

**HT Inspection**  
**1 Barney Road Suite 253**  
**Clifton Park, NY 12065**  
**518 383-1314/800 963-9456**  
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Nina Damsgaard

File Number: 109-082015-0224

August 25, 2015

Address of Inspection: 3 Ridgetop  
Great Barrington, MA 01230

Inspection Start Time: 3:00 PM

Inspection Stop Time 4:30 PM

NY Lic: 8470/MA Lic: 450/VT Lic 143.0119812

#### GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Throughout this report, the terms "right" and "left" are used to describe the home as viewed from the street. The term "major visual defect" is defined in the Home Inspection Agreement, the terms of which are incorporated into this report, including but not limited to "A major, visually-observable defect is one that is capable of detection by reasonable visual examination only, and that requires an immediate expenditure in excess of \$1,500.00 to prevent further deterioration of the property. HT Inspection inspects for evidence of structural failure and safety concerns only. The cosmetic conditions of the paint, wall covering, carpeting, window coverings, etc., are not addressed. All conditions are reported, as they existed at the time of the inspection.

Routine maintenance and safety items are not within the scope of this inspection unless they otherwise constitute major, visually observable defects as defined in the home inspection agreement. Acceptance and/or use of this report implies acceptance of the home inspection agreement. Although some maintenance and/or safety items may be disclosed, this report does not include all maintenance or safety items and should not be relied upon for such items.

The approximate temperature at the time of the inspection was 65 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit and it was clear. The utilities were on and the home was vacant at the time of the inspection. The buyer was present during the inspection.

The inspected property consisted of a two-story structure with vinyl siding. There were no major visual defects on the visible portions of the exterior. Maintaining the sealing on all entrance and exit openings for the home was recommended. It was recommended that all exterior wood be kept painted or stained to prevent moisture penetration.

The home was situated on a lightly sloped lot. The general grade around the home appeared to be adequate to direct rainwater away from the foundation. There were no major visual defects observed in the drainage at the time of the inspection. It was recommended the grade around the home be properly graded to create positive drainage.

There was a concrete walkway leading to a concrete stoop in the front of the home, that were in fair condition at the time of the inspection. There was a concrete and stone porch in the rear of the home, home that were in fair condition at the time of the inspection. There were

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no major visual defects observed.

There was an asphalt driveway on the rear side of the home that led to the detached garage, home that were in fair condition at the time of the inspection. There were no major visual defects observed in the driveway.

#### **GARAGE:**

The detached garage was designed for two cars with access provided by two overhead-style doors. The Liftmaster brand electric garage door opener was tested and found to be functional. The automatic safety reverse on the garage door was tested and found to be functional. The concrete garage floor was in fair condition. There were no major visual defects observed in the garage. There were stored personal items and cluttered conditions that limited the inspection.

#### **DECK/PATIO:**

There was a patio located in the rear of the home, home that were in fair condition at the time of the inspection. There were no major visual defects observed to the patio.

#### **ROOF EXTERIOR:**

The roof was a gable, valley and shed design covered with asphalt/fiberglass shingles. Observation of the roof surfaces and flashing was performed from ground level with the aid of binoculars. There was 1 layer of shingles and roofing on the roof at the time of the inspection.

There was light curling and surface wear observed on the shingles of the home at the time of the inspection. These conditions indicate the shingles were in the first half and nearing the end of their useful life. There were exposed valleys, home that were in fair condition at the time of the inspection.

This visual roof inspection is not intended as a warranty or an estimate on the remaining life of the roof. Any roof metal, especially the flashing and valleys, must be kept well painted with a paint specially formulated for the use. There were no major visual defects detected on the exterior of the roof.

There was one brick chimney, home that was in fair condition at the time of the inspection. Observation of the chimney exterior was made from ground level with the aid of binoculars. There were waste stacks on the roof observed at the time of the inspection. There were no major visual defects observed on the exterior. The evaluation was limited due to the type of design at the time of the inspection.

#### **FOUNDATION:**

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The foundation was constructed of poured concrete and block. A single inspection cannot determine whether movement of a foundation has ceased. Any cracks should be monitored regularly. There were no major visual defects observed on the visible portions of the foundation.

#### **BASEMENT:**

The full basement was partially finished and had a concrete floor. The basement was damp at the time of the inspection. A dehumidifier was recommended. Because the basement is below grade, there exists a vulnerability to moisture penetration after heavy rains.

#### **SUBFLOOR:**

The visible floor structure consisted of a tongue and groove sub-floor, supported by 2-inch by 8-inch wood joists spaced 16-inches on center. There was a 6-inch wood center beam, 4-inch steel posts and a sill plate for load bearing support. There were no major visual defects observed in the visible portions of the sub-floor structure.

#### **PLUMBING:**

The visible water supply lines throughout the home were copper, brass, rubber, flex hose and pex tubing. The visible waste lines consisted of PVC, copper, cast iron and brass. All plumbing fixtures used on a routine basis were operated and inspected for visible leaks. Water flow throughout the home was average. There were no major visual defects observed in the visible portions of the plumbing system. There were stored cluttered conditions that limited the inspection.

The main water shutoff valve for the home was located adjacent to the water service entry point in the basement.

There was a 40-gallon capacity, gas water heater located in the basement. The water heater was manufactured by Rheem. Information on the water heater indicated that it was manufactured 18 years ago. A temperature and pressure relief valve (T & P) was present. Because of the lime build-up typical of T & P valves, we do not test them. A drip leg was present. It did terminate close to the floor. Your safety depends on the presence of a T & P valve and a drip leg terminating close to the floor. The water heater was functional. The water heater is nearing the end of its useful life.

#### **ELECTRIC SERVICE:**

The overhead electric service wire entered the home on the left wall. The electric meter was located on the exterior wall. The service wire entered a Square D service panel located on the basement wall with a 200 amp and 120/240 volt rated capacity. There were 13 branch

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circuits observed within the service panel. The branch circuits within the panel were copper. These branch circuits and the circuit breakers to which they were attached appeared to be appropriately matched. The visible house wiring consisted primarily of the Romex and BX type and appeared to be in fair condition.

The grounding and polarity of receptacles within six feet of plumbing fixtures, and those attached to ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI), if present, were also tested. All GFCI receptacles and GFCI circuit breakers should be tested monthly. There were no GFCI protected circuits located in the home.

GFCI protected outlets are recommended for the exterior of the home, the garage, basement, bathrooms and within six feet of the kitchen sink. In addition, pools, hot tubs and jacuzzis should also be GFCI protected.

A representative number of installed lighting fixtures, switches and receptacles located throughout the home were inspected. The electrical service appeared to be adequate. Alarms, electronic keypads, remote control devices, landscape lighting, telephone, television and all electric company equipment were beyond the scope of this inspection. There were no major visual defects observed in the electrical system.

#### **SMOKE ALARMS & CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS:**

There were smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors found in the home. For safety reasons, smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors should be tested upon occupancy. The batteries (if any) should be replaced with new ones when you move into the house and tested on a monthly basis thereafter. It was recommended that a UL listed carbon monoxide detector be installed according to manufacturer's recommendation.

#### **WINDOWS, DOORS, WALLS, FLOORS AND CEILINGS:**

The primary windows were constructed of wood; double hung, casement and fixed style with single pane glass. A representative number of accessible windows and interior doors were operated. All exterior doors were operated. The exterior door locks should be changed or rekeyed upon occupancy. Possible problem areas may not be identified if the windows or doors have been recently painted. There were no major visual defects observed. The caulking and weather stripping for the windows and doors throughout the home should be appropriately maintained.

The interior wall and ceiling surfaces were finished with drywall and plaster. Possible problem areas may not be identified if the interior wall and ceiling surfaces have been recently painted. The interior floors were finished with hardwood, carpeting and vinyl. There were no major visual defects observed.

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The first level consisted of a kitchen, living room, dining room, three bedrooms and two full bathrooms. A fan provided the ventilation for the bathroom at the time of the inspection. HT Inspection inspects for evidence of structural failure and safety concerns only. The cosmetic conditions of the paint, wall covering, carpeting, window coverings, etc., are not addressed.

#### SECOND LEVEL:

The second level consisted of three bedrooms and two full bathrooms. A fan provided the ventilation for the bathroom at the time of the inspection.

#### FIREPLACE:

A wood-burning fireplace was located in the living room. There were no major visual defects observed in the fireplace. The evaluation of the fireplace was limited due to the type of design. The damper did appear to be functional.

For safety reasons, the fireplace and the chimney or pipe to which it is vented should be cleaned and re inspected, as there may be hidden defects, not fully visible at the time of the inspection. The fireplace was not tested for operation or function, nor were the flue tiles or flue pipes if present inspected.

#### ATTIC STRUCTURE:

The attic was accessed through a hallway and garage and was viewed by walking it. The attic above the living space was insulated with loose fill insulation, approximately 9-inches in depth. An attic should be insulated with approximately twelve inches of batted fiberglass insulation or its equivalent (an insulating value of R-38). Adding insulation was recommended. Gable vents provided ventilation throughout the attic. The temperature in the non-livable attic space should be the same as the outside temperature all year. Adding ventilation was recommended. The roof structure consisted of 2-inch by 6-inch wood trusses spaced 24-inches on center with plywood sheathing.

Because of the configuration of the trusses, which limited access, it was not possible to inspect all areas of the attic. There was no moisture visible in the attic space at the time of the inspection. There was evidence of prior moisture stains observed. It was recommended that this situation be monitored. The only way to be sure a roof does not leak is to inspect the underside of the roof during a heavy rain. There were no major visual defects observed in the attic or roof structure.

#### HEATING:

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There were electric baseboard and a wall heating units located throughout the home. Each unit was operated and observed to be functional. These units should be kept clean and unobstructed for proper working order.

There was a wood stove located in the basement. Evaluation of the wood stove is beyond the scope of this inspection.

## REASONABLE EXPECTATIONS REGARDING A PROFESSIONAL HOME INSPECTION:

There may come a time when you discover something wrong with the house and you may be upset or disappointed with your home inspection. There are some things we'd like you to keep in mind.

1) Intermittent or concealed problems

Some problems can only be discovered by living in a house. They cannot be discovered during the few hours of a home inspection. For example, some shower stalls leak when people are in the shower, but do not leak when you simply turn on the tap. Some roofs and basements only leak when specific conditions exist. Some problems will only be discovered when carpets are lifted, furniture is moved or finishes are removed.

2) No clues

These problems may have existed at the time of the inspection, but there were no clues as to their existence. Our inspections are based on the past performance of the house. If there are no clues of a past problem, it is unfair to assume we should foresee a future problem.

3) We always miss some minor things

Some say we are inconsistent because our reports identify some minor problems but not others. The minor problems that are identified were discovered while looking for more significant problems. We note them simply as a courtesy. The intent of the inspection is not to find the \$200 problems; it is to find the \$1500 problems. These are the things that effect people's decisions to purchase.

4) Contractor's advise

A common source of dissatisfaction with home inspectors comes from comments made by contractors. Contractor's opinions often differ from ours. Don't be surprised when three roofers all say the roof needs replacement, when we said that the roof would last a few more years with some minor repairs.

"Last Man in" theory

While our advice represents the most prudent thing to do, many contractors are reluctant to undertake these repairs. This is because of the "last man in" theory. The contractor fears that if he is the last person to work on the roof, he well get blamed if the roof leaks, regardless of whether or not the roof leak is his fault. Consequently, he won't want to do a minor repair with high liability, when he could re-roof the entire house for more money and reduce the likelihood of a callback. This is understandable.

5) Most recent advice is best

There is more to the "last man in" theory. It suggests that it is human nature for homeowners to believe the last bit of expert advice they receive, even if it is contrary to previous advice. As home inspectors, we unfortunately find ourselves in the position of "first man in" and consequently it is our advice that is often disbelieved.

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6) Why didn't we see it?

Contractors may say, "I can't believe you had this house inspected and they didn't find this problem." There are several reasons for these apparent oversights:

Conditions during the inspection

It is difficult for homeowners to remember the circumstances in the house at the time of the inspection. Homeowners seldom remember that it was snowing, there was storage everywhere or that the furnace could not be turned on because the air conditioning was operating, etc. It's impossible for contractors to know what the circumstances were when the inspection was performed.

This wisdom of hindsight

When the problem manifests itself, it is very easy to have 20/20 hindsight. Anybody can say that the basement is wet when there is 2" of water on the floor. Predicting the problem is a different story.

A long look

If we spent half an hour under the kitchen sink or 45 minutes disassembling the furnace, we'd find more problems, too. Unfortunately, the inspection would take several days and would cost considerably more.

7) We're generalists

We are generalists; we are not specialists. The heating contractor may indeed have more heating expertise than we do. This is because we are expected to have heating expertise and plumbing expertise, structural expertise, electrical expertise, etc.

8) An invasive look

Problems often become apparent when carpets or plaster are removed, when fixtures or cabinets are pulled out and so on. A home inspection is a visual examination. We don't perform invasive or destructive tests.

9) Not insurance

In conclusion, a home inspection is designed to better your odds. It is not designed to eliminate all risk. For that reason, a home inspection should not be considered an insurance policy. The premium that an insurance company would have to charge for a policy with no deductible, no limit and an indefinite policy would be considerably more than the fee we charge. It would also not include the value added by the inspection.