



Home Inspection Services Newsletter

November, 2011

Educational: **Building Permits**

H&A Services does not check for building permits as part of a home inspection. If we suspect that there has been a major re-model, enclosure or addition, we will advise our client to check that the work was permitted as well as obtain copies of invoices from licensed contractors. It is important to understand the scope of the work and the warranties that were provided. I went on the city of Phoenix's web site and have listed some of the areas that require permits:

- Remodels, Additions, Garage conversions, carport & porch/patio enclosures
- New or replacement: Ceiling fans, water heaters & water softeners
- Electrical updates or re-wires
- Projects that involve gas lines
- New sprinkler and drip systems
- Added or relocated sinks, tubs, and toilets
- Window replacements that involve change of size or frame
- Some roof replacements (call)
- Room Addition
- Detached structures over 120 square feet in size
- Exterior walls and fences over 3 foot high
- Swimming pools

This list is not official or complete. Please check your city's web site. Possible consequences for failing to obtain a permit:

- Citation/fine
- Increase cost of obtaining a permit after the work is done
- Removal of the work

- Hold up of the sale of the property, possible hazards from non-professional work, and possible denial of insurance claims.

Monthly Question: **What is a parapet wall?**

The sections of the house exterior walls that extend above the roof line are call parapet walls and are generally seen on low sloped homes. Since the roof is below the wall, scuppers protrude through the parapet wall to drain rain water. Occasionally, internal drains are utilized that exit the base of the house walls.

Maintenance Item for Nov: **Moisture inspection**

A regular inspection of the walls and ceilings in the home for moisture intrusion is critical. We recommend using a **powerful flashlight** with the beam at an angle to examine the edges, corners and ceiling surfaces. Inspect the base of exterior walls and interior walls that are proximate to water fixtures and drains (kitchen, bathrooms, laundry, water softeners, bar sinks, etc.). Look for stains, sagged wallpaper, rippled drywall surfaces, and discolored grout. Inspect window headers, sides and sills. Fill and drain all sinks while observing feed and drain pipes. Examine your water heater and garbage disposal for rust. **Utilize your nose** to detect odors from mold which is often present in moist areas.

Safety Tip: **Garage Fire Separation!**

A majority of fires start in the garage. In order to contain the fire to the garage, a one hour fire separation is required for attached garages. This is accomplished by:

- Utilizing fire rated sheet rock on walls and ceilings that abut the home. Pull down stairs must be fire rated (most are not).
- Utilizing a fire rated door between the home and the garage. This door should be sealed (weather stripped), have a threshold and self close. Pet doors are not allowed in fire doors.

Frequent deficiencies are pull-down stairs that are sheathed in plywood, holes in walls and ceilings, and cracks in ceilings.

Let our experience work for you!



Daryl Gates



Mark Andrews



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