



Home Inspection Services Newsletter

March 1, 2006

Educational Section: **New Construction Inspections**

Are you **building, representing a client, or have a friend** building a **new home**? Should you inspect or recommend phased inspections? **Phased or construction inspections** generally are done **1)** before the slab is poured, **2)** before drywall is installed **3)** before final walk through.

Typical inspection findings at the **pre-slab stage**:

- **Re-bar** in contact with soils (promotes corrosion & slab cracks)
- **Plumbing pipes** not protected (may result in future pipe damage)
- **Inside corners** not re-enforced with rebar (more prone to cracking)
- **Post tension** cables not properly tied off (Unusable tension cable)

Typical inspection findings at **pre-drywall**

- Missing **nail guards** for wiring & plumbing (75% of inspections)
- **Structural fasteners** not properly secured (60%)
- **Load path** issues where second story load is not properly aligned with first floor support (20%)
- Improperly **supported** gas line, HVAC ducting, & water pipe (40%)
- Improperly **notched** load bearing studs (40%)
- Openings in the exterior wall **air barrier** before stucco (80%)
- **Unsecured** water or drain lines in baths (30%)
- Missing **fire blocking** in top plates & stairwells (50%)
- Missing/improper **sill bolts**, shear or hurricane strapping (40%)

Typical **Final** inspection

- Windows that don't operate properly
- Water leaks at bath and kitchen sink drains
- Hot and Cold water reversed in bathrooms
- Clogged bathtub drains
- Doors and jambs that are not plumb
- Damaged roof tile or roof flashing

Should you inspect? For pre-slab and pre-drywall, once substandard work is covered, it is no longer visible but problems may manifest later. For final inspection, most items that could be fixed before move-in are delayed for months, or sometimes, are never addressed.

Is it affordable? A typical 2000 Sq FT home costs \$260 per inspection on a \$350,000 home. The cost sure seems prudent to us!

Please visit our web site at www.hainspect.com to view a typical report.

Questions of the Month: **What is an arc fault breaker?**

Arc-fault interrupters (AFCIs), are circuit breakers (located in electrical panels) for bedroom circuits that were incorporated into the 2002 National Electrical Code for new construction. These safety devices are designed to detect fire causing faults that do not trip standard breakers. Typically these faults are: **1)**hot wire arcing to ground wire, **2)**hot wire arcing to neutral wire, or **3)**a broken wire or joint making intermittent contact. Yes, they can be added to your pre-2002 home.

Inspection Item for March: **Water Heater Leaks**

(Each month, we select appropriate items so that over a 12 month period you are reminded to attend to most common household maintenance/inspection items.)

The most common symptom of a **failed water heater** is water leakage. With your **flashlight** in hand, check the platform, the casing (signs of rust), the piping connections (for corrosion and leakage), and the valves.

Safety Tip of the Month: **Inspect for fire safety**

Take time to (SLOWLY) examine your home and garage for fire hazards.

Electrical: With the lights on, are wall switches or dimmers hot to the touch? Do switches arc or are they not positive (feel loose)? Abnormal odors (may be overheated components)? Extension cords damaged?

Heat Sources: Are combustibles close to the stove top? Are the range exhaust filters greasy? Do kids have candles or incense in bedrooms? Are clothes or pillows proximate to light bulbs?

Garage: Are there oily rags? Are combustibles near water heater or flue?

Let our experience work for you. Over 10,000 inspections performed!



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