

**ABS-** pipes used for waste, drains, and venting

**AFCI-** Arc fault circuit interrupter.

**A/C-** An abbreviation for air conditioner or air-conditioning

**Accessible** - Can be approached or entered by the inspector safely, without difficulty, fear, or danger

**Access Panel-** An opening in the wall or the ceiling near the fixture that allows access for servicing the plumbing/electrical equipment

**Activate-** To use normal control means to turn on, supply power, or enable systems or devices.

**Adversely Affect-**Conditions that affect the ability to properly inspect.

**Agent-** Someone who represents a consumer in a real estate deal. That consumer may be either the buyer or the seller. An agent is someone who will look after the interests of the consumer.

**Agreement-** A legally binding contract between two or more persons.

**Air Chambers-** Pressure-absorbing devices that eliminate water hammering. Air chambers should be installed as close as possible to valves or faucets at the end of long runs or pipe.

**Air Ducts-** These are usually made of sheet metal, and carry cooled or heated air to all rooms.

**Air Returns-** Air that returns from conditioned or refrigerated space to the source.

**Alligatoring-** Extensive surface cracking in a pattern that resembles the hide of an alligator.

**Aluminum Wire-** A conductor made of aluminum for carrying electricity.

**Amperage-** The rate of flow of electricity through wire-measured in terms of amperes.

**Ancillary Inspection Services-** These are offered in addition to the traditional home inspection. These may include environmental testing or looking for wood-destroying pests.

**Asbestos-** A common form of magnesium silicate used in various construction products to make them more stable or fire-resistant, but can cause lung cancer if its tiny fibers become airborne and are inhaled into the lungs.

**Attic Access-** an opening that is placed in the drywalled ceiling of a home providing space to the attic.

**Backfill-** The gravel or earth replaced in the space around a building wall after the foundation is in place.

**Backflow-** Movement of water (or other liquid) in any direction other than the one that was intended.

**Backflow Preventer-** device that prevents the reverse flow of water, due to atmospheric pressure, by means of a positive check valve.

**Beam-** A supporting member either wood or steel. Structural support member (steel, concrete, lumber) transversely supporting a load that transfers supporting a load that transfers weight from one location to the other.

**Below Grade-** The portion of a building that is below ground level.

**Bonding Jumpers-** reliable conductor to ensure the required electrical conductivity between metal parts required to be electrically charged

**Breaker Box-** A metal box that contains circuit breakers or fuses that control the electrical current in a home.

**Breaker Panel-** The electrical box that distributes electric power entering the home to each branch circuit (each plug and switch) and is comprised of circuit breakers.

**Bridging-** Metal or wood placed diagonally between joists to prevent joists from slipping.

**BTU-** Heat energy required to raise the temperature of 1 lb. of water 1° f.

**Building Code-** Minimum local or state regulations established to protect health and safety. They apply to building design, construction, rehabilitation, repair, materials, occupancy, and use. Community ordinances governing the manner in which a home may be constructed or modified.

**Cap Flashing-** that portion of the flashing attached to a vertical surface to prevent water from migrating behind the base flashing.

**Ceiling Joist-** One of a series of parallel framing members used to support ceiling loads and supported in turn by larger beams, girders, or bearing walls (Also referred to as *roof joists*.)

**Certification-** Generally speaking, a certification comes as a result of training that helps someone function in a number of different areas. It differs from a designation, which usually covers training in one specific discipline.

**Chase-** groove in masonry wall or through a floor to accommodate ducts and pipes.

**Check Valve-** A valve or other device that allows fluids to flow in only one direction.

**Chimney Cap-** Protects chimney brick from weather. The chimney cap is generally made from concrete.

**Circuit-** a network of wiring that typically commences at a panel box, feeds electricity to outlets, and ultimately returns to the panel box.

**Circuit Breaker-** A protective device that automatically opens an electrical circuit when it is overloaded.

**Client-** Someone who has entered into an agreement with a home inspector and agreed to terms to compensation for work by the home inspector.

**Collar Beams-** Ties that prevent the roof from spreading; connects similar rafters on opposite sides of the roof.

**Component-** A component is a permanently installed or attached fixture, element, or part of a system.

**Condensation-** Water condensing on the walls, ceilings, and pipes. Normal in areas of high humidity, usually controlled by the ventilation or a dehumidifier.

**Condition-** The visible and conspicuous state of being of an object.

**Conduit-** A hollow pipe casing through which electric lines run.

**Coping-** covering piece placed on top of a masonry wall that is exposed to the weather. It is usually sloped to shed water.

**Corner Bead-** Wood or metal strip protecting the outside corners of plastered walls.

**Corrosion-** the deterioration of metal by chemical or electrochemical reaction resulting from exposure to weathering, moisture, chemicals, or other agents or media.

**Crawl Space-** A shallow open area between the ground and the lowest floor structural component that is normally enclosed by the foundation wall.

**Cricket-** A small saddle-shaped projection on a sloping roof; used to diver water around an obstacle such as a chimney. Also called a *saddle*

**Cupping-** an inward-curling distortion at the exposed corners of asphalt shingles.

**Deck-** surface installed over the supporting framing members, to which the roofing is applied.

**Decorative-** Ornamental; not required for the operation of the essential systems and components of a home.

**Delaminate-** to separate into layers (to separate from the substrate).

**Delamination-** Separation of the piles in a roof membrane system or separation of laminated layers of insulation.

**Describe-** to report a system or component by its type its type or other observed significant characteristics to distinguish it from other systems or components.

**Detrimental Conditions-** conditions that an inspector believes may be unsafe, unhealthy, or otherwise harmful to the inspector or the property

**Dimmer-** switch that allows control of lights intensity.

**Dismantle-** to take apart or remove any component, device, or piece of equipment that would not be taken apart or removed by a homeowner in the course of normal and routine maintenance.

**Downspout-** pipe for draining water from roof gutters also called a *leader*.

**Draft hood-** device placed in and made part of the vent connector (chimney connector or smoke pipe) from the appliance or in the appliance itself that is designed to (1) ensure the ready escape of the products of combustion in the event of no draft, back draft, or stoppage beyond the draft hood; (2) neutralize the effect of stack action of the chimney flue on appliance operation

**Drip Edge-** non-corrosive, non-staining material used along the eaves and rakes to allow water run-off to clear of underlying construction.

**Drip Pan-** pan-shaped panel or trough used to collect condensate from the evaporator coil.

**Drying Edge Effect-** Removal of moisture from the soil along the perimeter of the foundation.

**Eave-** lower edge of sloping roof projecting beyond the wall.

**Efflorescence-** white powder that forms on the surface of bricks.

**EIFS-** (exterior insulation finish system) also known as *synthetic stucco*, EIFS is designed to keep water out and energy in. If the water seeps inside, however, it can become trapped and rot the wood underneath.

**Expansion Joint-** structural separation between two building elements designed to minimize the effect of the stresses and movements of a building's components and to prevent these stresses from splitting or ridging the roof membrane.

**Exposure-** That portion of the roofing exposed to the weather after installation.

**Evaluate-** to form an opinion of or judge an item or condition

**Fascia-** a horizontal board that is nailed vertically to the ends of roof rafters; sometimes supports a gutter.

**Felts-** fibrous material saturated with asphalt and used as an underlayment or a sheathing paper.

**Fill Type Insulation-** loose insulating material applied by hand or mechanically blown into wall spaces.

**Fire Stop-** blocking placed in any vertical channel in a building, such as between studs in an exterior wall or interior partition, its purpose is to slow down progress of a fire by blocking off the flue-like effect of such a channel.

**Flashing-** Sheet metal or other thin, impervious material used around roof and wall junctions to protect the joints from water penetration.

**Fixtures-** Personal property that is attached to real property, such as chandeliers, window blinds, and medicine cabinets.

**Flue-** a passageway in a chimney for conveying smoke, gases, or fumes to the outside air.

**Footing-** portion of the foundation (a concrete base) that transfers the structural load to the ground.

**Foundation-** masonry and concrete foundation walls, usually below ground level below ground level, that supports house structure.

**Framing-** joists, studs, rafters, and beams of a residential structure.

**Function-** The action for which an item, component, or system is used or fitted.

**Functional-** The ability to perform a function.

**Functional Drainage-** if a supply faucet is left on, a drain empties in a reasonable amount of time without overflowing.

**Functional Flow-** Enough flow of water to provide an uninterrupted supply to the faucet farthest from the source when a single intermediate, unrestricted tap is operated at the same time.

**Fuse-** device that stops the electrical flow in case there is a circuit overload for any reason. Fuses cannot be reset; they must be replaced.

**Further Evaluation-** Examination and analysis by a qualified professional, tradesman, or service technician beyond what a home inspector provides.

**Gable Roof-** type of roof containing sloping planes of the same pitch on each side of the ridge with a gable at each end.

**Galleries-** Chamber-like voids in wood caused by termites or other wood-destroying insects.

**Girder-** structural member carrying the weight of a floor or partition . Often used to support floor joists in a pier-and-beam foundation. Piers support the girder and transfer the load to the ground

**Glazing-** (1)fitting glass into window frames and doors; (2) glass plastic or other transparent or translucent material designed to transmit light.

**Grade-** the ground level existing at the outside walls of a building or elsewhere on a building site.

**Habitable-** suitable for humans to live in.

**Habitable Spaces-** rooms used for sleeping, sitting, bathing, eating, cooking, or with toilets. However, closets, halls, storage spaces, and utility areas are not usually considered habitable spaces.

**Header-** structural member carrying a wall load above the opening for windows and doors.

**Heat Source-** Something from which heat is intended to be emitted, such as radiators, heat pipe, and duct work, and so forth.

**Home Inspection-** the process by which an inspector visually examines and evaluates the readily accessible systems and components of a house.

**Hip Roof-** type of roof containing sloping angles of the same pitch on each of the four sides; contains no gables.

**Household Appliances-** Installed or free-standing kitchen, laundry, and similar appliances.

**Humidifiers-** device used to add and control the humidity in a confined space.

**Humidistat-** humidity-sensing control that cycles the humidifier on and off.

**HVAC-** heating, ventilation and air-conditioning.

**Inspect-** To examine readily accessible systems and components of a building.

**Inspected Property-**The property where inspection is performed.

**Inspector-** a person hired to examine systems or components of a building. Not all inspectors are licensed, and in some states, special training isn't even required.

**Installed-** attached so that removal requires tools.

**Intended Function-** The ability of an item to perform the usual function for which it was designed, and in a condition appropriate for the function, age, and location.

**Joist-** structural members or beams that hold the floor or ceiling; floor and framing lumber, laid on end, to which flooring and lath are attached.

**Knee Wall-** A wall that acts as a brace by supporting roof rafters at an intermediate position along their length.

**Lintel-** a horizontal structural member that supporting the load over an opening such as a door or window.

**Observe-** To see through visual directed attention

**Open Circuit-** interrupted electrical circuit that stops the flow of electricity.

**Overhang-** Upper part of a building (such as a roof) extending beyond the lower part.

**Operate-** to cause activated equipment or systems to perform their intended function(s).

**Pier-** a masonry column, usually rectangular in horizontal cross section, used to support other structural members.

**Pigtail-** 1) a flexible conductor attached to a light fixture that provides a means of connecting the fixture to a circuit 2) a short length of copper conductor that is attached to the end of an aluminum branch circuit by a special fastener, then fastened to the terminal of a switch or outlet.

**Pitch-** degree of roof incline expressed as the ratio of the rise, in feet, to the span, in feet. (i.e.: 7/12)

**Pointing-** filling open mortar joints; removing deteriorated mortar between the joints of masonry units and replacing of it with new mortar.

**Poly Butylen Plumbing-** Commonly installed in mobile home and apartments through the 1980's, PB plumbing was the subject of a class action lawsuit because of a leak.

**Rafter-** one of a series of inclined structural roof members spanning from an exterior to a center ridge beam or ridge board.

**Receptacles-** outlet that provides power to lamps and other electrical appliances; also called *duplex receptacle*.

**Readily Accessible-** Available for visual inspection without requiring the moving of personal property, dismantling, destructive, measures, or any action likely to involve risk to property or people.

**Receptacle-** outlet that provides power to lamps and other electrical appliances also called a duplex receptacle.

**Representative Number-** Enough components to serve as a typical or characteristic, example of the item or items inspected.

**Ridge Beam**- the beam or board placed on edge at the ridge (top) of the roof, into which the upper ends of the rafters are fastened.

**Septic Tank**- watertight receptacle discharge of a building's sanitary drain system or part thereof and that is designed and constructed so as to separate solid from liquid, digest organic matter through a period of detention, and allow the liquids to discharge into the soil outside the tank through a system of open-joints or perforated piping or through a seepage pit.

**Service**- conductors and equipment for delivering electrical power from the supply system to the wiring system of the property.

**Service Cable**-service conductors constructed in the form of a cable.

**Service Drop**- overhead service conductors from the last pole or another aerial support to and including the splices connecting to the service entrance conductors at the building.

**Service Panel**- main fuse box or circuit breaker box for the property; also called electrical panel

**Sewage Ejector**- ejector used with sanitary systems below the city sewage system or when the drain field is higher than the septic tank.

**Shake**- Wooden shingle, usually edge grained.

**Shed Roof**- roof containing only one sloping panel has no hips, ridges, valleys, or gables.

**Sheathing**-The structural covering, usually wood boards or plywood, over a building's exterior studs or rafters.

**Shelter Tube**- Mud-type tube (tunnel) built by termites as a passageway between the ground and the source of food (wood).

**Shut Down**- In terms of an inspection, this is a condition in which a system or component cannot be operated by normal operation controls.

**Sill Plat**- The lowest member of the house framing resting on top of the foundation wall.

**Slab on Grade**- These are structures without a crawlspace that are in direct contact with the soil.

**Soffit**- The visible underside of a rood overhang or eave.

**Soft Rot-** Decay fungi that attack wood from the surface inward and cause cavities to form.

**Soil Pipe-** pipe that directs house sewage to receiving sewer, building drain, or building sewer.

**Stair Tread-** Horizontal strip where the foot is placed to walk up and down stairs.

**Starter Strip-** asphalt roofing, applied at the eaves, that provides protection by filling in the spaces under the cutouts, and joints of the first course of shingles.

**Step Flashing-** flashing application method used where a vertical surface meets a sloping roof plane.

**Stringer-** one of the enclosed sides of a stair supporting the treads and risers.

**Structural Component-** a component that supports non-variable forces or weights (dead loads) and variable forces or weights (live loads)

**Stud-** one of a series of lender wood or metal vertical structural members placed as supporting elements in walls and partitions.

**Sub-Floor-** boards or plywood laid on joists over which a finished floor is to be laid

**Sump-** hole in the basement floor designed to collect water, from which the water either drains or is removed via a sump pump.

**Swale-** A shallow depression in the ground to form a channel for storm-water drainage.

**Synthetic Stucco-** This exterior insulation finishing system, also known as EIFS, is designed to keep water out and energy in. If water seeps inside, however, it can become trapped and rot the wood underneath.

**Temperature and Pressure Relief Valve-** safety valve installed on a hot water storage tank to limit temperature and pressure of water.

**Thermopane window-** double pane that is hermetically sealed with vacuum between the two pieces of glass.

**Trap-** fitting that provides a liquid seal to prevent emission of sewer gases without affecting the flow of sewage or wastewater.

**Truss-** a rigid, open web structural member designed and engineered to carry roof or floor loads.

**Valley**- internal angle formed by the intersection of two sloping roof planes.

**Ventilation**- natural or mechanical means or supplying or removing air to or from a space.

**Vent Stack**- vertical vent pipe installed to provide air circulation to and from the drainage system and extending through one or more stories.

**Vent System**- (as applied to plumbing) pipe or pipes installed to provide an airflow to or from a drainage system or to provide air circulation within such a system to protect trap seals from siphonage and back pressure. Also refers to a gas vent or chimney connector; if used, assembled to form a continuous, unobstructed passageway from the gas appliance to the outside atmosphere for the purpose of removing vent gases.

**Wains Coating**- lower facing of interior wall when different from remainder of wall facing.

**Water Hammer**- loud thump of water in pipe when valve/faucet is suddenly closed.

**Water Service Pipe**- pipe from the water main or other sources of potable water to the water distribution system of the building served.

**Weather Stripping**- metal, wood, plastic, or other material installed at doors or windows to retard air passage, water moisture, or dust around the openings.