



Home Inspection Services Newsletter

March, 2011

Educational: **Home Warranty Follow up**

We had a lot of feedback from February's Home Warranty Article; some very positive and a few horror stories. The feedback provides more insight and perhaps a more balanced view (Feb's article was positive).

Positive feedback: Several clients wrote about having far more items fixed and recouping much more money than Lauren and I have. Kudos to you!

Negative feedback by type of complaint:

- **Timeliness of service** relative to AC systems; several people waited 3 to 7 days to get AC restored in the summer. OUCH!
- **Exclusions;** Underground waste lines because of a lack of sewer clean out, a plumbing leak because a valve (not a pipe) burst, a garage door opener
- **Pre-existing conditions:** a rusted water heater that leaked
- **Limits:** Maximum dollar limits on AC, under slab pipe leaks, etc
- **Unscrupulous contractors;** A couple of people had contractors try to sell them on replacing equipment that would not be covered by the warranty and did not need to be replaced.

Obviously, the world of home warranties is not totally rosy. You can't just buy one and assume that everything is covered. **Here is my input:**

- **Read the policy before you buy it;**
 - What are the exclusions? If your main concern is your old AC units, be sure that the company covers full replacement.
 - What are the limits of coverage? Compare companies relative to limits on AC units, pipe leaks, etc. Also, what items are not covered; sprinkler and drip, washer & dryer, garage door opener, pool equipment?
 - Is there a waiting period for certain items to be covered (ie pre-existing conditions)? Some companies utilize the home inspection report and cover everything from day one except

for non-functioning items that are in the home inspection report. Some companies have a three month period whereby questionable items (such as the rusted garbage disposal or water heater) can be denied.

- Check on the warranty company's reputation; BBB, web blogs, etc.
- Challenge the contractor; If a contractor wants to charge for additional (non- covered) items, get a second opinion. Some sub-contractors are just not honest! Give feedback to the home warranty company in these cases; they should drop that sub!

Thanks to all who took the time to provide feedback! This one hit a nerve!

Monthly Question: **Why is attic ventilation important?**

Adequate attic ventilation will keep attic temperature a maximum of 20 degrees F higher than the outside temperature. Attic heat accelerates degradation of roof underlayment (tar paper) and transfers additional heat to the interior of the home. Attics are ventilated with some combination of gable, soffit, ridge, and roof vents. Wind turbines and power ventilators are utilized in some situations.

Maintenance Item for March: **Test your pool water**

Pool water in Arizona becomes harder and harder over time. Water evaporates daily and the concentration of minerals increases. Most pool supply stores test water hardness for free. When water gets too hard, PH and chlorine cannot be properly maintained. At that point, water has to be replaced. Now is the time to drain and refill pools because certain pools may crack if empty during the heat of the summer.

Safety Tip: **Pool Safety**

Is your home adequately separated from the swimming pool? The state and each city have regulations that are available on their web sites. Don't forget to consider access from **pet doors** and windows!

New product: We purchased and have been using a solar swimming pool skimmer for the last month. We love it! We'll use it for another month. If we're still totally impressed, I'll run a feature on it next month!

Let our experience work for you!



Daryl Gates



Mark Andrews



Lauren Andrews