



Generalist inspections

Inspection Service Corporation

Scope of the inspection

You have contracted with Reliant Inspection Service Corporation, to perform a generalist inspection in accordance with the standards of practice established by the American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI) a copy of which is available upon request. Generalist inspections are essentially visual, and distinct from those of specialists, inasmuch as they do not include the use of specialized instruments, the dismantling of equipment, or the sampling of air and inert materials. Consequently, a generalist inspection and the subsequent report will not be as comprehensive, nor as technically exhaustive, as that generated by specialists, and it is not intended to be. The purpose of a generalist inspection is to identify significant defects or adverse conditions that would warrant a specialist evaluation. Therefore, you should be aware of the limitations of this type of inspection, which are clearly indicated in the standards. However, the inspection is not intended to document the type of cosmetic deficiencies that would be apparent to the average person, and certainly not intended to identify insignificant deficiencies. Similarly, we do not inspect for vermin infestation, which is the responsibility of a licensed exterminator.

Most homes built after 1978, are generally assumed to be free of asbestos and many other common environmental contaminants. However, as a courtesy to our clients, we are including some well documented, and therefore public, information about several environmental contaminants that could be of concern to you and your family, all of which we do not have the expertise or the authority to evaluate, such as asbestos, radon, methane, formaldehyde, termites and other wood-destroying organisms, pests and rodents, molds, microbes, bacterial organisms, and electromagnetic radiation, to name some of the more commonplace ones. Nevertheless, we will attempt to alert you to any suspicious substances that would warrant evaluation by a specialist. However, health and safety, and environmental hygiene are deeply personal responsibilities, and you should make sure that you are familiar with any contaminant that could affect your home environment. You can learn more about contaminants that can affect your home from a booklet published by the environmental Protection Agency, which you can read online at <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs/index.html>

Mold is one such contaminant. It is a microorganism that has tiny seeds, or spores, that are spread on the air then land and feed on organic matter. It has been in existence throughout human history, and actually contributes to the life process. It takes many different forms, many of them benign, like mildew. Some characterized as allergens are relatively benign but can provoke allergic reactions among sensitive people, and others characterized as pathogens can have adverse health effects on large segments of the population, such as the very young, the elderly, and people with suppressed immune systems. However, there are less common molds that are called toxigens that represent a serious health threat. All molds flourish in the presence of moisture, and we make a concerted effort to look for any evidence of it wherever there could be a water source, including that from condensation. Interestingly, the molds that



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commonly appear on ceramic tiles in bathrooms do not usually constitute a health threat, but they should be removed. However, some visibly similar molds that form on cellulose materials, such as on drywall, plaster, and wood, are potentially toxigenic. If mold is to be found anywhere within a home, it will likely be in the area of tubs, showers, toilets, sinks, water heaters, evaporator coils, inside attics with unvented bathroom exhaust fans, and return-air compartments that draw outside air, all of which are areas that we inspect very conscientiously. Nevertheless, mold can appear as though spontaneously at any time, so you should be prepared to monitor your home, and particularly those areas that we identified. Naturally, it is equally important to maintain clean air-supply ducts and to change filters as soon as they become soiled, because contaminated ducts are a common breeding ground for dust mites, rust, and other contaminants. Regardless, although some mold-like substances may be visually identified, the specific identification of molds can only be determined by specialists and laboratory analysis, and is absolutely beyond the scope of our inspection. Nonetheless, as a prudent investment in environmental hygiene, we categorically recommend that you have your home tested for the presence of any such contaminants, and particularly if you or any member of your family suffers from allergies or asthma. Also, you can learn more about mold from an Environmental Protection Agency document entitled "A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture and Your Home," by visiting their web site at: <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/moldguide.html> , from which it can be downloaded.

Asbestos is a notorious contaminant that could be present in any home built before 1978. It is a naturally occurring mineral fiber that was first used by the Greek and Romans in the first century, and it has been widely used throughout the modern world in a variety of thermal insulators, including those in the form of paper wraps, bats, blocks, and blankets. However, it can also be found in a wide variety of other products too numerous to mention, including duct insulation and acoustical materials, plasters, siding, floor tiles, heat vents, and roofing products. Although perhaps recognized as being present in some documented forms, asbestos can only be specifically identified by laboratory analysis. The most common asbestos fiber that exists in residential products is chrysotile, which belongs to the serpentine or white-asbestos group, and was used in the clutches and brake shoes of automobiles for many years. However, a single asbestos fiber is said to be able to cause cancer, and is therefore a potential health threat and a litigious issue. Significantly, asbestos fibers are only dangerous when they are released into the air and inhaled, and for this reason authorities such as the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] and the Consumer Product Safety Commission [CPSC] distinguish between asbestos that is in good condition, or non-friable, and that which is in poor condition, or friable, which means that its fibers could be easily crumbled and become airborne. However, we are not specialists and, regardless of the condition of any real or suspected asbestos-containing material [ACM], we would not endorse it and recommend having it evaluated by a specialist.



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Radon is a gas that results from the natural decay of radioactive materials within the soil, and is purported to be the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. The gas is able to enter homes through the voids around pipes in concrete floors or through the floorboards of poorly ventilated crawlspaces, and particularly when the ground is wet and the gas cannot easily escape through the soil and be dispersed into the atmosphere. However, it cannot be detected by the senses, and its existence can only be determined by sophisticated instruments and laboratory analysis, which is completely beyond the scope of our service. However, you can learn more about radon and other environmental contaminants and their affects on health, by contacting the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), at <http://www.epa.gov/radon> , and it would be prudent for you to enquire about any high radon readings that might be prevalent in the general area surrounding your home.

Lead poses an equally serious health threat. In the 1920's, it was commonly found in many plumbing systems. In fact, the word "plumbing" is derived from the Latin word "plumbum," which means lead. When in use as a component of a waste system, it is not an immediate health threat, but as a component of potable water pipes it is a definite health-hazard. Although rarely found in modern use, lead could be present in any home build as recently as the nineteen forties. For instance, lead was an active ingredient in many household paints, which can be released in the process of sanding, and even be ingested by small children and animals chewing on painted surfaces. Fortunately, the lead in painted surfaces can be detected by industrial hygienists using sophisticated instruments, but testing for it is not cheap. There are other environmental contaminants, some of which we have already mentioned, and others that may be relatively benign. However, we are not environmental hygienists, and as we stated earlier we disclaim any responsibility for testing or establishing the presence of any environmental contaminant, and recommend that you schedule whatever specialist inspections that may deem prudent within the contingency period. Lead Information can be found at this link. <http://www.epa.gov/lead/>

Hope this information is helpful to you and your family.

Fidel F Gonzales, President
Reliant Inspection Service Corporation