

HOME BUYING HINTS

Tips On What To Watch For

(NAPSA)—It is crucial for potential home buyers to remember that not everything meets the eye when it comes to homes.

Federal programs these days heavily promote home buying. Many families are taking advantage of low interest rates along with other incentives, and are shopping for new homes.

Prospective purchasers must be fully aware of what they are getting into when buying a home. For example, a recent study found that as many as 44 percent of consumers call a plumber within one year of purchasing a new home. Many homes may have an attractive facade and price, but bear problems that can prove to be costly. Problems that lie beneath the surface of a home, such as faulty plumbing or water leakage, often do not become evident until after the house is acquired.

To help avoid such unexpected and costly problems, experts at Roto-Rooter offer potential homebuyers helpful tips and a “Plumbing Checklist for Homebuyers.” Many homebuyers look to professional home inspectors to examine prospective homes. Roto-Rooter also recommends these guidelines:

Toilets

- Check around the base of toilets for signs of water damage or soft floors (check for soft floors by standing over the toilet and rocking back and forth on each foot. If the floor feels spongy, it has probably been damaged).

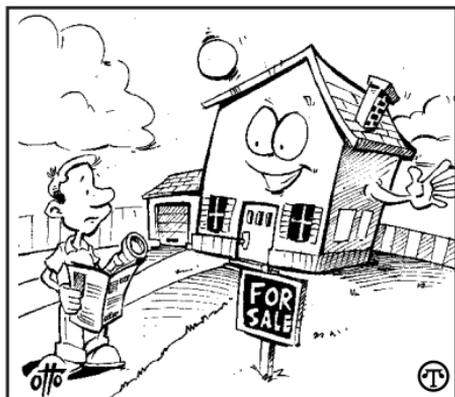
- Check to see how fast the toilet flushes.

Bathtubs

- Check for leaky or loose tiles.
- Press on the walls where they come into contact with the tub. If they're soft, water has most likely done damage behind the tiles.

Water Supply Piping

- Turn on the water in the bathtub and the kitchen sink. If there is a noticeable reduction in volume, the pipes may need to be



replaced because of calcium and mineral deposits.

- If the house has a basement, check exposed pipes for signs of leaks and recent repairs.

- Find the main line cleanout and be sure it is accessible.

Water Heater

- Check the date of the water heater (the first four digits of the heater's serial number are the month and year it was made). Typically, the operating life of a water heater is between seven and 20 years, depending on water conditions and frequency of usage. Hard water conditions significantly reduce the life of water heaters.

- If the water heater vent ties into the chimney, verify that the chimney is lined. To check, look to see if a metal liner sticks out of the top of the chimney. In the lower level of the house, make sure there is a drip tee sticking out of the chimney.

- If there is not a basement in the house, make sure the water heater vent is a “class b chimney” or at least six inches away from wood.

Other Vital Tips

- Make sure the garbage disposer and dishwasher connections work properly.

- Use a flashlight to check for signs of water damage inside cabinets. Check washing machine hoses for rupture and turn valves on and off to test for leaks.

The “Plumbing Checklist for Homebuyers” can be found online at www.rotorooter.com.