

## Sample / Building Inspection Report

125 Burke Drive, Monroeville, Pennsylvania 15146

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**Inspection date:**  
02-20-06

**Clients:**  
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**Report Number:**  
4370

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ASHI Certification # 104579

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## Understanding the report

### VERBIAGE USED IN THIS REPORT TO CONVEY THE CONDITION OF ITEM/COMPONENT

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#### **Improve / Repair / Correct:**

Denotes items/components in which improvements, repairs and/or corrections are recommended; considered deficient or unsatisfactory at the time of the inspection.

*Example - roof coverings / shingles have reached the end of their normal life cycle, replacement is advised.*

#### **Material Defect:**

A material defect is defined as "that which poses an unreasonable risk to people on the property"

*Example - dilapidated safety railing at elevated outdoor deck.*

#### **Serviceable / marginal or marginal condition:**

The item/component was noted to be in below average condition or working order. Capable however of being used for an indeterminate time period. No immediate visible need for major repair was noted, assuming normal maintenance practices are followed.

*Example - older T 1 11 wood siding noted to be weathered; localized delaminating of wood was noted.*

#### **Serviceable condition and/or satisfactory condition:**

The item/component was performing its intended function as of the date and time of the inspection in response to normal use (i.e. item/component is functional/serviceable). Likely in fair or good working order/condition; The item/component exhibits typical wear when considering age and usage. No immediate visible need for major repair was noted, assuming normal maintenance practices are followed.

*Example - air conditioning unit "functioning as intended" - no defects were observed.*

#### **Monitor and/or further evaluation recommended:**

Denotes a limitation or an area where further investigation and/or monitoring is needed. Repairs may be necessary. During the inspection, there may have been insufficient information. In some cases, the need for improvements cannot be determined until further investigation or observations are made.

*Example - water stain noted at the finished ceiling beneath the master bathroom. The source of the staining was not identified. Monitor or have condition further evaluated.*

#### **Routine maintenance item:**

Improvements are recommended as part of an ongoing maintenance regimen (e.g. weekly, monthly, and annually, as needed). Routine maintenance will reduce the probability of needing future corrections.

*Example - exterior windows are in need of caulking.*

***For the purpose of this report, assume you are standing on the street facing the front door.***

***F is the front of the house R is the rear of the house LS is the left side of the house RS is the right side of the house***

## The house in perspective

### Description

Style: Two story  
 Bedrooms: Three  
 Construction: Wood frame / brick veneer  
 Foundation: Masonry block (basement configuration)  
 Age: 48 years (estimate only)

### Construction standards

Generally speaking, both the materials used and workmanship regarding construction of the house appear consistent with locally recognized/accepted building practices common for the era in which it was constructed; also taking into consideration the geographical location. It is not the intention of this report to evaluate the house as if it were new.

*In other words, all components and conditions will be evaluated when taking into consideration "age" which by inference incorporates construction norms/standards for that particular era.*

### Maintenance / upkeep

Maintenance / upkeep of the house has been deferred and in some instances neglected. In addition, several of the systems and/or components are considered "aging / dated". While it is difficult to predict the remaining life cycle of any component, aging components are more likely to need future repairs or replacement based upon age alone.

*As noted throughout this report, numerous repairs and/or near future improvements are necessary / recommended.*

#### Example's of what would be considered "aging / dated" component's

- Heating system                      forced air furnace
- Plumbing system                      water tank, cast iron and terra cotta waste piping

Please read this report in its entirety for an understanding of inspector's findings including items / components that were considered deficient at the time of the inspection.

**Deficiencies will be prefaced with the words -- "IMPROVE / REPAIR / CORRECT"**

Corrections of deficiencies should be prioritized; those of a safety nature or those affecting the short term habitability of the house should be addressed first.

## THE SCOPE OF THE INSPECTION

All components designated for inspection in the ASHI® Standards of Practice are inspected, except as may be noted in the body of this report.

**Please refer to the building inspection contract for a full explanation of the scope of the inspection.**

## Structural components & basement

### DESCRIPTION OF STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS

<b>Foundation:</b>	•Masonry block •Basement configuration
<b>Beams/columns:</b>	•Steel
<b>Floor structure:</b>	•Wood joists •2 x 10 inch @ 16 inch on centers
<b>Wall structure:</b>	•Wood frame
<b>Roof structure:</b>	•Rafter roof system •Plank boards and OSB sheathing

### Foundation

The most essential function of the building foundation is to distribute the building weight onto the spread footing which ultimately distributes the weight of the house to the soil. In evaluating foundation settlement, when possible, distinctions will be made in regards to uniform or non-uniform (differential) settlement. The exact cause of foundation cracks often cannot be determined solely by a visual inspection. Nor, generally can a detailed prognosis be made without further analyses that exceed the scope of this inspection.

#### Different types of Settlement:

- ⇒ Uniform with no cracks
- ⇒ Differential, where the difference is small causing no cracks or small cracks
- ⇒ Differential, where the difference is large and has caused movement in excess of the ability of the structure (i.e. foundation or footer) to resist yields - sizable cracks form.

### Foundation observations

The foundation wall material consists of masonry block and mortar and is such that all walls are located below grade or at least partially below grade.

*Foundation walls function both to transmit the weight of the house to the footer and also to resist exterior pressures; functioning as a retaining wall resisting the weight of soil and water.*

The accessible foundation walls were noted to be in satisfactory condition. No evidence of inordinate foundation distress was observed.

### Slab / concrete

Satisfactory condition

*Minor cracks are not uncommon and not a structural concern. Concrete floors are usually poured after the structure has been built and have no support function in regards to the foundation.*

### Floor structure / framing

#### Framing

Where visible; basic framing members are in satisfactory/serviceable condition.

Insulation and/or finish materials restricted access to the flooring structure.

*For example, the fixed ceiling within the garage restricted access to the flooring system.*

**Support beam / columns**

The steel beam and columns were noted to be in satisfactory condition.

*The steel beam is supported by columns and also set into the masonry block walls.*

**Crawl space**

Not applicable

**Roof structure / framing****Framing**

**IMPROVE / REPAIR / CORRECT** material defect; the presence of fungal matter (i.e. mold) was noted within the attic space at both framing (i.e. rafters) and plank decking (i.e. roof) boards.

*The mere presence of mold would indicate inadequate ventilation, excessive moisture-laden air or a combination of both.*

**Possible causes of moisture-laden air would be --**

- Operation of the furnace humidifier at too high of a level.
- Bathroom exhaust vents(s) improperly discharging into the attic space.

**Ventilation deficiencies include --**

- Soffit vents partially blocked with insulation
- Power-vent fan inoperative (i.e. motor seized)

**Examples of improvements which could be undertaken to reduce the "future potential" for mold may include --**

- The installation of additional soffit ventilation. Baffles should be installed to hold back the insulation and allow for movement of air through the soffit vents and into the attic space.
- The installation of a ridge vent.

- Replacing existing power-vent fan (i.e. which is not working) with a new fan that operates off both a humidistat and temperature control.
- Reduce moisture-laden air at living space; be careful so as not to operate humidifier at levels which exceed recommended standards.
- Install an exhaust fan (i.e. vented to the exterior) to service the main bathroom.

Many types of mold produce mycotoxins which have been identified as toxic agents. Certain types of molds (i.e. fungi) when present can pose a health risk to the occupants of the house; additionally, mold can damage goods, furnishings and building material.

Other than noting the presence of mold (i.e. fungal matter) an assessment including testing and/or determining corrective action for remediation is beyond the scope of this inspection.

The following is recommended --

- Improve ventilation
- Contact a professional to discuss testing and remediation of fungal matter (i.e. mold condition).

*Mold testing and/or remediation should only be performed by a contractor qualified to undertake such work.*

### **Foundation - for evidence of moisture penetration**

When evidence suggests moisture penetration (i.e. dampness, seepage or leakage), it is unlikely that I can predict the severity of the problem during a one time cursory inspection. Comments are most often limited what was visually ascertainable at the time of the inspection.

Moisture penetration may be due to one or more contributing factors. The vast majority of problems are the result of insufficient control of storm water at the surface. The ground around the house should be sloped to encourage surface water to flow away from the foundation walls. Gutters and downspouts should act to collect roof water and drain the water at least five feet from the foundation, or into a functional storm sewer. Downspouts that are clogged or broken below grade level, or that discharge too close to the foundation, are common causes of moisture penetration.

#### **Below grade - foundation walls**

**IMPROVE / REPAIR / CORRECT**; active moisture intrusion and/or condition(s) which indicate same were apparent at the left front corner area of the basement.



*Moisture penetration at the left front corner area of the basement*

As a practical matter (when leakage occurs); a reasonable "correction strategy" is to always start with the simplest items such as lot and/or roof drainage improvements.

The cost to eliminate leakage varies greatly depending on both the contractor selected and the method of correction.

*Corrections are recommended; client is advised to seek professional advice from a "basement waterproofing contractor" regarding this matter.*

## **LIMITATIONS OF STRUCTURAL COMPONENT INSPECTION**

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As described in the inspection contract, this is a visual inspection limited in scope by (but not restricted to) the following conditions: Your inspector is a home inspection generalist and not a structural engineer. An engineer is recommended where there are structural concerns about the building.

- Comments regarding the structure of the building are based upon what was visible and readily apparent at the time of the inspection. Inspection of structural components concealed behind finished surfaces or insulation is beyond the scope of this inspection. The inspection does not include any invasive testing or dismantling of the property including removal of ceiling tiles and insulation when present.
- Engineering or architectural services such as calculation of structural capacities, adequacy, or integrity are not part of a home inspection.
- **Please also refer to the ASHI protocol and building inspection contract for a detailed explanation of the scope of this inspection.**



## Roofing system

### DESCRIPTION OF ROOFING SYSTEM

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<b>Roof covering:</b>	•Composition shingle
<b>Chimneys:</b>	•One •Masonry chimney with two flues
<b>Gutters and downspouts:</b>	•Aluminum •Downspouts discharge below grade
<b>Method of inspection:</b>	•Walked upon roof surfaces

### ROOFING OBSERVATIONS

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#### Roof coverings

This type of roof covering has an approximate service life of **20-25** years. Factors that can influence the life cycle of the roof are; the quality of the shingles, the pitch, color, and the adequacy of the ventilation in the attic/roof space. Steep roofs will shed water quickly, resulting in a lengthened life cycle. Light colored shingles reflect the sun's rays better than dark colored shingles; therefore, they tend to outlast dark colored shingles. In addition to removing moisture laden air from an attic, proper ventilation will also help to dissipate the heat. Excessive heat in an attic can cause the shingles to wear prematurely. For additional information on ventilation, please refer to the insulation/ventilation section of this report.

#### Shingle roof coverings

Notwithstanding two corrections / deficiencies as noted below, the roof coverings / shingles were observed to be in serviceable condition exhibiting "normal" wear & weathering commensurate with their estimated age.

The estimated age of the roof coverings / shingles is 13 years.

It is estimated that the remaining service life of the shingles is approximately 10 years.

**IMPROVE / REPAIR / CORRECT**; wind damage including missing and/or torn shingles were observed at the rear slope. Client is advised to consult with a roofing contractor regarding needed repairs.



*Missing and/or damaged shingles at the rear slope*

**IMPROVE / REPAIR / CORRECT**; active leakage was noted at or adjacent to the skylight at the rear addition. The photo below depicts the leakage as viewed from within the attic space. The leakage appears to be due to a flashing deficiency. This condition should be further evaluated for repair by a qualified roofing contractor.



*Leakage at skylight as viewed from the attic space.*

## **Metal chimney**

None / not applicable

## **Masonry chimney**

Serviceable / meets applicable standards --

- Condition of the masonry and mortar
- Condition of the chimney crown
- Relative to height standards; the masonry chimney meets NFPA standards in regards to minimum recommended chimney height. These standards state that a chimney should extend through or above the roof at least three (3) feet and should also be at least two (2) feet higher than any obstruction within ten feet. Height standards are established to prevent down-drafts caused by turbulent winds which may follow the roof line.

## **Gutters and downspouts**

The intended purpose of gutters and downspouts are obvious. Gutters will collect the rain water from the roof and downspouts will direct the water away from the foundation. Problems often encountered are clogs due to leaves and debris, sags (i.e. improper slope), and leaks at the seams.

Satisfactory --

- General condition
- Gutters appear adequately secured.
- Sufficient downspouts are present to handle roof drainage.
- Discharge location relative to the house

*Note; this inspection does not certify the condition or termination location of underground leaders/piping.*

Ongoing maintenance should be anticipated. Leafs/organic debris should be cleaned from the gutters as needed. Leaks which may occur at the seams should be sealed with a gutter lap sealant. Gutters sometimes become loose due to a build up of ice and snow. When this is the case, the loose gutters should be re-secured to the fascia board.

## **LIMITATIONS OF ROOFING INSPECTION**

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As described in the inspection contract, this is a visual inspection limited in scope by (but not restricted to) the following conditions:

- Evidence of prior leaks may be disguised by interior finishes.
- Inspection of underground components such as downspout leaders is beyond the scope of the inspection.
- Roof inspection may be limited by access, condition, weather, or other safety concerns.
- **Please also refer to the ASHI protocol and building inspection contract for a detailed explanation of the scope of this inspection.**

## Electrical system

### DESCRIPTION OF ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

Amperage / electrical services	•100 amps, 110/120 - 220/240 volt main service
Service entrance conductor	•Overhead
Over-current protection / location	•Breakers •Located within the basement
Branch/auxiliary panel(s)	•None present
Service ground	•Copper •Aluminum •Plumbing system/piping •Ground rod connection
Distribution wiring	•Copper
Receptacles	•Grounded and ungrounded

### ELECTRICAL OBSERVATIONS

Inspection of the electrical service revealed the need for improvements as identified below. A qualified electrician should be contracted to undertake the improvements recommended below.

***Any electrical deficiencies identified should be considered a safety condition / material defect.***

#### Electrical service - entrance cable and panel

##### Service entrance cable

Satisfactory / serviceable / meets applicable standards --

- Installation / location of entrance cable
- Amperage capacity (i.e. based upon current arrangement/demands)
- Condition

##### Service panel

Satisfactory / serviceable / meets applicable standards --

- Location, installation, accessibility of the electrical panel.
- Materials - all visible 110/120 volt branch circuit wiring within the home is copper.
- Number of service disconnects - one. NEC standards allows up to six hand movements to terminate power.
- System grounding; applicable for the era in which the panel was installed.

*Individual circuits within the electrical panel are "partially" identified. Recommend labeling all of the circuits within the electrical panel; identify what each circuit services.*

**IMPROVE / REPAIR / CORRECT**; breakers must be "sized" according to the wiring they are protecting. Otherwise a safety concern exists where the wire could heat up without tripping the breaker(s).

*Three instances noted whereby breakers are improperly sized. Twenty amp breakers being utilized where fifteen amp breakers are required.*

*Note; over-sized breakers have been identified with blue tape*

## Auxiliary or sub panel

Not applicable

## Distribution wiring, outlets & fixtures

**A circuit analyzer is used to checked all accessible outlets; deficiencies when present will be itemized below**

The implementation of GFCI's has been gradual by location. Their remarkable effectiveness has led the NEC to require GFCI's in an ever-expanding list of applications. For example, GFCI's were required in bathrooms outlets between 1975 and 1978 (i.e. approximate dates), 1980 receptacles near water and concrete, later to include kitchen receptacles within six feet of the sink, 1996 further expanded to include all counter top receptacles within the kitchen. All homes benefit from the protection that these devices provide, therefore, whether or not required by code the installation of these valuable life saving devices is recommended anywhere in the home where the potential of working near water exists or in wet and/or damp locations. A ground fault circuit interrupter offers protection from shock or electrocution. GFCI's are inexpensive to add and can be a "life saver".

Locations where GFCI protection is recommended - bathrooms, kitchen (i.e. all counter top), basement, wet bars, exterior, garage, out buildings, swimming pools and whirlpools/tot tubs.

*There are limited exceptions to this recommendation. For example; you may not want, nor do you need GFCI protected receptacles at the garage ceiling servicing a garage door opener. Other exceptions may include a dedicated basement receptacle servicing a direct vent water tank, refrigerator or freezer.*

Discretionary improvement; for improved safety, the installation of receptacles with Ground Fault Protection (GFCI's) **is strongly advised** at the following locations --

- Kitchen (i.e. all counter top)
- Garage
- Exterior

**IMPROVE / REPAIR / CORRECT**; the receptacle with "Ground Fault Protection" located at the second floor bathroom failed to function properly during testing. Further investigation is required.

Future consideration; as would not be uncommon, many of the receptacles and switches are older (i.e. original). Older receptacles and switches become worn over time and should be replaced. For example, a worn receptacle is one where the slots have become elongated; when inserting a plug (lamp plug for example) it may fit/feel loose. If this were the case, the worn receptacle should be replaced.

*Replacing a receptacle or switch is an easy task/improvement; however, as with any electrical improvement, it should be attempted only by persons familiar with basis household wiring practices.*

**IMPROVE / REPAIR / CORRECT**; all junction boxes should be fitted with cover plates, in order to protect the wire connections. Missing cover plates were noted at the attic and also the basement (i.e. above washing machine).

**IMPROVE / REPAIR / CORRECT**; a poor electrical connection was noted at the right front corner area of the basement. Improve as required, all electrical connections must be made inside of junction boxes fitted with cover plates.

**IMPROVE / REPAIR / CORRECT**; install a receptacle at the garage ceiling to service the automatic door opener. *The door opener is currently operating on an extension cord which is not permitted.*

## LIMITATIONS OF ELECTRICAL INSPECTION

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As described in the inspection contract, this is a visual inspection limited in scope by (but not restricted to) the following conditions:

- Electrical components concealed or located behind furniture, furnishings, storage and/or finished surfaces are not inspected.
- The inspection does not include remote control devices, alarm systems, low voltage wiring systems, ancillary wiring systems, and other components which are not part of the primary electrical power distribution system.
- Notification of product recall is beyond the scope of this inspection
- **Please also refer to the ASHI protocol and building inspection contract for a detailed explanation of the scope of this inspection.**

This sample represents a "partial report" only; the full report would be approximately 30 pages and include all sections listed under the "table of contents".