



7 Cheap Fixes for Home Inspection Red Flags

Written by Mike from Structure Check LLC for [Wise Home Essentials](#)

This article is for:

- **Home Sellers:** Address inspection issues with a low-cost fix
- **New Homeowners:** Add safety to your older home (10+ years old)
- **Real Estate Agents:** Recommend this to clients as part of pre-listing prep
- **Property Investors:** Improve code compliance and reduce liability risks

Information and recommendations supplied
by Mike from Structure Check LLC.



<https://www.structurechecknh.com>



Wise Home Essentials

A home inspector's catalog of must-have home products. Smart essentials every wise homeowner should have. Improve safety, efficiency, and preparedness. Wise Home Essentials.

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Buying, selling or managing a home? Then you know a **home inspection report can make or break the deal**. Often, it's not major structural problems that derail closings — it's the **small, overlooked issues** that raise red flags and cost sellers money or make buyers nervous. As a seller or a buyer, you want a short list of typical maintenance items. The following list of red flags is influenced by the daily discoveries at actual real-world home inspections. So we know for a fact that right now there is an agent and a seller getting a house ready for sale and all these issues are being overlooked.

7 Cheap Fixes for Home Inspection Red Flags

1. Garage Door Safety Cable for Extension Springs (Galvanized Carbon Steel)



Problem: Missing garage door safety cables — a common safety concern flagged by inspectors.

Why It Matters: Without a safety cable, a broken extension spring can fly off with enough force to damage property or injure someone. Most local building codes require them, and inspectors won't let it slide.

The Fix: [Garage Door Safety Cable – Galvanized Carbon Steel](#)

- Installs in under 15 minutes
- Heavy-duty, rust-resistant
- Prevents dangerous spring recoil
- Saves you from future liability or costly buyer negotiations

Price: Typically under \$15

DIY Level: Beginner



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2. Havahart 1026 Small 1-Door Humane Animal Trap



Havahart 1083 Catch and Release



Problem: Signs of pests (squirrels, mice, chipmunks) around the exterior or attic.

Why It Matters: Evidence of pest activity — especially burrowing animals — can delay closings and prompt requests for professional remediation. Clean up the droppings and nests, update the insulation where disturbed, and get those rodents to the state park. Remember, you want the inspector to have little to talk about, you want a small maintenance and update list, or no list at all! You want buyers to be comfortable knowing they're not inheriting a huge list of updates and typical maintenance items.

The Fix: **Havahart 1026 Live Catch & Release Trap**

- Humane and reusable
- Ideal for small rodents and garden pests
- Sturdy, rust-resistant build
- A buyer-friendly alternative to poisons or snap traps

Price: Around \$25–\$30

DIY Level: Intermediate (set and monitor)

3. Pipe Stair Handrail, 4 Ft Metal Staircase Handrail



Problem: All staircases should have graspable handrails. Some lenders require this (VA, NACA), railings and balusters are not enough, there should be a graspable handrail installed for safety. If this is a cash deal or conventional loan, this recommended update will likely be on the buyer, but some lenders require this update for the sale to move forward.

Why It Matters: This is a **safety concern** and a common red flag that concerns inspectors,

The Fix: **4 Ft Pipe Stair Handrail - Heavy-Duty Metal**

Price: Around \$40–\$50

DIY Level: Intermediate (drill

- Modern industrial look
- Easy to mount to walls or posts
- Indoor/outdoor use
- Improves safety and adds visual value

4. Attic Door Insulation Cover



Problem: Lack of insulation around attic access hatches, leading to energy inefficiency

Why It Matters: Energy leaks from attic doors can cost homeowners in heating/cooling bills and are often flagged as “inefficient” in inspection reports or energy audits. Warm air can hit cold roof sheathing, causing condensation and mold. In real estate transactions, mold is common, and remediating an attic can cost \$1,500.00 to \$10,000.00. So, stop the heat loss and consider having any mold/mildew on the roof sheathing remediated before listing a property for sale.

The Fix: Attic Door Insulation Cover - Reflective, Easy Zip-Up

- Installs in under 10 minutes
- Blocks heat transfer and air leaks
- Improves HVAC efficiency
- Fits most standard attic openings

Price: Typically
\$35-\$45

5. The Original Zip-It Hair Clog Remover - 25” Drain Snake



Problem: Slow-draining bathroom sinks and tubs.

Why It Matters: Inspectors often note poor drainage or standing water as a sign of plumbing issues — even when the real cause is just hair buildup. Make sure your tubs and sinks drain well, you do not want an inspector to recommend a scope and clean by a licensed plumber. The night before a home inspection, clean the drains! Remember, you want the inspector to have little to talk about, you want a small maintenance and update list, or no list at all! You want buyers to be comfortable knowing they're not inheriting a huge list of updates and typical maintenance items.

The Fix: Zip-It Hair Clog Remover - 25” Drain Snake

Price: Usually under \$10

DIY Level: Beginner

6. Fluidmaster 7530 Wax-Free Toilet Seal



Why Inspectors Flag It: Leaky or improperly sealed toilets can lead to moisture damage, mold concerns, and soft flooring. This is a daily discovery at our home inspection business, and honestly, it surprises me cause it's obvious that maintenance is needed. As obvious as a light bulb that won't turn on. But, it is a daily write-up, and an inspector is going to recommend a licensed plumber make the repair, and now the inspector is hunting for signs of moisture damage around and below the bathroom area. While this is a more advanced repair, I believe 75% of the population can handle learning and achieving a successful wax seal update.

The Fix: Fluidmaster 7530 Universal Wax-Free Toilet Seal

- No wax, no mess, no plumber required
- Fits any drain and toilet
- Compresses for a secure, leak-free fit
- A modern upgrade to traditional wax rings — lasts longer and is easier to install

7. GFCI Outlet Replacement



Why Inspectors Flag It: Missing or non-functioning GFCI outlets (especially near sinks, laundry rooms, and garages) violate modern electrical safety codes. So this is going to be an update recommendation by every inspector. Licensed electricians are not cheap, and this update is highly recommended for safety. While you should have an electrician make this update, maybe you're one of the lucky people who has a friend who is an electrician. The materials are cheap; do all you can to properly install GFCI receptacles before listing. Remember, you want the inspector to have little to talk about, you want a small maintenance and update list, or no list at all! You want buyers to be comfortable knowing they're not inheriting a huge list of updates and typical maintenance items.

The Fix: GFCI Outlet - 15 or 20 Amp, Tamper Resistant, Self-Test

- Upgrades outdated or non-code outlets
- Built-in test/reset buttons
- Enhances safety and ensures code compliance
- Often one of the **top electrical items flagged in inspections**

Final Thoughts: Fix the Small Stuff, Avoid Big Problems

These **7 affordable Amazon products** are more than just quick fixes — they're **smart investments** in your home's safety, functionality, and resale value.

Whether you're preparing for a home sale or simply want to stay ahead of costly repairs, tackling these red flags now can save you **hundreds (or thousands) later**.

Shop the List [HERE](#)

Click below to grab your fixes on Amazon:

1. [Garage Door Safety Cable](#)
2. [Havahart Live Trap](#)
3. [4 Ft Metal Stair Handrail](#)
4. [Attic Insulation Cover](#)
5. [Zip-It Drain Snake](#)
6. [Wax-Free Toilet Seal](#)
7. [GFCI Outlet](#)

About Structure Check LLC

At Structure Check LLC, our mission is to provide comprehensive home inspection reports in Southern New Hampshire and coastal Maine that empower property owners, real estate investors, and homebuyers with the critical insights needed to preserve asset value, plan for future repairs, and eliminate costly surprises. We understand that real estate assets must be maintained proactively to remain market-ready and to ensure smooth resale. Using the latest tools and following state-licensed home inspection standards, we deliver detailed building reports, repair forecasting, and preservation recommendations that help you make informed decisions—whether you're buying, managing, or preparing to sell a property. We are committed to helping our clients maximize real estate value, reduce risk, and maintain properties efficiently, so they're always ready for market — and future-proofed for long-term success.

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