

**Home Sweet Home Inspections**  
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## Condominium Inspection Report Sample

Prepared For:  
Condominium  
Buyer



Report Number: 021308  
Inspection Date: 2/13/08

## Property Information

Address: 106 Condominium, Tuscaloosa AL

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## Notes

This report is CONFIDENTIAL, and is for the use and benefit of the client only. It is not intended to be for the benefit of or to be relied upon by any other buyer, lender, title insurance company, or other third party. DO NOT DUPLICATE WITHOUT PERMISSION. Duplication without permission is a violation of federal copyright law. Terms and conditions crucial to interpretation of the report are contained in a separate Pre-Inspection Agreement. Do not use this report without consulting the Pre-Inspection Agreement.

The report conforms to the standards of the American Society of Home Inspectors®. Components are identified and their apparent condition is reported. The client should consult the terms of the sales contract to determine whether any of the items contained within must be repaired by the seller prior to closing. Reporting on other issues such as cosmetic damage and suggestions for improvements is included for your information only, and should not be relied upon as items that may or may not be repaired under the terms of your Sales Contract. If in doubt, consult your Sales Contract and/or an attorney to explain your rights and obligations under your Sales Contract. The Inspector offers no warranties or representations as to your rights or obligations under any Sales Contract.

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## Identifying Repairs in the Report

Items that appear to need attention or repair are listed in the following formats:

**Major Repair** These are repairs to items not performing their intended function that, in the opinion of the inspector, might cost more than \$500.00 to remedy.

**Minor Repair** These are repairs that, in the opinion of the inspector, are minor repairs to items not performing their intended functions. Cost to repair may range from minimal to several hundred dollars.

**Maintenance** These are repairs that, in the opinion of the inspector, are regular maintenance typical for buildings this age. Repairs to these items are not urgent, but should be made within the next six months.

**Safety Concern** Conditions that are judged to be a real or potential threat to safety or health (regardless of cost to repair) are listed as safety concerns. **These items should be repaired immediately and prior to occupancy.** Cost may be minimal or significant.

**Investigate Further** Conditions that warrant further investigation by an appropriately licensed specialist are identified here. Often, only a specialist can confirm that repairs are needed and determine the scope of the repairs. This includes conditions that require destructive inspection, engineering, analysis beyond the scope of a visual home inspection, or subjects outside the general knowledge of a home inspector.

**FYI** These are items that are noted for your information. You may or may not want to act on them

## CONDITIONS DURING INSPECTION

The weather was cold and wet.

The outdoor temperature during the inspection was about 40

The soil was wet.

No other parties were present during the inspection.

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## WINDOWS AND EXTERIOR DOORS

### Description

The windows are aluminum single hung.

The windows have insulated glass.

The doors are Metal covered

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### Observations and Recommendations

Doors and random windows were operated and found to be functional except as noted below.

## ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

### Description

The 120/240 volt, 125 amp service enters the house from through conduit underground.

The service entrance wires are #2/0 aluminum.

The main service panel is located on the exterior wall next to the meter. The main panel contains a single circuit breaker main disconnect.

The main disconnect is a 125 amp circuit breaker located in the main panel.

Service grounding connections were observed at a driven rod.

A sub-panel is located in the hallway.

The readily visible wiring is copper in non-metallic cable.

Receptacles are the modern three hole grounded type.

Smoke detectors were observed in appropriate locations.

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### Observations and Recommendations

Electrical systems require regular maintenance for safety reasons. We recommend that you have a licensed electrician perform annual inspection and maintenance.

We opened and inspected all main and sub-panels. Conditions appear adequate.

We tested a random number of receptacles using a testing device. Accessible receptacles tested as being wired properly and grounded.

A ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) is a modern electrical device, either a receptacle or a circuit breaker, which is designed to protect people from electric shock. In the event of a fault in an appliance that you are touching, the current that passes through your body to ground is detected and the circuit is shut off, protecting you from potentially fatal shocks. GFCI devices are now required in new homes in wet or damp environments. We recommend that all receptacles located in the kitchen at countertops, in bathrooms, in the garage, at spas, hot tubs, fountains, pools, in crawl spaces, near laundry tubs, and outdoors be upgraded to the Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter type by a licensed electrician if not already present. This will considerably improve electrical safety for occupants of the building.

GFCI devices tested functional using a testing device.

Overall, we found the system to be in adequate condition. It's very similar to what would be installed today.

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Note: The inspection does not include low voltage systems, telephone wiring, intercoms, alarm systems, cable TV wiring, timers or the operation of smoke detectors.

Smoke detectors should be installed (if not already present) on each floor (including attics and basements.) Modern standards require that smoke detectors be installed inside and outside of all sleeping areas. They should be hard wired and have battery backups. All smoke detectors should be interconnected so that they all sound at once. We recommend upgrading to this level of protection (if not already present.)

Consult the manufacturer's literature for recommended mounting locations of smoke detectors. Be sure to test your smoke detectors upon moving in and monthly thereafter.

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## PLUMBING SYSTEM

### Description

The water is supplied by the municipal system.

The waste system is municipal sewers.

Readily visible plumbing supply pipes are copper. (Most of the piping is concealed and cannot be identified.)  
Readily visible waste pipes are PVC plastic.

Hot water is provided by a water heater that uses electric elements to heat with.

The electric 40 gallon primary water heater is located in the utility room We estimate the age of the water heater to be three to five years old. A temperature pressure relief valve is present on the water heater.

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### Observations and Recommendations

The readily visible supply piping system appears to be in functional condition.

The readily visible drain piping system appears to be in functional condition.

Water was run through all fixtures and drains. Flow through the supply piping is low when using more than one fixture at a time. Expect to replace the piping in the near future. Drainage was slow in some fixtures.

Valves and fixtures were operated. All fixtures were functional.

Showers are typically lined with a waterproofing material placed beneath the floor tile. This material is called a pan. The tile and grout are not completely waterproof. The pan captures and diverts water into the floor drain. Older pans often develop leaks. Occasionally, small leaks are present that are very difficult to detect. This is especially true if the shower is not in daily use. Although care is taken in the inspection, the report is not an assurance that future repairs will not be needed. We saw no evidence of leakage on the floors or baseboards adjacent to the shower.

Hot water was present at all fixtures on the correct side of the fixture.

The temperature of the hot water was 120 degrees. The temperature is within the safe range.

Be aware of the risk of scalding from water temperatures above 120° F. The risk is especially acute for infants, children, and the elderly. Water temperatures should never be set higher than 120° F. Newer water supply valves contain anti-scalding mechanisms to prevent scalding. These can be retrofitted. Note that higher water temperatures are not necessary for modern dishwashers, which heat the water.

The temperature pressure relief valve on the water heater should be tested upon moving in and on a regular basis thereafter. This is an important safety device that prevents the water heater from exploding in the rare event of a defect in the built in operating and safety controls. We do not test these valves.

Tile walls in the tub(s) and/or shower(s) were tapped to test for signs of deterioration. None were observed.

A tub trap access panel is not present.

**Minor Repair** Minor leakage was observed from the drain piping beneath the kitchen sink.

**Safety Concern** Piping from the water heater temperature/pressure relief valve should be extended to within 12" of the floor. In the event the water heater controls became defective and failed to stop heating, the steam and boiling hot water discharged would strike anyone standing nearby. Extension piping is required to be the same size as the valve. It may not be reduced. See the manufacturer's installation instructions for other requirements. Repair of this condition is inexpensive.

The water heater is not installed in a drain pan (as would be required in a new installation.) When it begins to leak, as all inevitably do, water will damage floor coverings.

We recommend you shut off the water when you are not home.

Given the advanced age of the water heater, it would be advisable to replace the heater before this happens, or at least shut off the water when you are not at home.

Wells, septic systems, sewer lines, and water treatment equipment are not inspected and are expressly excluded from the inspection and report. If a well is present, it is recommended that you sample the well water for testing by local health authorities. No water testing of any type is performed during the inspection.

If the house has a septic system, inspection and pumping by a septic tank contractor should be done before closing. Septic tanks need regular pumping. Evaluation of the system can be made at that time. Reliable evaluation of the septic system cannot be made during a visual inspection.

# HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEM

## Description

The heating system for the house located in the utility room consists of an electric air to air heat pump.

The heating system capacity 50,000 BTUis

The heating system is estimated to be twenty to twenty five years old.

The air conditioning system for the house is an electric air to air heat pump.

The estimated size of the system is one and a half tons.

The estimated age of the cooling system is three to six years old.

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## Observations and Recommendations

Note: The report should not be read as a prediction of the remaining lifespan of the system. Typical lifespans of equipment may range from 8-12 years, but there are many exceptions to this. Most air conditioning compressors are warranted for only 5 years. Replacement of a compressor alone may cost from \$600-\$800. We recommend that you purchase a warranty or service contract to cover replacement or repair. Be advised that defects or failure can occur at any time, and that the inspection in no way lessens the risk or likelihood of repairs or replacements being needed at any time in the future, including the day after the inspection. Any mechanical equipment can fail without warning at any time.

We recommended that all equipment be serviced twice a year. Regular service is very important for efficient operation and to achieve maximum lifespan. Filters in forced air systems should be changed monthly.

## HEAT PUMP:

A heat pump operates exactly the same as an air conditioner when it's cooling. When heating, it operates in a reverse cycle, using the same components that are used for air conditioning. A valve located in the outdoor condensing unit reverses the flow of refrigerant to change from cooling to heating. Instead of extracting heat from the indoor air and exchanging it outdoors (air conditioning), it extracts heat from the outdoor air and exchanges it indoors (heating.) The heat pump is a more energy efficient method of heating than electric heat typically used with regular air conditioning, because it is easier to move heat than it is to create heat. While air conditioning, function and efficiency are the same. Some units are more efficient than others. This is true for regular air conditioners also.

Most heat pumps have a supplemental electric heat strip located in the air handler. This provides additional heat when the outdoor temperatures are very low and the heat pump is not able to extract as much heat from the colder air.

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The heat pump was operated in heating mode only during the inspection using the normal operating controls. The temperature differential was measured and found to be 22. This is the number of degrees the system is cooling (or heating) the house air. Normal range for this number is 16-22 degrees when cooling and 20-28 degrees when heating (without supplemental heat.)

The suction line at the air handler was found to be hot which indicates the unit is operating properly in heating mode. The liquid line was found to be cool which indicates the system is working normally in heating mode.

Coils in the condensing unit and air handler were examined and found to be in need of cleaning. The air handler coil is dirty and clogged. This affects the operation of the system.

Motors and fans were found to be in functional condition. No unusual noises were observed.

The primary condensate drain line was inspected where readily visible. The drain appears functional but was not operating. The drain only works when cooling.

An auxiliary drain line is not present. Installation is advised, as the inevitable overflow of the main drain (if it clogs) will damage interior surfaces.

The heat pump system the system is old. Plan on the need for replacement at any time.

**Minor Repair** The air handler does not have an auxiliary drain pan beneath it. Auxiliary drain pans are required to prevent the damage to the ceilings and walls beneath the unit that will occur when the main drain becomes clogged. It is just a matter of time until this damage occurs as these drains inevitably become clogged, especially when service is neglected. The installation of a drain pan is needed. Have a contractor install a drain pan.

**Minor Repair** The evaporator coil in the air handler is dirty. This dirt may contain mold, fungus or other substances. A contractor should clean the coil. The inside of the air handler should also be cleaned. The dirty coil reduces heat transfer and affects the operation of the system.

## DUCTWORK:

Filters should be cleaned or changed on a regular basis. This helps keep the system and the house clean and reduces operating costs.

Visible ductwork was not accessible and was not inspected.

**Minor Repair** The air filters were the wrong size. This is letting unfiltered air get to the coils and causing a built up on them. Recommend cleaning the coils, servicing the cooling system and checking the refrigerant level

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## INTERIOR

### Description

The walls and ceilings are drywall.

Floors are wood.

Interior cabinets are wood.

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### Observations and Recommendations

Minor cracks are found on interior surfaces in all buildings and are typically cosmetic in nature. This type of cracking is usually caused by settlement, shrinkage of building components or thermal expansion and contraction. Small cracks of this type are not mentioned in the report.

We cannot determine the condition of floors underneath carpet and other coverings. The condition of concealed floors is specifically excluded from the inspection and report.

Walls and ceilings were found to be in adequate condition. No unusual cracking or staining was observed except as noted below.

Interior floors were found to be in adequate condition.

**Investigate Further** Interior cabinets were found to be in adequate condIn the utility room beside the water heater there are walls with fungus growth on them.

**Investigate Further** There is an area where the plumbing is showing behind the water heater where the wall has been torn out.

**Investigate Further** There are other stains on the walls and ceiling along with an repaired area

**Minor Repair** There are window that will not stay up when they are opened, the one(s) that where found is at the bedroom.

**Minor Repair** At the bedroom window there is moisture stains on the sheet rock.

**FYI** There are joints in the wood flooring that is wider than normal.

## **A Word about Mold and Other Indoor Air Contaminates**

Molds are fungi that can be found both indoors and outdoors. Molds grow best in warm, damp, and humid conditions, and spread and reproduce by making spores. Mold spores can survive harsh environmental conditions, such as dry conditions, that do not support normal mold growth.

Molds are found in virtually every environment and can be detected, indoors and outdoors, year round. Mold growth is encouraged by warm and humid conditions. Outdoors they can be found in shady, damp areas or places where leaves or other vegetation is decomposing. Indoors they can be found where humidity levels are high, such as basements or showers or where water leaks into the building.

Some people are sensitive to molds. For these people, exposure to molds can cause symptoms such as nasal stuffiness, eye irritation, wheezing, or skin irritation. Some people, such as those with serious allergies to molds, may have more severe reactions. Severe reactions may occur among workers exposed to large amounts of molds in occupational settings, such as farmers working around moldy hay. Severe reactions may include fever and shortness of breath. Some people with chronic lung illnesses, such as obstructive lung disease, may develop mold infections in their lungs.

Sensitive individuals should avoid areas that are likely to have mold, such as compost piles, cut grass, and wooded areas. Inside homes, mold growth can be slowed by keeping humidity levels between 40% and 60%, and ventilating showers and cooking areas. If there is mold growth in your home, you should clean up the mold and fix the water problem. Mold growth can be removed from hard surfaces with commercial products, soap and water, or a weak bleach solution (1 cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water).

To reduce the possibility of mold growth, keep the humidity level in the house between 40% and 60%. Use an air conditioner or a dehumidifier during humid months. Be sure the home has adequate ventilation, including exhaust fans. Add mold inhibitors to paints before application. Clean bathrooms with mold killing products. Do not carpet bathrooms and basements. Remove or replace previously soaked carpets and upholstery.

We do not inspect or test for the presence or absence of mold. Generally, it is not necessary to identify the species of mold growing in a residence, and CDC and EPA do not recommend routine sampling for molds. Current evidence indicates that allergies are the type of diseases most often associated with molds. Since the susceptibility of individuals can vary greatly either because of the amount or type of mold, sampling and culturing are not reliable in determining your health risk. Consult your doctor.

If you are susceptible to mold and mold is seen or smelled, there is a potential health risk; therefore, no matter what type of mold is present, you should arrange for its removal. Furthermore, reliable sampling for mold can be expensive, and standards for judging what is and what is not an acceptable or tolerable quantity of mold have not been established.

For further current information regarding the issues of mold and other indoor air contaminants we recommend that you visit the Center for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/asthma/factsheets/molds/default.htm> and the Environmental Protection Administration at <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/moldguide.html>

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## APPLIANCES

### Description

The following appliances were inspected by operating the appliance using the normal operating controls as you would under every day use:

Refrigerator: Operated during inspection, found to be functional.

Range: Operated during inspection, found to be functional.

Range hood: Operated during inspection, found to be functional.

Dishwasher: Operated during inspection, found to be functional.

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### Observations and Recommendations

We inspected appliances by turning them on briefly. Extensive testing of timers, thermostats, and other controls is not performed. No report can be made regarding the effectiveness of any appliances. (For example, it is impossible to thoroughly check a washer and dryer without a load of clothes.) The inspection only determines whether or not the appliances run.

We found the appliances to be in adequate condition, except as noted below.

**Safety Concern** The anti-tip bracket that prevents the range from tipping over is not installed. The bracket should be installed to prevent the possibility of injury. See the manufacturer's installation instructions for details.

Discovery of recalled appliances and other products is outside the scope of this inspection. For the latest information on recalls, visit <http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/recallsdesc.htm#CP> and <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/prerel.html>

**Refrigerator maintenance:** Regular maintenance of your refrigerator will pay for itself in terms of better efficiency and a longer life. Refrigerators, like air conditioners, move a lot of air across the condenser coils located behind a grille under the door. With this air comes dust, pet hair and lint that clings to the coils, reducing

their ability to *dissipate heat*. When this happens, the compressor runs longer and cools less. This makes for an inefficient appliance and higher electrical bills. Cleaning these coils twice year makes a big difference and will take only minutes.

In addition to the condenser coil, a refrigerator also has an evaporator coil or plate which needs regular cleaning. Location of the evaporator plate (or evaporator coil) will vary. On older models, the evaporator coil is next to the compressor at the appliance's back behind an access panel. Newer models usually have an exposed coil in the form of a large metal grid on the refrigerator's back.

Unplug the refrigerator before starting. Begin by lifting the grille from its place below the front door. Use a vacuum cleaner on the coils. If the coils are greasy, use a spray bottle and a degreasing cleaner to rinse the fins and tubes. Next, pull the refrigerator out so you can work on the compressor. Remove the access panel and vacuum the compressor and the evaporator coil. Finally, replace the grille and access panel and move the refrigerator back.

The door seal on your refrigerator should be kept clean, especially along the bottom edge where food particles and liquids are spilled. Spilled soda is the primary cause of deterioration of refrigerator door seals.

**Dryer Maintenance:** Adequate venting of your dryer is a priority. Vents clogged with lint, or crushed or kinked vents can and do cause fires. The vent itself and the outlet screen should be cleaned of lint and debris twice a year. We recommend you clean this vent upon moving into the home. During a typical home inspection, we usually can't observe or evaluate any of the dryer vent. Often, the dryer itself blocks our view of the vent. In most cases, much of the vent is hidden by finish materials (such as wallboard), and insulation.

We recommend that you make sure your dryer vent is made of proper materials, and is properly installed. You should do this before closing, when you have a good opportunity to observe the dryer vent. Here's why we make the recommendations: The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that in 1997, there were 16,700 fires, 30 deaths and 430 injuries associated with clothes dryers. Some of these fires occur when lint builds up in the filter or in the exhaust duct. Under certain conditions, when lint blocks the flow of air, excessive heat build-up can cause a fire in some dryers.

To prevent fires, closely follow manufacturers' instructions for new installations. Most manufacturers specify the use of a rigid or flexible metal duct to provide a minimum restriction of airflow. If metal duct is not available at the retailer where the dryer was purchased, check other locations; such as hardware or builder supply stores. If you are having the dryer installed, insist upon metal duct unless the installer has verified that the manufacturer permits the use of plastic duct. Source: CPSC Document #5022.

**End, summary follows.**

*Inspector: Phillip Smith*

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## SUMMARY

The inspected components appear to be in adequate condition, with some exceptions. Comparing this house to other houses of this age and type that we have recently inspected,

The number of repairs listed in the report is normal. Bear in mind that all homes need repairs of one type or another, even if only minor. Generally, older homes need more repairs. This varies depending on maintenance and upgrading performed over the years. Some of the reported repairs are of the type that you might be inclined to live with under ordinary circumstances. Buyers and sellers of homes often have different perspectives on this issue.

Immediate repairs that should be completed prior to occupancy and major repairs that might cost more than \$500.00 to remedy include:

**Safety Concern** The anti-tip bracket that prevents the range from tipping over is not installed. The bracket should be installed to prevent the possibility of injury. See the manufacturer's installation instructions for details.

**Safety Concern** At the time this condo was build ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) where not required in the kitchen. Suggest adding them for a safety upgrade.

**Minor Repair** The evaporator coil in the air handler is dirty. This dirt may contain mold, fungus or other substances. A contractor should clean the coil. The inside of the air handler should also be cleaned. The dirty coil reduces heat transfer and affects the operation of the system.



**Minor Repair** The attic air handler does not have an auxiliary drain pan beneath it. Auxiliary drain pans are required to prevent the damage to the ceilings and walls beneath the unit that will occur when the main drain becomes clogged. It is just a matter of time until this damage occurs as these drains inevitably become clogged, especially when service is neglected. The installation of a drain pan is needed. Have a contractor install a drain pan.

**Minor Repair** The air filters were the wrong size. This is letting unfiltered air get to the coils and causing a built up on them. Recommend cleaning the coils, servicing the cooling system and checking the refrigerant level



**Minor Repair** The water heater is not installed in a drain pan (as would be required in a new installation.) When it begins to leak, as all inevitably do, water will damage floor coverings.

**Safety Concern** Piping from the water heater temperature/pressure relief valve should be extended to within 12" of the floor. In the event the water heater controls became defective and failed to stop heating, the steam and boiling hot water discharged would strike anyone standing nearby. Extension piping is required to be the same size as the valve. It may not be reduced. See the manufacturer's installation instructions for other requirements. Repair of this condition is inexpensive.



**Minor Repair** Minor leakage was observed from the drain piping beneath the kitchen sink.



**Minor Repair** The dishwasher has only one screw holding it in place. There is supposed to be two.

**Investigate Further** In the utility room beside the water heater there are walls with fungus growth on them.



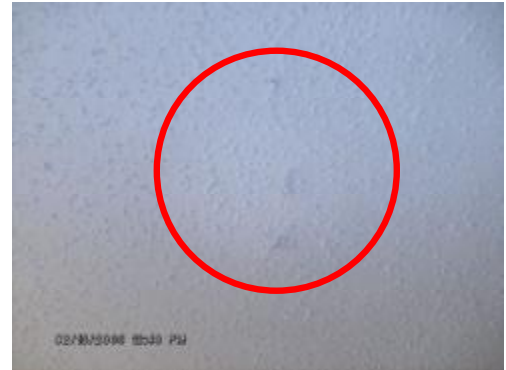
**Investigate Further** There is an area where the plumbing is showing behind the water heater where the wall has been torn out.



**Investigate Further** There are other stains on the walls and ceiling along with an repaired area



**Investigate Further** There are areas the texture of the ceiling is peeling of in the bathroom.



**Minor Repair** There are window that will not stay up when they are opened, the one(s) that where found is at the bedroom.

**Minor Repair** At the bedroom window there is moisture stains on the sheet rock.



**FYI** There are joints in the wood flooring that is wider than normal.



**FYI** The bathroom fan is making a noise.

**FYI** When the bathroom ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) is tripped it shuts off the lights in the bathroom and hall.

Other repairs are needed as mentioned in the report. All safety concerns listed in the report should be completed prior to occupancy.

Possible, future concerns over the next couple of years include:

- Normal wear and tear.
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While we make an effort to identify existing or potential problems, it is not possible for a home inspector to predict the future. We recommend that you budget perhaps \$1,000.00 to \$1,500.00 dollars a year for unforeseen repairs and maintenance. This would hold true for any house you were considering.

Please feel free to call at any time if you have any questions.

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## END OF REPORT