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Home Seller Checklist

A HOME SELLERS CHECKLIST

It is important to identify problems that typically appear on buyers' home inspection report. Early correction of these problems can increase a home's appeal, and its selling price. It also sets the stage for a favorable home inspection report for the buyer, and thereby helps to expedite the sale. The following 6-point checklist can help you achieve these marketing goals:

1. CHECK THE MAJOR SYSTEMS

After size, style, and location, a home buyer's primary concern is the condition of the home's basic structure and major electrical and mechanical systems. Most buyers do not want to invest a great deal of money correcting problems in such critical areas.

A pre-listing home inspection can reveal problems, and include recommendations for repairs, if needed, on the following major items:

- Roof structure and covering
- Foundation, basement, and/or crawl space.
- Central heating and air conditioning systems.
- Electrical system.
- Plumbing system.

2. MAKE MAINTENANCE IMPROVEMENTS

A number of maintenance improvements are relatively easy and inexpensive to make, yet they can substantially improve a home's appearance, efficiency and comfort. A professional home inspector may make helpful maintenance suggestions, such as:

- Trim trees and shrubs which touch or over-hang the house.
- Apply new caulking and weather-stripping as needed around windows and doors.
- Clean gutters of debris and leaves; repair or replace cracked or broken gutters, downspouts and extensions to ensure proper drainage.
- Replace bathroom caulk or grouting where necessary to prevent seepage and improve appearance.
- Ventilate closed basements and crawl spaces, or install a dehumidifier, to prevent excessive moisture build-up.

- Re-grade soil around the foundation, as needed, to keep water away from the house.
- Replace dirty filters in the heating and air conditioning systems.
- Have the heating and air-conditioning systems professionally serviced.
- Have chimneys professionally cleaned, and install chimney hoods or caps as needed.

3. PAY ATTENTION TO DETAILS

Fixing even minor items can go along way toward improving that important first impression of your home. Here are some typical improvements which might be suggested by the home inspector's findings;

- Repair leaking faucets
- Tighten loose doorknobs
- Replace damaged screens
- Replace broken panes of glass
- Replaced burned out light bulbs
- Secure loose railings
- Repair and coat driveway
- Patch holes or cracks in walls and ceiling, then repaint
- Repair peeling wallpaper

4. TAKE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Home inspectors also pay attention to items relating to protecting the home and its occupants from danger. They can alert you to important safety precautions which home buyers will appreciate, such as:

- Installing smoke detectors on each level
- Installing ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI) in "wet" areas, such as bathrooms, exterior outlets, and near kitchen countertops.
- Keeping flammable products away from heaters water heaters and fireplaces.

5. MAKE COSMETIC IMPROVEMENTS

An attractive, clean and neat appearance will enhance your homes appeal. In addition to making repairs such as those listed above, remember to:

- Keep the lawn mowed and the house picked up
- Clean the exterior walls and trim; repaint if necessary
- Open window shades and curtains to create a bright, inviting atmosphere.
- Keep the kitchen and bathrooms clean, since buyers scrutinize these areas

6. PREPARE FOR BUYER'S INSPECTION

It is a good idea to assemble in advanced various house records that can be used to answer questions from buyers and home inspectors.

Specifically, you should have on hand:

- Appliance receipts, service records and warranties
- Information on the age of major components such as the heater, air conditioner, and roof
- Major component warranties (e.g. carpeting, siding, roof shingles)
- Heating, water and electric bills from the last year.

In addition keep basement, attic and garage areas clear and uncluttered to give buyers and inspectors access to the heating system, electrical equipment, and visible structure