



## Home Inspection Services Newsletter

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April, 2009

### Educational: **Common, low \$, inspection findings**

Home inspections often result in a long, daunting list of issues. Below are a few “common” findings that can be inexpensive to fix. Remember, just because an item is a “cheap fix”, doesn’t mean it’s not important! A \$30 smoke detector could save your home and your family’s lives.

**No high loop on dishwasher drain line:** Fasten the dishwasher drain line so that at one point, it is higher than the entry point at the disposer.

**A broken roof tile:** Many broken tiles can be repaired with a bonding agent (be sure that the bonding agent is designed for the job).

**An out of place roof tile:** Put it back in place and bond it in position.

**Miss-wired electrical receptacle:** Sometimes, the hot & neutral wires (Black & white) are connected to the wrong receptacle contacts (brass is for hot and silver is for neutral). This condition is called reversed polarity.

**Doors that bind:** Assuming that the hinges are secure, mark the door where it binds, remove it, and sand or plane the location marked.

**Dirty air filters:** Did you know that inspectors need to report this? The cost of a new filter is about \$3.00 and your AC system will thank you.

**Under sink drain plumbing leaks:** These often only require tightening the connection. A full under sink waste pipe replacement may cost \$10.00 for parts. Remember; do not use FLEX piping because it clogs.

**Attic pull down stairs that are not fire rated:** Screw a piece of sheet metal or fire-rated sheetrock to the wood cover (on the garage side).

**Grade that slopes to the home or has low spots near the foundation:** Correction requires a shovel, a steel rake, sometimes a pick, and a strong back (beer is optional). Water should flow away from the foundation.

**Aging rolled roofing at the patio:** Roofing life can often be extended for a couple of years by power washing, repairing dings or cuts, seal coating the surface (with appropriate material) and re-sealing the outer edges.

Of course, if you have to hire people for these types of jobs, the cost increases. A **qualified handyman** can handle most small jobs.

## Question of the Month: **Why check the water meter?**

The standards of practice for home inspection in Arizona do not require inspectors to check the water meter. Therefore, many inspectors don't. H&A Services checks the water meter at the start of every inspection. Why? **Movement at the meter indicates that water is flowing to or in the home.** If all of the water fixtures are off and the triangular dial at the meter is turning, there may be a leak in the plumbing pipes (when this occurs, I shut off the pool auto-fill and yard watering and recheck the meter). Under ground or under slab leaks can be costly (and are always inconvenient) to repair.

## Maintenance Item for April: **AC/Heat Pump**

HVAC (heating, ventilating, & air conditioning) contractors are not frantic this time of year which makes it a good time to have your AC unit(s) or heat pump(s) serviced. Servicing AC units may save money off of the electrical bill and deter future repair costs. Examples: Units with low refrigeration fluid run longer to achieve proper cooling. Dirty evaporator coils result in lower efficiency. Clogged condensate lines may cause an expensive release of water into your home.

## Safety Tip of the Month: **Hot Electrical Devices**

Most people are not familiar with electrical wiring, electrical devices, or testing of circuits, however, there is a simple check that all can perform; feeling for heat. Electrical switches, receptacles, and circuit breakers are not designed to be hot when under normal load. A hot dimmer switch indicates a fault in the device or an electrical load that is too large for the rating of the device. If any of the aforementioned devices are hot to touch when in use, call an electrician before the "hot device" results in fire.

**Inspection class for realtors:** We offer several classes for realtors including a 3 hour class for credit (in conjunction with Arizona School of realtors). We also have programs from 30 minutes to an hour for new realtors covering such items as CBS codes, Standards of Practice, understanding an inspection report, etc. Feel free to call on me to help.

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***Let our experience work for you!***



Daryl Gates



Mark Andrews



Lauren Andrews