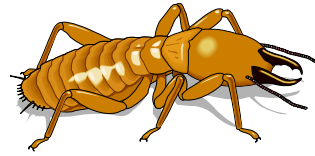


Things to do BEFORE signing all those papers.

- Request a pest inspection?
- Inspector licensed? Find all WSDA licensed inspectors at: http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/pesticides/lic_struct_pest.htm
- Inspector insured?
- Prior complaints with WSDA?
- Receive and read the inspection report?
- Questions? Not certain about something in the report? Contact the pest inspector.
- All recommendations completed by qualified personnel?



STRUCTURAL PEST INSPECTIONS

What Are They?

Are They Really Necessary?

How Will I Know If It's Done Right?

PUB 027 (R/1/01)

Inquiries regarding availability of this publication in an alternate format should be directed to the WSDA Receptionist at (360) 902-1976 or Telecommunications Device for the Deaf at (360) 902-1996.



An Educational Brochure by the
Washington State Department of Agriculture
Pesticide Management Division
Structural Pest Control Section

HOME BUYERS

Read this **BEFORE** buying your home.

A pest inspection* is the **MOST IMPORTANT** and **LEAST UNDERSTOOD** procedure in a home sale.

*Often called structural pest, real estate, wood destroying organism, or pest & dry rot inspections.



Something to Remember...

Appraisers measure value - **THEY ARE NOT** pest inspectors.

A PEST INSPECTION IS NOT A HOME INSPECTION - but a home inspection usually includes a pest inspection.

Home inspectors often check:

- heating and cooling systems
- electrical systems
- plumbing systems
- interior and exterior components
- many other things that make up a home

Pest Inspectors look for:

Wood Destroying Pests

- termites
- carpenter ants
- rot fungus
- wood infesting beetles

Evidence of Pest Activity

- damaged wood
- dead insects
- termite tubes

Conductive Conditions for Pests

- standing water
- earth to wood contact
- plumbing leaks
- inaccessible areas

Inspections are absolutely necessary for older homes.

As homes age, they become susceptible to wood destroying pests. Damp or wet wood is an ideal place to find insects and rot.

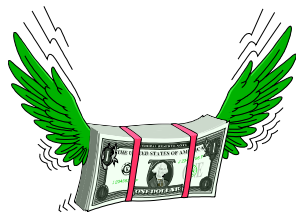
Even new homes should be inspected. A pest inspector looks for plumbing leaks, wood scraps, water-filled depressions in the crawl space, and decorative bark near wooden siding. All can lead to future pest problems.

By law, anyone inspecting for pests, their signs, or conducive conditions must be licensed by the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA).

- However, the state DOES NOT require a pest inspection before a home is sold.
- Many lenders do, as a way to protect their investment. Shouldn't you do the same?
- Do not rely solely on the seller or their agent to provide the pest inspection.
- When in doubt, order your own inspection.
- You should try to be present during the inspection.

Remember, it is your investment.

- A pest inspection costs \$100-300.
- Unreported damages can cost **tens of thousands of dollars.**



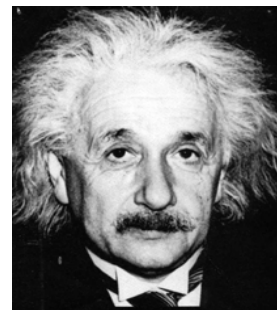
Are all pest inspections and inspectors created equal?

Absolutely not.

- All are required to pass two written exams and complete 40 continuing education credit hours every five years.
- Insurance or a surety bond is now required by state law.
- Even though the WSDA licenses and regulates pest inspectors, we cannot guarantee that the job will be done right every time.
- If a pest inspector overlooks damaged or infested areas, is uninsured, and refuses to help, you may be stuck with the bill - or be forced to take them to court.

How do you avoid this?

Hire the **best** inspector you can find.



How do I find a good pest inspector?

- Ask your friends, neighbors, and others whose opinion you value.
- Call and talk to inspectors listed in the telephone book; ask them for references.
- Call the WSDA to make certain the inspector is licensed. Ask if they have any complaints on file.

Above all - **EDUCATE YOURSELF** about the inspection process.

What Should I Expect From A Good Pest Inspection?

- Confidence that your home is not being damaged by wood destroying organisms.
- A complete and accurate inspection report and site drawing showing pests, their signs, and conducive conditions.

Inspectors report on conditions present at the time of the inspection; they cannot predict future infestations, nor can they see through walls or floors.

Sellers or lenders call for repairs or chemical treatments to be made, **NOT** the WSDA.

What if I find that a pest inspector overlooked some major problem?

First, contact the inspector and explain your concern. Many will correct the problem immediately.

Second, if no agreement can be reached, contact the WSDA. An investigator will work with you and the inspector to find a solution.

Finally, we may conduct our own investigation. A WSDA investigator will need to see inspection reports, repair bids, and personally examine the areas in question. **Do not destroy evidence by repairing damaged areas.**

Although WSDA has the legal authority to fine an inspector or suspend their license, we cannot force violators to reimburse you. Civil action may still be necessary.

Who to Contact :

Washington State
Department of Agriculture
Toll Free: 1-877-301-4555

Olympia	(360) 902-2040
Spokane	(509) 533-2690
Yakima	(509) 225-2640
Wenatchee	(509) 664-3171

Visit our Web Site at:
<http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert>