they appreciate the information which we include in every report on the location of furnace/air conditioner filters, electrical panels, and the main water, electricity and gas shutoffs - particularly when they are normally hidden or hard to get to.

Specifying these critical locations becomes even more valuable for those of our clients who are not able to accompany the inspector on the inspection. Not only does this information aid you in operating and maintaining your residence, but the abundance of information contained in our report is further reassurance that your inspector did, in fact, crawl into all those nasty places and examine all those "nitty-gritty" details.

Here is how you will find we have called out locations and directions in your report:

On the exterior, when we talk about the "right side" or "left side" of the building, we are assigning direction as we would if we were standing at the street and were looking towards the front of the building.

For features inside the home, they also will be located by imagining that you were standing at the street and were looking towards the center of the building. Then locations will be described as "left" or "right", and "front" or "rear". (For example, "the left rear corner of the right front bedroom").

The floors or levels are referenced from the level which we enter from the main entrance. The level that you walk in on will be called the "Main Level". If there is a basement, that is usually the level below the Main Level, and the floor above would be called the "Second Floor" or "Upper Level".

Furnishings and Storage Limited Our Access

The presence of furnishings, stored items, decorations or other ‘stuff’ limited our view, and thus, the scope of the inspection. For instance, the placement of furniture prevented access to every electrical receptacle. If possible, we recommend a walkthrough inspection when these items have been removed.

The Yard Sprinkler System Was Not Inspected

The landscape irrigation (sprinkler) system was not inspected and is not included in this report. Thus, we cannot make any representations as to its present condition or future performance. We recommend evaluation by a sprinkler system technician, if further information on the system’s function and condition is desired.

A Special Invitation When Our Clients Are Not Present At Their Inspection

We always encourage our Clients to join us on their Home Inspection. Those who are able to do so always enjoy many benefits when they are present that they would otherwise miss if they are unable to attend. Since you were unable to attend, we encourage you to read through this Inspection Report carefully, then please do not hesitate to call us at **510.525.7173** with any questions you may have. It is of utmost importance that you thoroughly understand the findings we have presented in your Report. Thank you for selecting us for your inspection services. We are available by telephone at any time that you have further questions.

A Detached Building Was Not Inspected

Examination of the detached shed was not within the scope of this inspection and was therefore not inspected.

Evidence of a Past Remodel and Addition

Parts of the dwelling had obviously been remodeled and the dwelling had been extended by the construction of an addition, subsequent to original construction.

Check the Status of Building Permits and Inspections

Confirmation should be obtained from the owner, or in their absence the local building department, that all necessary permits for appropriate construction and/or remodeling were secured, appropriate inspections were performed and all requisite final signatures have been obtained.

A Definition of the Terms “Acceptable” and “Satisfactory” as Used in this Report

When any item in this Report is noted as being in “acceptable” or “satisfactory” condition, the meaning is that it was providing generally adequate service within the limits of its age - and any defects, deficiencies or potential problems noted during the inspection.

Not Inspecting for Building Code Violations

The presence or extent of building code violations was not the subject of this inspection, nor was it included in the report. No warranty is offered on the legal use, or uses of the building or property. Information with regard to these issues may be available from the appropriate building and/or zoning agency.

Environmental Issues Are Excluded

Comments on environmental hazards or conditions, including, but not limited to, toxic, reactive, combustible or corrosive contaminants, wildfire, geologic or flood hazards are specifically excluded from this inspection and report.

We Evaluate for Function, Operability and Condition

The purpose of a home inspection is to evaluate the home for function, operability and condition of systems and components. Its purpose is not to list or attempt to address cosmetic flaws. It is assumed that the client will be the final judge of aesthetic issues and not the home inspector, as the inspector’s tastes and values will always be different from those of the client.

Important Information May be Found in the Public Records

Important information about this property may be a matter of public record. However, search of public records is not within the scope of a home inspection. We recommend review of all appropriate public records by the buyer, or a representative of the buyer, should this information be desired.

A Home Inspection, Not a Pest Inspection

Any observations, which the inspector might make in this report regarding evidence of pests or wood destroying organisms, are not a substitute for inspection by a licensed pest control operator or exterminator. Your inspector may only report on a *portion* of the currently visible conditions and cannot render an opinion regarding their cause or remediation.

Guidelines for the Proper Disposal of “Universal Wastes”

Beginning February 9, 2006, it is ILLEGAL to dispose of waste batteries, electronic devices, fluorescent light bulbs and mercury-containing thermostats in the trash. These waste items are known as “universal wastes” and must be recycled or taken to a household hazardous waste disposal facility.

Universal wastes are hazardous wastes that are generated by several sectors of society, rather than a single industry or type of business. Hazardous wastes contain harmful chemicals, which, if put in the trash, are harmful to the environment and public health. These items include:

Electronic Devices: Televisions and computer monitors, computers, printers, VCRs, cell phones, mp3 players, telephones, radios, and microwave ovens. These devices often contain heavy metals like lead, cadmium, copper, and chromium.

Batteries: All batteries of sizes AAA, AA, C, D, button cell, 9 Volt, and all other batteries, both rechargeable and single use. These contain a corrosive chemical that can cause burns as well as toxic heavy metals like cadmium.

Fluorescent Tubes and Bulbs and Other Mercury-Containing Lamps: These lights contain mercury vapor that may be released into the environment when they are broken. Mercury is a toxic metal that can cause harm to people and animals including nerve damage and birth defects. If mercury is released into the environment it can contaminate the air we breathe and enter streams, rivers, and the ocean.

To find out more information on universal waste and how to dispose of it, please contact:

In Alameda County:

Alameda County Household Hazardous Waste Program

<http://stopwaste.org> 1-800-606-6606

In Contra Costa County:

Contra Costa County Household Hazardous Waste Program

<http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/cd/recycle/> 1-800-750-4096

In Solano County:

Solano County Department of Environmental Management

<http://www.solanocounty.com/SubSection/SubSection.asp?NavID=319> (707) 784-6765

Sources of Energy Conservation Information in California

Consumer-related questions regarding energy conservation in and around the home, and programs available to assist the homeowner in financing energy conservation projects, can be obtained by contacting the gas and electric service provider for your home or, the California Energy Commission.

Their web site is: www.consumerenergycenter.org

Their phone number is: 1-800-555-7794.

Structure

DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Foundation Type:	• Perimeter wall with crawl space
Foundation Material:	• Poured in place concrete
Exterior Wall System:	• Conventionally framed wood stud
Interior Bearing Walls:	• Conventionally framed wood partitions
Floor System:	• Diagonally applied wood planking over wood joists
Roof Structure:	• Conventionally framed joist and rafter
Roof Sheathing:	• “1x” boards nailed across the rafters with minimal gaps between them
Basement Access:	• By way of an exterior door
Crawl Space Access:	• From an access hatch or door on the left exterior

OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Building Foundation

The foundation and other visible elements of the underbuilding support structure were generally in satisfactory condition for the age of the dwelling.

The foundation beneath this building appeared to consist of both relatively modern, steel reinforced concrete and older outdated portions. The older concrete did not appear to be steel reinforced and probably does not have footings that extend very far into the soil. Foundations of this type are typically more susceptible to cracking, settlement, deterioration from moisture entry, and earthquake damage. For information as to the structural adequacy of concrete foundations, a qualified engineer should be consulted.

A concrete cap-saddle was installed over the original foundation at the right front. Cap-saddles are typically poured on the top of and over one or both sides of an existing foundation, which had been made of either brick masonry or poor quality concrete. Cap-saddles are usually steel reinforced and can significantly strengthen the older building support system. They should not be considered equivalent to a new foundation (unless designed by a qualified engineer to modern standards). In some installations the additional weight of a cap-saddle can cause settling, especially if the footings are inadequate and the soil is too weak to support the added weight. These foundations should be monitored periodically for settlement and good area drainage should be maintained.

We observed minor tilting or "rotation" in the front left foundation wall. Rotation or foundation leaning is not unusual in older foundations. The weight of the building on the outer portion of the foundation wall causes the concrete foundation to lean or rotate. The amount of leaning can be influenced by damp soil beneath the foundation walls from poor drainage. Foundation movement may continue until repair, reinforcement, or replacement becomes necessary.

Concrete Foundation

Hairline and/or small cracks, within normal tolerances, were visible. This type of cracking is often a result of shrinkage of the concrete during curing, and/or minor settlement, and usually does not affect the strength of the foundation. Periodic monitoring of foundation cracks is recommended to determine if they are expanding or shifting over time.

A condition known as “efflorescence” was evident on portions of the foundation walls. This whitish, fuzzy material is a deposit left when moisture in the foundation evaporates on the inside surface, depositing crystals. This indicates an occasional surplus of moisture on the outside of the foundation. Steps could be taken to improve the exterior drainage where appropriate, but no other action is indicated at this time.

There did not appear to be an adequate foundation beneath the rear left wall, which was composed of hollow clay tile. A determination as to the presence or extent of any steel reinforcing and filled concrete is beyond the scope of this inspection. We also cannot determine the adequacy of this section of foundation, and the floor framing in this area may have been originally cantilevered out from the building. The tiles may have been added later, as a retaining wall. Hollow clay structures are known for being seismically weak. We recommend consulting a Structural Engineer for further evaluation.

Support Posts and Piers

The support posts and piers were generally in acceptable condition with no sign of significant movement.

Cripple Walls

Cripple walls (usually walls shorter than room height, < 8 feet) built of vertical studs set on continuous concrete footings provided center bearing support for the interior ends of the floor joists in the multiple span floor system under this dwelling. This support system was functioning as intended and was in acceptable condition.

Several modifications have been made to the substructure framing. We recommend a history of the modifications be obtained. This should include, if possible, the date repairs were made, the contractor's name, a description of changes made, and any available plans and permits. A determination as to the adequacy of these repairs is beyond the scope of this inspection.

Wood destroying organisms visibly damaged some framing at a small area at the right front. We recommend further investigation by a competent, licensed pest control operator or contractor followed by repair or replacement of all structurally damaged or deteriorated materials. Preventative treatment also may be necessary.

Stains were observed on framing beneath the bathroom tub, apparently related to rodent activity in the past. We recommend this condition be monitored, as no signs of current activity were observed.

Beams and Girders

Where visible, the support beams or girders were performing as intended and were in satisfactory condition.

Sill Plate

The sill plate, where visible, was in acceptable condition.

Floor Joists

In the areas where the floor framing was visible, all components were properly installed and in acceptable condition.

Subflooring

In general, the visible sections of the subfloor were in acceptable condition.

Seismic Considerations

The sill plate is the first (lowest) wood member of the framing that rests directly on the foundation. Anchor bolts are fasteners that connect the wood framing to the foundation. They limit the ability of the framing to move independently on the foundation in the event of seismic activity. The sill plate was anchored to the foundation with a significant number of bolts.

Holddowns were visible during the inspection. Holddowns are structural hardware connections that tie the wall framing to the foundation. They strengthen the structure and allow it to resist lateral forces and uplift during an earthquake. The visible holddowns were properly installed and in acceptable condition.

Bracing panels had been retrofitted in the subarea to help resist lateral movement. Bracing panels are special plywood panels installed on garage and foundation area framing, connected to and running from the mudsill or sill plate, up the studs, and terminating at the top plate. They help the framing resist lateral movement or "racking". The work was typical of seismic upgrades of this type. Such improvements are usually considered a very beneficial feature, however no comment is made regarding the design or engineering involved.

Metal devices called "shear transfer ties" between the rim joists or blocking and the top plates of the cripple walls or foundation sill were present and in acceptable condition.

Finished surfaces covered most of the structural connections and therefore were not accessible. To determine

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seismic adequacy, we suggest obtaining the construction plans and consulting the Structural Engineer who designed the retrofit.

Basement Floor

The basement floor was a concrete slab in acceptable condition, although small cracks were observed. This type of cracking is common and normally not structurally significant.

The basement floor was below the exterior grade level. This configuration could be conducive to moisture entry and subsequent damage. No moisture penetration was evident at the time of this inspection. In the future, we recommend monitoring these areas and upgrading the exterior drainage if moisture entry is detected.

Crawl Space Moisture

The crawl space was dry at the time of the inspection. However, we recommend careful and frequent monitoring of conditions in the crawl space throughout the year, and especially during times of high ground water levels. In this area, the highest ground water levels normally occur in the spring of the year, during the "mud season". An understanding of seasonal moisture variation and how the moisture is entering the crawl space will be important in planning for effective moisture management. Moisture management is the single most influential factor in the preservation of structures and insuring their overall good health and longevity.

Vapor Barrier

To help keep the moisture content of the soil under the foundation and in the underbuilding space at equilibrium, a vapor barrier can be installed over all exposed soil in the crawl space as an upgrade. This will help minimize changes in the soil moisture that are likely to cause movement or deterioration in the support structure along with possible degradation of mechanical components caused by excessive humidity. Reducing the humidity of the crawl space will also greatly improve indoor air quality. The vapor barrier should be installed in conformance with present standards.

Crawl Space Ventilation

Ventilation in the crawl space was inadequate according to current trade practices, but no serious adverse condition was discovered that might have resulted from a lack of ventilation. Installation of additional vents should be considered as an optional upgrade.

General Comments About The Underbuilding Crawl Space

All of the visible structural elements, systems and components in the underbuilding crawl space were in generally acceptable condition and were performing as would be expected for a dwelling of this age and type of construction.

Conditions were observed in the underbuilding crawl space indicating evidence of previous rodent activity. The first step in eliminating rodents from the building is to seal all possible openings. Careful work sealing cracks, gaps and openings with caulking, wire mesh, wood trim and steel wool will be necessary to prevent future rodent entry. If the problem persists, we recommend obtaining the advice and services of a competent, licensed Pest Control Operator.

Seismic retrofit upgrading has been performed. We recommend checking the permit history to verify that this work was performed with permits and inspections. Information on building permits and inspections, if any, may be available through the local building department.

Wall Framing

The wall framing was nowhere visible; however no symptoms of non-performance were evident.

Roof Sheathing

The roof sheathing, where visible, was in acceptable condition; however, the underside of the roof sheathing was water stained in several areas. Although no visible evidence of damage was observed, these areas should be monitored for active leakage and any leaks should be repaired as necessary.

Rafters

The original framing was in acceptable condition, although the rafters, which are the members that support the roof sheathing, did not conform to present standards. No adverse conditions were noted and no action was indicated.

Purlins

Several purlins, which are the members, perpendicular to the rafters, whose function it is to provide mid-span support, were performing adequately.

Ceiling Joists

Most of the ceiling joists were not visible due to installed insulation that covered them; thus they were not inspected.

Roof Seismic Considerations

The roof/wall joints did not have reinforcing connections. The addition of connective hardware would strengthen the building's resistance to wind or seismic forces, and would be considered a beneficial upgrade.

Summary Comments On The Structure

After careful examination of the visible and readily accessible portions of the structure, we were able to conclude that it was in acceptable condition for its age.

Alterations to the building have been performed. Please consult with the project architects and/or engineers to verify all work was performed in substantial conformance with their plans and specifications; the building department should be consulted to verify all work was permitted and inspected; and consult with any developer, general contractor, or key subcontractors to verify the nature of warranties in effect. Key subcontractors include, but may not be limited to, those that installed the foundations, framing, roofing, windows and doors, exterior siding and related waterproofing, electrical system, plumbing, and heating system. Warranties and responsibility for latent and patent defects for residential construction are controlled in part by state law. For information in this regard, please consult qualified legal counsel specializing in construction law. We are not qualified to render legal opinions.

ADVICE, PRECAUTIONS & CONDITIONS AFFECTING THE SCOPE OF THE STRUCTURE INSPECTION

The Crawl Space Was Entered for Inspection

The crawl space was entered for a closer examination.

Older Foundation May Be Weak By Present Standards

The rear foundation wall was not typical of buildings of this age, and likely weak by current standards. While no serious conditions were discovered during the inspection, complete replacement of this section of the foundation may be required if significant changes would be made to the building.

Clearances Allowed Only a Partial Inspection

The crawl space could only be partially inspected, because heating ducts, plumbing lines, and/or other low clearances restricted access at the rear and left side addition. As an upgrade, excavations or modifications could be made to provide more complete access.

Not All of The Rafters Were Visible

The attic was partially inaccessible and not all the rafters were visible, thus not all could be inspected.

Usually, Our Evaluation Must Be Based On Symptoms

Most of the time, many, if not all, structural components are inaccessible. Thus, our evaluation is based only on our observations of symptoms of movement, damage, and deterioration. If there are no visible symptoms, conditions requiring repair may go undetected. We make no comment on the internal conditions of soils, foundations and framing, except as reflected in their performance.

A Word About Foundation Cracks

Cracking is common in concrete or masonry foundations. Minor cracks caused by shrinkage and/or settling can be found in even relatively new foundations. Moderate or larger cracks may indicate ongoing settling or movement and the eventual need for underpinning or foundation repair. There is no way to determine if a crack will grow in size or if new cracks will form. Most large cracks were once small. The best way to estimate the likelihood of

future movement may be to monitor the number and size of cracks over a period of time.

Information on Seismic Strengthening

For more information about methods to seismically strengthen a building, we recommend consulting the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) website: <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/residents/steps>

Building Exterior & Site

DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Lot Topography:	• Moderately sloped
Site Gradient:	• Slopes moderately from the back to the front of the building
Driveway Surface:	• Concrete
Walkway Surface:	• Stone • Brick • Concrete
Patio Surface:	• Concrete
Retaining Wall Material:	• Concrete • Brick • Wood
Primary Exterior Cladding:	• Wood shingles
Secondary Exterior Cladding:	• Stucco
Exterior Window Material:	• Painted or stained wood frame • Painted aluminum frame
Number/Type of Garage Door:	• One tilt-up type door

OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Grading and Drainage

Grading at the rear sloped toward the foundation. This condition promotes water accumulation at the building, which could result in deterioration of the foundation and water penetration into the basement or crawl space. If it is found that negative conditions from moisture penetration into the basement or crawl space are found, a qualified contractor, specializing in drainage systems should be consulted.

This dwelling has been constructed on, or adjacent to, a hillside. An opinion on soil stability and potential movement may be available from a competent soil or geotechnical engineer who is familiar with conditions in this area. A competent specialist should be consulted, if specific information on the characteristics and performance of this particular hillside is desired.

The drainage system utilizes flexible corrugated drainage piping, some of which runs above grade and some of which runs below grade. This material is easy to install, but is difficult to clean out and is prone to losing adequate slope due to its flexibility. Care should be taken to keep debris out of this type of drainage system and it should be tested periodically to confirm that the system is still functional.

Downspouts

The majority of the downspouts terminated in surface drain lines.

One of the downspouts was disconnected at the drain connection. We recommend reconnection of all downspouts where necessary to the drains to prevent water accumulation near the foundation.

Driveway

The driveway was in acceptable condition.

Walkways

By the very nature of its construction, a brick walkway may contain natural trip hazards, as is the case in this instance at the front. Repair or replacement would be the first option to consider, however, if that option is not practical, then caution should be exercised when walking in this area.

Retaining Walls

The retaining walls were generally in acceptable condition. Retaining walls are structures designed to retain, or hold, earth to form a sudden change in elevation. Structural retaining walls maintain a grade separation that supports an important property improvement, such as a home or other building. Decorative retaining walls are

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usually landscaping elements which simply maintain a change in elevation away from any property improvements.

The rear retaining walls were obviously leaning. The retaining walls should be monitored for further movement. If and when further deterioration or movement develops, repair will be necessary immediately to reduce the potential for collapse of the walls and related damage to protected structures, including the dwelling.

A walking surface at the rear right was not provided with sufficient barriers or guardrails to prevent a fall. As this is readily accessible, we recommend adequate safety barriers be installed.

Fences, Gates & Other Structures

The fences were not inspected and are not included in this report. It is important to remember that wood fences have a finite service life. Maintaining the bases of the fence posts free and clear of rotting leaves, and occasional treatment of the entire fence with a wood preservative, exterior stain or paint will help slow deterioration and prolong service life.

Shingle Siding

The shingle siding showed routine wear, but was in acceptable condition.

Stucco

The stucco exterior was generally in acceptable condition, with no significant cracks. Hairline cracks are typical of this material and no immediate action is necessary to correct them. The small cracks can be scratched open, patched and sealed in the course of routine maintenance.

Exterior Trim

The exterior trim was in acceptable condition.

Fascia

The fascia (boards nailed across the ends of the rafters at the eaves) was in acceptable condition.

Eaves and Soffits

The eaves were in acceptable condition. The eaves or overhangs are comprised of those portions of the roof that extend beyond the exterior walls. The eaves protect the siding, windows and doors from the deteriorating effects of direct rain and sun exposure.

Flashings

The visible flashings on the dwelling exterior were in acceptable condition.

Paint and Stain

The exterior finishes were generally in acceptable condition, with exceptions noted.

Portions of the finish on the exterior trim at the front door were failing, exposing the underlying surfaces to damage. To improve appearance and maximize the effective life of the surfaces, the most weathered elements of the exterior should be repainted, or re-stained soon, after being carefully prepared in conformance with the paint/stain manufacturer's instructions.

Exterior Doors

The exterior doors were generally in acceptable condition, with exceptions noted.

The rear door was damaged, exposing it to accelerated weathering and affecting its performance. The damaged door should be repaired, or a replacement door should be installed in conformance with standard trade practices.

Exterior Windows

The exterior aspects of the windows were in acceptable condition.

Patio

The concrete patio evidenced cracks and slight settlement, typical of this type of installation, but was otherwise in acceptable condition.

Porches

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The floor of the front porch was masonry over wood framing. Water stains were observed on the wood framing in some areas, indicating past leakage and conditions conducive to deterioration. Correction of the leakage may only require resealing the related flashings or small cracks. After the repairs are completed, the surfaces and framing elements should be maintained periodically thereafter to minimize moisture entry and resulting damage.

The porch had settled, causing it to pull away from the face of the structure. However, in this case, the movement had not been significant, and, in our opinion, the porch, overall, remained in acceptable condition.

Exterior Stairs

The front stairs were masonry over wooden framing. They were in acceptable condition. There were stains on framing beneath this area, however, and the exposed framing should be monitored for additional stains or active leakage.

Exterior Railings

Stair handrails were not provided where needed at the front and rear of the house. Handrails should be installed in conformance with standard trade practices to reduce the potential for personal injury at these locations. Handrails are currently required at stairways with four or more risers.

The stair handrail at the front was not “grippable”, and therefore would not be effective. To reduce the potential for personal injury, the handrail should be modified to make it “grippable,” or replaced with a handrail that is “grippable”. In some situations, an additional handrail can be installed if modification to the existing handrail is not practical.

Guardrails were not provided where needed at the rear to prevent injury. Guardrails should be installed in conformance with standard trade practices at all required locations by a licensed contractor to reduce the potential for personal injury.

A guardrail at the front was hazardous in that it was not high enough to meet current guardrail standards and would allow small children to climb, or fall through. We recommend modification of the guardrail to conform to current standard trade practices to eliminate safety hazards, especially for children.

General Comments about the Exterior

The appearance of the exterior suggested regular and conscientious maintenance. Any items noted should be considered exceptions to a well-maintained property.

Garage Structure

The garage framing was properly installed for the time that it was constructed and, based on conventional construction standards, was adequate to resist lateral movement.

Garage Vehicle Doors

The garage door was opened and was in generally acceptable condition.

The garage door counterbalance springs were not provided with safety restraints to eliminate damage or injury in the event of breakage, in accordance with present standards. Without the benefit of a safety device, pieces of the spring may fly across the garage upon accidental breakage and cause damage or injury. All garage door springs should be upgraded as appropriate.

Garage Door Opener

The garage door opener worked properly to operate the door, and stopped when meeting resistance, prior to fully closing but then did not reverse. A self reversing garage door opener prevents children from being trapped and killed under closing garage doors. We recommend repair of the opener, adjustment of the controls or replacement of the unit as necessary to prevent injury or entrapment.

The light-actuated safety beam for the garage door opener was not installed properly to direct its beam across the door opening not more than six inches (6”) above the floor. We recommend re-installation, repair or replacement of the safety beam, as appropriate, by a competent garage door opener mechanic to restore its proper function.

The door was equipped with a manual release cable and lock to allow access to the garage in the event electrical power is out and the opener cannot be used. The key to the lock should be obtained from the Owner.

Garage Floor

Minor cracking was evident in the floor slab, but no noticeable vertical displacement of the slab was observed. No action is indicated.

Garage Ceiling & Walls

The visible areas of the garage ceiling and walls were in acceptable condition.

ADVICE, PRECAUTIONS & CONDITIONS AFFECTING THE SCOPE OF THE EXTERIOR INSPECTION

Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Protection

The hillside location of this building may make it vulnerable to damage from a fire approaching from the surrounding area. These areas can sometimes be called the “wildland-urban interface”. We recommend an area around the building be kept thinned of vegetation or cleared as a fuel break, to provide additional fire protection. The local Fire Marshall should be contacted for their recommendations. Many states and most cities and counties now have designated fire zones that require specific fire resistant building surfaces and combustible materials clearances around all buildings.

For more information about the basics of fire-safe building and landscaping, CAL Fire has extensive information on their website: <http://www.readyforwildfire.org/>

Inspect Stucco Below Grade Periodically

Stucco extended over the foundations below the finished grade. This configuration was accepted practice when installed, but has proved to promote infestation by wood destroying organisms. We recommend periodic inspections for wood destroying organisms.

Rekeying Exterior Doors

Most exterior door locks can and should be rekeyed after transfer of ownership to ensure personal safety and security.

Safety Glass Labeling

Generally speaking, all safety glass should be labeled using either an etching or ceramic-blasting method to produce a permanent emblem in the surface of the glass that must remain visible after it has been installed. During our inspection, we will look for the emblem as evidence that the glass is, indeed, safety glass. However, industry standards do allow for installation of safety glass that does not display the specified emblem, under certain circumstances.

Nevertheless, our policy is to hold to the conservative view that, if no emblem can be found that confirms that a light of glass is, in fact, safety glass, then we will NOT assume that it is.

The Importance of Roof Drainage

The gutters and downspouts are a very important part of any drainage system, as a substantial amount of water can flow from the roof surface when it is raining heavily. For example, a roof that is 15 feet by 40 feet in size can collect more than 280 gallons of water for each one inch of rainfall (enough water to fill a two-person hot tub)! The downspout system should direct this water away from the building foundation, helping to reduce the possibility of undesirable structural movement. Controlling roof drainage can also reduce the need for exterior maintenance. The gutters and downspout system should be checked regularly to ensure that it functions properly during wet weather.

Roof Surface

DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

- Roof Coverage Area:** • Most of the building
- Slope, or Pitch, of the Roof:** • Both steep and medium
- Roof Covering Material:** • Asphalt-Composition shingles
- Number of Layers:** • One
- Estimated Age of Covering:** • 15 or more years
- Valleys Were Flashing With:** • Shingles woven half-lap • Shingles woven full-lap
- Edges/Sides Flashing With:** • Sheet metal
- Penetrations Sealed With:** • Sheet metal in most places • Neoprene boots
- Roof Drainage System:** • Gutters and downspouts
- Method of Inspection:** • Inspected from the roof surface – the inspector walked upon the roof and examined it from above
- Secondary Roofing Material:** • Modified bitumen with mineral top coating at the right and left side valleys
- Estimated Age of Covering:** • 15 or more years
- Method of Inspection:** • Inspected from the roof surface – the inspector walked upon the roof and examined it from above
- Secondary Roofing Material:** • Gravel ballasted membrane at the garage
- Estimated Age of Covering:** • 15 or more years
- Method of Inspection:** • Inspected from the roof surface – the inspector walked upon the roof and examined it from above

OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Composition Shingles

Many of the shingles on the roof were worn and weathered, and some repairs are advised. Nailheads were popping through several shingles, and we recommend the nail heads be sealed to prevent leakage.

Moss and or lichen were growing on the roof surfaces in several places. The growth should be removed periodically as part of routine roof maintenance as it will trap moisture that can damage the roofing material and allow water to flow up or beneath the roof surface. Substantial growth can be removed by a company that specializes in cleaning roofs. Attaching bare copper wire on top of the roof, at the upper portion of the roof areas, also may help to retard moss and lichen growth. This condition can be addressed during routine property maintenance.

Membrane/Built-Up Roofing

The roofing material on the garage was moderately worn but appeared serviceable. We recommend the roof be monitored periodically and repaired as needed to maximize the service life of the surface.

Penetration Flashings

The accessible flashings were in acceptable condition. However, all flashings should be periodically examined for signs of leakage, and repairs should be performed if necessary.

Valley Flashings

The visible and accessible valley flashings were in acceptable condition; however, the valley flashings were filled with debris and some plant growth. All of the debris should be removed immediately to ensure proper drainage, and then these critical areas should be kept clear to reduce the potential for backups and subsequent water

This inspection was done on January, 2012, by Inspector John McComas of JMC Building Inspections, 510.525.7173.

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penetration into the dwelling.

Chimney Crickets and Cricket Flashings

No cricket flashing existed at the “uphill” side of the chimney. This condition can lead to collection of debris and accelerated deterioration. This area should be cleaned and monitored regularly to help prevent damage. The installation of a chimney cricket should be considered when a new roof is installed.

Edge Flashings

Edge flashings had been installed on top of the roofing paper (felt) at the lower drip edge. This was an improper installation raising the possibility of non-professional workmanship and potential damage to the eaves. We recommend reinstallation of the edge flashing to help prevent water intrusion and moisture related damage.

Gutters/Roof Drains

Roof runoff water was collected and channeled to the downspouts by a metal gutter system that was attached to the fascia boards, or directly on the ends of the rafters, along the edge of the roof.

The gutters were in acceptable condition, but should be checked for debris and cleaned on a regular basis to prolong their useful life.

Chimney

The chimney was in acceptable condition; however, minor cracks were visible in the chimney mortar and masonry. We recommend repairing the cracks as preventive maintenance by a licensed masonry contractor. We did not remove the spark arrestor for an examination of the interior of the chimney, thus the interior of the chimney was not inspected.

Appliance Vents

The appliance vents were properly installed and in acceptable condition, with exceptions noted.

An appliance vent cap was missing at the left side. To keep out rain and debris, the missing flue cap should be replaced licensed heating or plumbing contractor.

Plumbing Vents

The plumbing vents were in acceptable condition.

Vegetation Considerations

Debris from overhanging trees has dropped onto the roof. This debris blocks roof drainage, gutters and downspouts. Existing debris should be cleared and the roof kept clear of debris in the future to reduce the potential for damage to the roof, accumulation of water on the roof surface and water damage to exterior and interior elements of the building.

General Commentary on the Roof

The roof was in the middle of its expected service life, and with routine maintenance should remain reliable for a number of years.

For attention to the items noted above, we recommend the advice and services of a competent, licensed roofing contractor.

Attic Access Entry Information

The attic was accessible through a hatch in the ceiling of the hall. The attic was entered and inspected from within.

Pest Control in the Attic

Conditions were observed in the attic indicating evidence of rodent activity. The first step in eliminating rodents from the house is to seal all possible openings. Careful work sealing cracks, gaps and openings with caulking, wire mesh, wood trim and steel wool will be necessary to prevent future rodent entry. We recommend the attic vents also be screened to limit future habitation. After these corrections are made, monitoring future activity can be made easier by having an insulation contractor replace and level the insulation which was compressed by rodent activity. If the problem persists, we recommend obtaining the advice and services of a competent, licensed Pest Control Operator.

Evidence of Moisture in the Attic

Water stains were visible on the underside of the sheathing and the rafters. These were indications of old leaks. No current leakage was evident or suspected. No action is indicated.

Attic Ventilation

The attic was only minimally ventilated. Adequate attic ventilation is particularly important in a well-insulated attic or where additional attic insulation will be installed. We recommend the installation of additional ventilation, especially if additional insulation is going to be installed. Often, the most cost effective time to add roof venting is when the roof is replaced. This condition should be monitored to see how it affects the building to determine when additional venting should be installed.

ADVICE, PRECAUTIONS & CONDITIONS AFFECTING THE SCOPE OF THE ROOF SURFACE INSPECTION

The Roof Must Be Cleaned

Some debris had accumulated on the roof. This material should be removed to allow for a more thorough evaluation of those portions of the roof surface which were hidden from view during this inspection. If the subsequent inspection reveals conditions requiring attention, appropriate repairs should be made.

Extending the Life of Sheet Metal Flashings By Painting

The effective service life of sheet metal flashings can be extended by regular, conscientious painting of the exposed surfaces. The paint should be applied over dry surfaces prepared by wire brushing or scraping to remove as much rust as possible. All rusted flashings should be replaced when a new roof is installed.

Brick and Mortar Chimneys

One or more chimneys or flues for this building were constructed using mortar and brick. Chimneys typically do not have steel reinforcement, and cannot withstand large intensity earthquakes. They may fail during the next earthquake, and they pose a significant human risk. We advise removal of any older chimneys, especially if not in use, as they could cause damage to the building or injury to occupants, when they fail. Until this can be done, applying plywood on the ceiling joists around the chimney(s) where they are directed through open attic spaces may help reduce falling brick.

Vaulted Ceilings Have No Attic

Because of the vaulted or “cathedral” ceiling design, at least some parts of the building did not include an accessible space between the ceilings and the roof deck. In these areas, the roof structure and related building components above the high ceilings were not visible, and thus, could not be inspected.

We Cannot Guaranty a Leak-free Roof

Our comments do not constitute a warranty that the roof is free of leaks, or will remain free of leaks.

The Benefits of Cleaning the Roof Drainage System

The roof drainage system should be monitored on a regular basis and be cleaned out whenever debris has accumulated. Regular and conscientious cleaning will prevent clogging of the downspouts and potentially damaging leaks.

All Roofs Should Have a Periodic “Checkup”

All roof systems require annual (or even more frequent) maintenance. Failure to perform routine roof maintenance will usually result in leaks and accelerated deterioration of the roof covering and flashings. Any estimate of remaining life expectancy must be based upon the assumption that the roof will receive conscientious periodic maintenance.

Ventilation is Important

Attic ventilation is extremely important to the general “health” of a dwelling and can be provided by eave/soffit,

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gable or ridge vents. Thermostatically controlled fans and wind driven turbines are sometimes used to augment passive ventilation. While no absolute formula exists for determining attic ventilation requirements under all circumstances, experts generally agree that attic ventilation should remove excess heat and moisture from an attic space. This should be accomplished without the need of any moving elements, such as fans or turbines and should be roughly equivalent to 1.5 square inches of free vent area (about half the area of screened or louvered vents) for every square foot of attic floor. Total ventilation should be divided almost equally between gable or ridge vents and soffit or eave vents.

Plumbing System

DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Domestic Water Source:	• Municipal/Community supply
Landscape Water Source:	• Public, same as domestic water source
Main Supply Line Material:	• Galvanized steel, where visible
Supply Piping Material:	• A combination of older galvanized steel and newer copper pipe, where visible
Water Pressure:	• At the mid-range of normal
Waste Disposal:	• Municipal/Community collection system
D,W,V Pipe Material:	• Cast iron • Galvanized steel pipe • ABS Plastic

OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Water Shut Off Valve Condition

The main water supply shut-off valve was located, but testing the operation of this valve is not within the scope of a home inspection. Operation of the valve from time to time will keep it functional and maximize its useful life.

Main Water Supply

The main water supply piping was mostly not visible; thus it was not inspected.

There was surface corrosion, but no leakage, at the exposed and accessible portions of the main supply piping. This piping should be monitored for leakage and repaired if necessary.

Interior Water Supply Piping

The visible portions of the exposed and accessible supply piping generally were in acceptable condition, with minor exceptions noted.

We observed a potential cross connection in water piping at the hall bathroom toilet. A cross connection is an improper plumbing configuration which could allow waste water to enter the supply piping. We recommend a qualified plumber eliminate any potential cross connections.

Water Pressure

System pressure, as judged by a water pressure tester, was judged to be adequate. Several fixtures were operated simultaneously in the course of the inspection. Minor changes in flow, when other fixtures are turned on or turned off, are considered normal.

Exterior Plumbing

Inspected exterior plumbing was in acceptable condition and functioning as intended.

Sewer Cleanout Locations

A sewer cleanout was located on the exterior at the right side.

Several sewer cleanouts were located in the crawlspace.

Drain & Waste Lines

The visible drain and waste piping was in acceptable condition.

A corrugated drainage connector was used in the drain piping from the hall bathroom basin. These are often installed by non-professionals to form drain piping and because they do not have smooth interior waterways they can collect debris and sludge. We recommend hiring a qualified plumber for replacement with an approved drainage connector.

Vent Lines

The visible portions of the vent piping for the dwelling were in acceptable condition.

Gas Meter Installation

The gas meter was beneath the building, a configuration that will make the gas meter prone to damage in an earthquake. As an upgrade, relocation of the gas meter to the outside the building should be considered for seismic safety. For more information, the local utility should be consulted.

An automatic gas shut-off valve was not installed on the gas piping between the meter and the building. The valve is intended to shut off the gas in an earthquake. For improved safety, we recommend the installation of an automatic seismic shutoff valve by a licensed plumbing contractor.

A meter wrench could not be located in the vicinity of the gas meter. A proper wrench should be located near the meter to provide a convenient means for shutoff in an emergency. The valve can be turned 90 degrees in either direction to shut the gas supply off.

Gas Piping

The gas piping was in acceptable condition. No evidence of leakage was detected at any of the exposed gas piping. Pressure testing may reveal leaks, but this procedure would be considered beyond the scope of a home inspection.

An uncapped gas valve was observed at the abandoned floor furnace. If it remains unused, it should be properly capped to reduce the chance of a gas leakage.

General Comments About The Plumbing System

The plumbing system was generally in acceptable condition and was functioning as designed and intended.

ADVICE, PRECAUTIONS & CONDITIONS AFFECTING THE SCOPE OF THE PLUMBING SYSTEM INSPECTION

For Water Quality Questions, Ask The Supplier

For information concerning water quality, we suggest contacting the municipality or utility company that provides water to this property.

Water Supply Piping Materials

Copper is generally considered a very desirable type of piping because it is less susceptible to corrosion and could be expected to last the lifetime of the building. Galvanized steel water pipe is subject to rusting and scale/mineral deposit accumulation within the pipe. The accumulation of these deposits will eventually decrease the diameter of the waterway resulting in severely restricted water pressure and flow. When pressure and flow fall below acceptable levels (i.e. bathtubs, and washing machines seem to take endless time in filling), many homeowners have the galvanized pipes replaced with a copper system.

Water Heater

DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Water Heater Location:	• In the basement
Energy Source:	• Natural Gas
Storage Capacity:	• 50 Gallons
Water Heater Age:	• 11 years, from Data Plate
Water Heater Configuration:	• Free standing tank
Vessel Insulation:	• Manufactured with insulation

OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Water Connections

The cold water inlet and hot water outlet connections were properly installed and in acceptable condition.

Temperature and Pressure Relief Valve

The water heater installation included a temperature and pressure relief valve. This device is an important safety feature and should not be altered or tampered with. No adverse conditions were observed.

Water Heater Gas Supply

The gas supply piping included a 90-degree shutoff valve in the vicinity of the heater for service personnel and emergency use. The valve was not operated, but this age and style of valve is normally found to be operable by hand and generally trouble free.

Water Heater Combustion Air Supply

The combustion air supply for the water heater was adequate. Combustion air provides the oxygen needed for the safe and efficient operation of fuel burning appliances. An adequate supply of fresh air around all fuel burning appliances with open combustion compartments is vital for their safe operation.

Water Heater Ignition System

The pilot light was controlled by a thermocouple, which ensures that the pilot gas valve will close, if the pilot light is extinguished. This system was in acceptable condition.

The Water Heater Burner

The water heater burner was generally clean and was in acceptable condition.

The Water Heater Venting System

The water heater vent was properly installed and was in acceptable condition.

Seismic Restraint For The Water Heater

The seismic restraint for the water heater tank was minimal and was not installed in a professional manner. The lack of proper restraint could result in unnecessary damage in the event of a major earthquake. We recommend immediate installation of proper restraint in accordance with current industry standards, local trade practice and applicable jurisdictional requirements.

California law requires that all gas fired water heaters be properly anchored or strapped when dwellings are sold or transferred. Standards require at least two restraints on every tank provided by either approved metal strap or electrical conduit. The upper strap should be located 9" down from the top and the lower strap approximately 4"

above the gas control valve. If the heater is larger than 52 gallons, then additional straps are required. We recommend immediate installation of proper restraint in accordance with current industry standards and local jurisdiction requirements.

General Comments About The Water Heater

This water heater was near the end of its expected service life. Although it was still operating, the need for replacement should be expected within the next few years.

The water heater was gas fired. We recommend the installation of one or more Underwriters Laboratory Listed Carbon Monoxide detectors in appropriate locations to monitor the indoor air.

ADVICE, PRECAUTIONS & CONDITIONS AFFECTING THE SCOPE OF THE WATER HEATER INSPECTION

Valves Were Not Operated

Valves may leak when operated after a period of inactivity. For this reason, they were not tested during the home inspection.

The Benefits of Periodic Purging of The Tank

Draining a few gallons of water from the tank periodically to flush the sludge from the bottom is recommended by all water heater manufactures. However, water heater drain valves often become encrusted with deposits and may not completely close as the unit gets older. Therefore, unless the water heater is flushed regularly from the time it is new, operation of the drain valve is not recommended except in an emergency or when the unit is replaced.

Why is a Discharge Pipe Required on Every T & P Relief Valve?

The function of the T & P Relief valve, which is required on every water heater, is to allow excessive pressure to safely escape the tank without causing damage to the vessel or the surroundings. Excessive pressure can be caused by a variety of conditions, including too high an internal temperature, which could even cause the water to flash to steam. In any case, when the valve discharges (as is its intended function), it will spray very hot water or even steam from its exit opening. If water is ever observed coming of the TPRV drain, a licensed plumbing contractor should be consulted immediately.

Electrical System

DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Service Entry Type:	• Overhead drop
Electric Meter Location:	• Front right exterior of dwelling
Service Voltage Supplied:	• 120-240
System Amperage Capacity:	• 125
Based Upon:	• The rated capacity of the main circuit breaker
System Grounding Source:	• Water supply piping
Circuit Protection:	• Circuit breakers
Conductor Material:	• Copper, exclusively
Wiring Type:	• Non-metallic sheathed cable (“Romex”) • Knob and tube

OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Electrical Service Drop – The Overhead Electrical Supply

The service drop was in acceptable condition.

Electric Meter Condition

The electric meter installation was in satisfactory condition. No need for immediate attention was evident.

Electrical Service Capacity – How Much Power Can We Draw?

The service capacity had previously been upgraded and was adequate for the existing demand and small additional loads.

The Main Disconnect

The function of the main disconnect was provided by a two-pole circuit breaker mounted in the main distribution panel. The breaker appeared to be in good condition, although it was not tested during this inspection.

The Main Distribution Panel

Circuitry in the main service panel was not labeled. Each circuit should be identified, allowing individuals unfamiliar with the equipment to properly operate it, if necessary. When the opportunity arises, we recommend accurately labeling the circuits by actually operating the breakers.

There was double wiring at one or more neutral wire terminals in this panel. This “double tapping” can be a serious hazard because positive connection for all the wires at the terminal is not assured. Correction of “double tapping” requires reconfiguration of all of the affected circuitry so that a single wire only, connects to each terminal. We recommend repair by a competent, licensed electrician.

NM cables (non-metallic sheathed, or “Romex”) were bundled where they were exiting the electrical panel, which is poor installation practice. Generally, no more than two or three wires can be secured with a single clamp. Reconfiguration of the wiring to meet recommended practice is suggested.

Service Grounding

The grounding system appears outdated and may not function effectively in some situations as the grounding system was not supplemented with driven rods. While this is consistent with building practices at the time the home was built, we recommend driven grounding rods be installed to upgrade the main panel grounding for increased safety.

Electrical bonding of all of the gas and water piping could not be confirmed as one bonding wire was installed on the wrong side of a dielectric fitting beneath the building, which will prevent it from performing as intended.

Current standards require that all gas piping and hot and cold water piping be bonded to the grounded side of the electrical system. We recommend further review by a competent, licensed electrician for confirmation or upgrading as appropriate.

Branch Circuitry

Accessible branch circuitry was examined and was in acceptable condition, with exceptions noted.

A section of exposed non-metallic sheathed cable ("Romex") was observed in the "closet" off the left side bedroom. This type of wiring is not designed to be exposed and the cable was subject to damage. All exposed non-metallic sheathed cables should be adequately protected or replaced with an appropriate wiring type to prevent possible damage.

The doorbell was inoperable. We recommend this condition be evaluated and corrected by a qualified Electrician or contractor.

Electrical Conductor Material – The "Wire"

The conductor material in accessible branch circuit wiring was all copper.

Knob & Tube Wiring

The knob and tube circuits were in acceptable condition, considering the age of the system components, but were ungrounded. We recommend replacement of the knob and tube wiring, as upgrades and maintenance projects are undertaken.

Knob and tube wiring in the attic was covered with insulation. Knob and tube wiring was not designed to be installed beneath insulation and may be subject to overheating when covered with insulation. For a greater margin of safety, the removal of the insulation over the wiring or replacement of the knob and tube wiring with modern wiring should be considered.

Electrical Receptacles

This dwelling contained some two-prong and some three-prong type receptacles, ungrounded and grounded, indicating installation at different times and probably by different people.

Only a minimal number of receptacles were present in this dwelling. Although there is no requirement for upgrading, we recommend installation of additional circuits and receptacles as an upgrade to adequately meet the needs of modern appliances.

Electrical Switches

A representative number of switches were operated and were in acceptable condition.

Electrical Lighting

One or more of the closet light fixtures did not meet the current safety requirements for closet lighting. Light fixtures with bare, incandescent bulbs located close to storage shelves in closets can be fire hazards, and they are no longer allowed in new construction. To minimize the threat of fire, one should install protective covers, or replace the existing fixtures with enclosed fluorescent or recessed incandescent fixtures. Heat sensitive circuit breakers may also be required for recessed fixtures.

Ground Fault Circuit Protection

GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter) protection was installed and functioning satisfactorily for all of the receptacles where this type of protection is presently required. We recommend testing the protective device(s) on a monthly basis.

General Comments On The Electrical System

The electrical system was generally in acceptable condition, with only a few instances of needed repair or correction observed. See notes above for specific comments. A competent, licensed electrician should examine those portions of the system specified as deficient in this report, and repair, augment or modify them to insure that the entire system is safe and dependable.

ADVICE, PRECAUTIONS & CONDITIONS AFFECTING THE SCOPE OF THE ELECTRICAL SYSTEM INSPECTION

Low Voltage Systems Were Not Included

Review of any low voltage electrical devices and their associated wiring, including, telephone, TV antenna, stereo systems, fire and burglar alarm, intercom, yard lighting, landscape water (sprinkler) timers or other water features, is not within the scope of a home inspection. We recommend consultation with the appropriate service technician for full evaluation of the operating condition of these devices.

GFCI Protection Explained

GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter) protection is a modern safety feature designed to help prevent shock hazards. GFCI breakers and receptacles function to de-energize a circuit or a portion of a circuit when a hazardous condition exists. GFCI protection is inexpensive and can provide a substantially increased margin of safety.

GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter) protection was first required by national industry standards for receptacles in the vicinity of Swimming Pools and in exterior locations in 1971. Coverage was extended to bathrooms in 1975, then garages in 1978 and to Spas and Hot Tubs in 1981. Then in 1987 GFCI protection was extended to kitchen receptacles within six feet of the sink, hydro-massage tubs, and unfinished basements. Underbuilding crawl spaces were added in 1990. Wet bars were then added in 1993. Finally, *all* receptacles above *all* kitchen counters were added in 1996. Local jurisdictions may, however, delay in their adoption of national standards by several years.

Labeling of Circuits

All of the Circuits in electrical panels should be accurately and clearly labeled to allow individuals unfamiliar with the equipment to operate them properly, if necessary. When the opportunity arises, we recommend ensuring that all the circuits are properly labeled.

Representative Sampling of Outlets

A representative sample of the outlets was tested in each room. Nationally recognized home inspection standards require testing a minimum of one outlet in every room, where accessible. Before plugging in sensitive electronic equipment like computers and TVs, we recommend testing outlets with a receptacle tester (available at local hardware stores for under \$20) to verify that the receptacle is properly grounded.

Heating System

DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Heat Plant Location:	• In the basement
Heating Fuel:	• Natural Gas
BTU Input Rating:	• 66,000
Heating Plant Age:	• Age from Data Plate 9 years
The Air Filter Type:	• None present
Number of Zones:	• Single zone system
Attic Insulation Type/R-Value:	• 10" Fiberglass Batts, R-30
Wall Insulation Type/R-Value:	• Inaccessible, not visible, could not be inspected
Floor Insulation Type/R-Value:	• None present

OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Floor Heaters

There was an inoperative floor furnace in the left bedroom/hall. Floor furnaces operate by heating a stream of air moving through the unit by "gravity" or convection. By design, they are not equipped with a blower. Floor furnaces are simple and easily maintained, but do not distribute heated air very efficiently. The floor furnace grill can get extremely hot when the furnace is in operation, and it can be a burn hazard, especially for small children.

The floor furnace was a manually operated type, rather than being controlled by a thermostat. The burner was not equipped with a thermocouple or pilot generator to close the gas valve if the pilot is extinguished. This was a safety hazard. If the furnace is to be used, we recommend the installation of a "pilot safety" type ignition.

There was no exhaust vent directed above the roof to remove combustion gases and carry them to the exterior. This would be a significant safety hazard as combustion gases contain carbon monoxide. Before the furnace is used we recommend installation of an exhaust vent as required.

Forced Hot Air Heating System

Forced air furnaces operate by heating a stream of air moved by a blower through a system of ducts. Important elements of the system include: the heat exchanger, exhaust venting, blower, controls, and ducting.

The heat exchanger in this furnace was inaccessible and could not be visually examined. If information about the condition of the heat exchanger is desired, a licensed HVAC contractor should be retained.

HVAC Electrical

The local disconnect was properly installed and in acceptable condition. The equipment "local disconnect" acts as a shut off switch for use in an emergency or while servicing.

Fuel Supply

The gas supply piping installation included a 90-degree shutoff valve in the vicinity of the heating plant for service personnel and emergency use. The valve was not operated, but this age and style of valve is normally found to be operable by hand and generally trouble free.

Combustion Air Supply

The combustion air supply appeared to be adequate. Combustion air provides the oxygen needed for the safe and efficient operation of fuel burning appliances. An adequate supply of fresh air around all fuel burning appliances with open combustion compartments is vital for their safe operation.

Ignition and Controls

The burner was equipped with an electronic ignition system, which is an energy saving feature that allows operation without the need for a continuously burning pilot light. The ignition system was activated during the inspection and was in acceptable condition.

Exhaust Venting System

The visible sections of the heating plant's venting system were functional and were in acceptable condition; however, the heating system vent was installed too close to a combustible surface at the exterior wall. Adequate clearance should be provided between the venting system components and all combustible surfaces in conformance with local trade practice and the manufacturer's installation specifications.

Distribution System

This unit was not equipped with any air filter. A properly sized air filter should be installed and secured in the correct orientation in this unit to filter out dust, preventing its re-entry into the occupied interior, and helping keep the blower and ductwork clean.

Portions of the duct insulation were in poor condition in some areas. The insulation in question should be repaired or replaced to minimize heat loss.

Some of the ducts were in contact with the soil. Corrosion and damage were evident in the ductwork at the areas of contact. We recommend that a competent heating technician repair or replace all damaged ductwork. This repair should leave all ductwork with a minimum of 4" of clearance above the soil.

A joint at a 'Y' fitting in the ductwork had come apart. This was resulting in a waste of energy. We recommend re-securing of all loose joints in the ductwork.

Several heating ducts in the crawl space were hanging too low, the result of inadequate support. We recommend further assessment by a competent HVAC technician followed by modification and re-support to meet current industry standards.

Duct tape, or other unapproved tape, had been used to seal the ducting in many areas. This suggested that this work was done by a non-professional. Tape that is not UL listed for HVAC ducting is not rated for high temperatures and will not be effective. All unapproved tape should be removed, and the ducting should be resealed with appropriate tape or other means approved for the application, by a qualified HVAC contractor.

System Controls

Activation of the user controls on the thermostat caused the unit to respond. Keep in mind that this was a programmable device with many options for setback settings, timed events, etc. No attempt was made to test all of the functions of this thermostat.

General Comments About The Heating System

The heating system was nearing the end of its expected service life. Although it responded to normal operating controls, the need for replacement should be expected within the next few years.

The furnace was activated, and warm air flowed out of the heat registers. The adequacy of the amount of heat delivered to any given room is quite subjective, and depends upon the occupant's comfort level and how much they want to spend on fuel bills. Therefore, only the people living in the house can make this kind of determination. The registers that control the air flowing into each room do so through adjustable louvers, which can be set to vary the amount of heat that is delivered to each room. However, in some instances, the size of the ductwork may not be sufficient to allow adequate heat to be delivered to a specific room regardless of how the louver in the register is adjusted. This type of determination is obviously beyond the scope of a home inspection.

It is common practice to post a record of service on the heating equipment. No visible record was evident in this case. Servicing prior to the heating season would be appropriate for this unit. Starting a service record should be considered.

For attention to the items noted above, a competent, licensed Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning contractor or service company should be contacted for further evaluation and/or cost estimates for the

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adjustments, modifications, repairs or replacements recommended in this report.

Attic Insulation Conditions

Insulation placed above the living spaces in this dwelling had been installed properly and was functioning as intended.

Wall Insulation Conditions

The wall insulation, if present, was not visible, thus it could not be inspected.

Floor Insulation Conditions

Insulation had not been installed beneath the floors, which is a common finding in older homes. While optional, upgrading by installing insulation under the floors would reduce cold air infiltration and make the home more comfortable as well as reducing energy bills.

Other Energy Conservation Features

None of the glass in the doors in this dwelling was double-pane or insulated glass.

None of the windows in this dwelling were glazed with double-pane or insulated glass units.

The thermostat in this dwelling was a programmable set-back type device.

The fireplace chimney in this dwelling was equipped with an operable damper or glass doors.

General Comments on Energy Conservation Features

We found this dwelling to be only minimally insulated and, thus, not very energy efficient. Adding insulation, installing energy saving features and improving general conservation by air sealing could make the home more comfortable and help reduce utility costs.

ADVICE, PRECAUTIONS & CONDITIONS AFFECTING THE SCOPE OF THE HEATING SYSTEM INSPECTION

Furnace Construction Limits Our Inspection

The nature and configuration of most furnaces, and particularly their heat exchangers, prevents visual access to many critical interior surfaces. In addition, our inspection standards do not allow a home inspector to disassemble a furnace beyond those panels that can be removed by a homeowner. Thus, any observations available to a home inspector will necessarily be limited.

Requirement to Install Carbon Monoxide Detectors

One or more appliances in this home were gas fired. The State of California now requires all homes with gas appliances to have Underwriters Laboratory Listed Carbon Monoxide detectors installed within. The International Association of Fire Chiefs recommends a carbon monoxide detector on every floor of your home, including the basement. A detector should be located within 10 feet of each bedroom door and there should be one near or over any attached garage. Each detector should be replaced every five to six years. We recommend the installation of one or more Underwriters Laboratory Listed Carbon Monoxide detectors in appropriate locations to monitor the indoor air.

Energy Saving Features

Insulation, weather-stripping, double-glazed windows and doors, and set-back thermostats are features that help reduce heat loss and/or gain and increase comfort while reducing energy costs. Today's standards would suggest that attic insulation levels reach at least R-30, while wall insulation be at least R-11 for 2 x 4 framing or R-19 for 2 x 6 framing, and floor insulation, where appropriate, should be R-19. Air sealing of the ceiling structure and installation of insulation are usually the most cost effective method to increase the thermal efficiency of a building.

Carbon Monoxide Warning

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Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas. You can't see it. You can't smell it. But it can poison or kill. Early symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning resemble those of the flu – headache, dizziness and nausea. The after effects can be headache, tiredness, memory impairment, difficulty in concentrating, difficulty in sleeping, and impairment of vision. Continued exposure to high levels of the gas can cause unconsciousness or death. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that hundreds of people die each year from carbon monoxide poisoning. It is also estimated that thousands of others unknowingly suffer the ill effects of this health hazard in their homes.

One source of carbon monoxide is the incomplete combustion of fuel gasses. Incomplete combustion can be caused by the lack of an adequate supply of combustion air, improper installation of venting systems, clogged vents, improperly sized burner orifices in some cases, unvented gas appliances. Rusted, cracked or damaged furnace heat exchangers can also lead to carbon monoxide production. To prevent unnecessary exposure to carbon monoxide, all fuel burning appliances must be properly adjusted and vented, must have an adequate supply of combustion air, and must be maintained in good working order.

Interior Components

DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

- Number of Bedrooms:** • Three
Number of Bathrooms: • One and a half
Wall & Ceiling Finish: • Plaster
Floor Covering: • Hardwood flooring • Resilient sheet flooring

OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Floors

The floors had a good appearance and were in acceptable condition.

Interior Walls and Ceilings

Minor wall and ceiling cracks were observed. These can be patched, then the surfaces prepared and refinished in the course of routine maintenance. However, we caution that this type of cosmetic cracking might recur because of minor movement in the structure.

Interior Doors

The interior doors were properly installed and in acceptable condition.

The glass in the right rear bedroom door was not safety glass. In order to help prevent possible injury in the event of breakage, the glass could be upgraded with safety glass or covered with a safety film.

Windows

The openable windows tested were functional and in acceptable condition. We operated a representative sample of the windows, but did not open, close, and latch *every* window.

The left bedroom window did not open sufficiently to meet the current escape opening requirements. This could be an egress issue or fire safety issue, because it could be difficult to exit the room or for emergency personnel to enter the room due to minimal access. For improved safety, the installation of an appropriate window should be considered.

Interior Stairs

The stairs were used several times during the inspection. The various components were properly installed and no deficiencies were noted during use.

Interior Hand Railing

The railings were in serviceable condition, but did not conform to current standard trade practices. We suggest they be updated for increased safety.

The Fireplace(s)

The wood-burning fireplace was not operated during the inspection (the lighting of fires is not a recognized part of a standard home inspection); however, it appeared to be capable of functioning as designed and intended. Thus, it was judged to be in acceptable condition for its age.

The damper in the fireplace was operated and found to be in acceptable condition.

Smoke Alarms (“Smoke Detectors”)

The smoke alarms (“Smoke Detectors”) were appropriately located. However, one or more of the smoke alarms observed was an older ionization type. We recommend installation of smoke alarms that utilize photoelectric technology, in all sleeping rooms and on all levels, as they have been proven to be more effective than the

ionization type installed in this home.

Carbon Monoxide Alarms

We did not locate any carbon monoxide (CO) alarms at the appropriate locations. The State of California now requires all homes with gas appliances or attached garages to have Underwriters Laboratory Listed Carbon Monoxide detectors installed within. The International Association of Fire Chiefs recommends a carbon monoxide detector on every floor of your home, including the basement. A detector should be located within 10 feet of each bedroom door and there should be one near or over any attached garage. We recommend the installation of one or more Underwriters Laboratory Listed Carbon Monoxide detectors in appropriate locations to monitor the indoor air.

Hall Bath

Washbasin

The washbasin was properly installed. When used, it was fully functional and in acceptable condition.

Bathtub

The bathtub was in acceptable condition.

Shower and Shower Surround

The shower/tub water supply valve(s) and shower diverter were operated for the inspection. The valve(s) and diverter were in acceptable condition.

The shower walls were functioning as intended and were in acceptable condition.

The small size of the shower enclosure does not conform to current standards and may be inconvenient for some persons to use.

Glass Shower Enclosure

The shower enclosure was in acceptable condition, but no indication was discovered to confirm that the glass door was tempered or laminated safety glass. If the glass in the door is not tempered or laminated safety glass, this could be a serious hazard to the personal safety of anyone using the shower. Replacement of the door is optional, but would protect users of the shower from potentially serious injury and should be considered.

Toilet

The toilet was flushed and functioned properly.

Water Supplies and Faucets

The faucet was operated and allowed to run for a short period of time. It produced functional flow and was in acceptable condition.

The visible portions of the shutoff valves and supply lines were in acceptable condition.

Bathroom Ventilation

This bathroom depended solely upon window(s) for ventilation and removal of excess moisture. Although not conducive to conscientious use in the winter, this may have met minimum standards at the time the bathroom was constructed or remodeled. As an upgrade, we recommend the installation of a bathroom fan to reduce the possibility of moisture related damage.

Cabinets & Countertops

The cabinets were in acceptable condition, displaying normal wear and tear for their age.

General Comments On This Bathroom

The bathroom was found to be in acceptable condition at the time of the inspection.

Bedroom Half Bath

Washbasin

The washbasin was properly installed. When used, it was fully functional and in acceptable condition.

Toilet

The toilet was flushed and functioned properly.

The clearance to the front of the toilet was noticeably less than that which is presently accepted for convenient use. We recommend that adequate clearance be provided when the bathroom is next remodeled.

Water Supplies and Faucets

The faucet was operated and allowed to run for a short period of time. It produced functional flow and was in acceptable condition; however, the flow of hot water from the hot side of the faucet was considerably less than the cold side. This can be a problem with the fixture or an indication that the galvanized piping is corroded to the point where water had a difficult time passing through the constrictions. We recommend further evaluation by a licensed plumbing contractor.

The visible portions of the shutoff valves and supply lines were in acceptable condition.

Bathroom Ventilation

This bathroom depended solely upon window(s) for ventilation and removal of excess moisture. Although not conducive to conscientious use in the winter, this may have met minimum standards at the time the bathroom was constructed or remodeled. As an upgrade, we recommend the installation of a bathroom fan to reduce the possibility of moisture related damage.

General Comments On This Bathroom

The bathroom was found to be in acceptable condition at the time of the inspection.

Laundry Area

Clothes Washer and Dryer

The utility connections for both the clothes washer and dryer were not visibly accessible and were not inspected. We recommend they be evaluated when access is provided, and as part of routine maintenance. Any observed water leakage should be immediately repaired to help prevent significant damage to wall and floor surfaces.

We suggest that any rubber or plastic type clothes washer hose connectors currently in use be upgraded with metal-sheathed "no-burst" types to reduce the potential for hose failure.

No drain pan could be found under the clothes washing machine. A properly drained catch pan under washing machines is recommended when a washing machine is installed above wood framing. We consider upgrading to be optional.

Dryer Vent

The dryer vent was not visibly accessible and was therefore not inspected. We recommend it be evaluated when access is provided, and as part of routine maintenance. Any observed dryer vent leakage should be immediately repaired.

Laundry Room Ventilation

There was no ventilation fan to serve the laundry area, however industry standards at the time this dwelling was built probably did not require that one be installed. Installation of a vent fan would be optional.

Kitchen

The Sink

The sink was in acceptable condition.

The faucet was operated and allowed to run for a short period of time. It produced functional flow and was in acceptable condition.

The visible portions of the shutoff valves and supply lines were in acceptable condition.

Dishwasher

The dishwasher was not tested or operated, due to the numerous cycles, yet appeared functional. We suggest testing all the cycles to confirm that the dishwasher is fully functional.

The Dishwasher Drain Separation

The dishwasher drain was equipped with an air-gap fitting (the cylinder protruding above the sink). This device assures separation of the supply water from the wastewater.

Cabinets & Countertops

The cabinets were in acceptable condition.

Range

The heat source used for cooking was natural gas. The range was turned on with the normal operating controls and was in satisfactory working condition.

The short vertical clearance provided above the cooktop may be inconvenient. We recommend consulting the microwave manufacturer to determine installation requirements.

Garbage Disposer

The disposer was turned on with normal user controls and was in satisfactory working condition.

Kitchen Exhaust

The blower and ducting for the kitchen ventilation system were in acceptable condition.

General Comments On The Kitchen

Our inspection of the significant components in this kitchen led us to conclude that they were functioning as intended and in acceptable condition.

The microwave, refrigerator, and hot water dispenser were not inspected as these appliances were outside the scope of a home inspection.

ADVICE, PRECAUTIONS & CONDITIONS AFFECTING THE SCOPE OF THE INTERIOR INSPECTION

Freshly Painted Surfaces May Conceal Items of Concern

As with any recently refinished and freshly painted surface, conditions may be present that were not readily apparent at the time of our inspection. We do not suggest or represent that this inspection will identify all such conditions.

Keyed Interior Locks

One or more of the doors had inside key locks. Deadbolts and other locks with removable inside keys can prevent escape in a fire emergency and are prohibited in most jurisdictions and by fire departments. If you desire keyed locks for security, always leave keys inside the locks when the building is occupied. Thumb latches are safer and lock replacement should be considered.

Sill Height Too High For Convenient Egress

At least some of bedroom windows did not meet current standards as the bottoms of the windows were over forty-four inches above the floor. Present standards require that each sleeping area have at least one operable window, where the bottom of the window opening is not more than forty-four inches above the floor, to provide a means of secondary egress in the event of a fire.

Burglar Alarm Not Tested

A burglar alarm had been installed in this dwelling. The alarm system was not tested. We recommend consultation with the owner and/or an alarm company regarding the operation and maintenance of this system.

Water Testing of Shower Pans

A water test of the shower pan was beyond the scope of a home inspection. However, this test may be performed as a part of a standard inspection for the presence of wood destroying organisms.

Secure Household Items

Unsecured household items such as televisions, bookshelves and items can become missile hazards in an earthquake. For more information about how to secure these items please see the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) website: <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/residents/contents>.

Representative Sampling of Windows

A representative sample of the windows was operated in each room, but not every window was opened, closed and latched. Nationally recognized home inspection standards require testing a minimum of one window in every room, where accessible.

Window Requirements for Egress

Basements and sleeping rooms below the fourth story should have at least one escape or rescue window for emergency egress. Most building standards require this to be at least 5.7 square feet in size, at least 24 inches high, at least 20 inches wide, and with a sill not more than 44 inches from the floor.

Not A Punch List

We did not attempt to list all cosmetic flaws and suggest that most of these items will be addressed by routine maintenance upgrading. The intended purpose of this inspection was not to create an architectural "punch list" of minor cosmetic flaws.

All Buildings Require Regular Care and Maintenance

A home inspection is designed to be a systematic review of the home, the surrounding site, and specific components and other features. While our findings will always be accurate as of the time of the inspection, because conditions can change literally hour by hour, let alone day to day and year to year, other items will undoubtedly need attention in the future. Regular and frequent maintenance will be needed to maintain the home in good working order.

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detector Maintenance

Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors should be tested at least once a month. They need no maintenance other than changing the batteries and occasionally vacuuming of dust or cobwebs. If the testing mechanism does not work properly, the detector should be replaced immediately. Using an open flame to test a smoke detector is not recommended. Most manufacturers recommend replacing smoke detectors every 10 years and carbon monoxide detectors every 5 years.

Requirement to Install Carbon Monoxide Detectors

One or more appliances in this home were gas fired. The State of California now requires all homes with gas appliances to have Underwriters Laboratory Listed Carbon Monoxide detectors installed within. The International Association of Fire Chiefs recommends a carbon monoxide detector on every floor of your home, including the basement. A detector should be located within 10 feet of each bedroom door and there should be one near or over any attached garage. Each detector should be replaced every five to six years. We recommend the installation of one or more Underwriters Laboratory Listed Carbon Monoxide detectors in appropriate locations to monitor the indoor air.

Caution Regarding Operating Dormant Angle Stops

Operating angle stops (shut off valves used for faucets and other plumbing fixtures) that have not been exercised for some time may cause them to leak. For that reason experienced home inspectors do not operate them during a standard home inspection. We recommend that before anyone operates angle stops that have not been operated within the past six months, adequate preparations be made to deal with water leaks of any magnitude.

Standards for Dryer Vents

Typical standards for dryer vents require a 4-inch (4") diameter, smooth wall duct, no longer than 14 feet, with a hood damper at the exterior termination. A flexible vent (6 ft. max.) may be used at the dryer connection only, but cannot go through underbuilding crawl spaces, floors or walls.

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