

When Buying a New or Resale Home Know This . . .

Six things to know when buying a new or resale home are mentioned here as they are often not thought of until it is too late . . . or they are learned through bad, uncomfortable and often expensive experiences.

1) General purpose home inspectors do not typically thoroughly inspect and test heating and cooling systems. This is due to their lack of knowledge, lack of testing equipment, and/or not getting paid enough to do an adequate job.

2) If you really want to know the condition of the house you propose to purchase have licensed contractors inspect it for you. Hire a NATE certified heating & cooling contractor, a licensed electrician and plumber. Be cautious when REALTORS suggest specific inspectors as there may be a conflict of interest involved.

3) When owners/sellers sell their homes they very seldom educate the new owner regarding the heating and cooling systems. The sellers just want to get away leaving any problems and knowledge for the buyers to discover on their own. This is tragic! Buyers should insert language in their offer to purchase which requires the seller to educate the buyer regarding all heating and cooling, electrical and plumbing systems. This should include turning over all documentation which goes with the heating, cooling and hot water systems etc. A list of all contractors who have worked on these systems over the last five years should be provided. A certification that the proper building permits have been obtained for the replacement of any of these systems should be provided.

4) When basements are finished there should be enough room left around the heating, cooling and water heater systems to permit easy access for maintenance. For example, by code, there must be at least 30 inches of clear access in front of any furnace. Additional space will be needed for the future additions of high efficiency air cleaners, humidifiers, heat recovery ventilators and/or another water heater etc.

5) Don't wait until you have a problem with your heating, cooling, hot water or electrical systems to call for help. Develop a relationship with reliable contractors BEFORE you need help. Have those contractors inspect and service your systems soon after you move in. Then they will be familiar with your systems so as to be able to give you outstanding service when needed. The worst way to have to find help is by looking in the yellow pages when you have an emergency.

6) Houses and their internal systems are much more complicated than they used to be. Therefore; all of the technicians working on these systems need to be better educated and smarter than ever. Look for experience and NATE certification in heating and air conditioning professionals to get competent service and help when you need it. AND expect to pay between \$175.00 and \$350.00 or more per hour for competent contractor help in your home. The average service call may be in the \$300.00+ range in the Denver area.

