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## Viewpoint

As AccuPro Inspection Services continues to grow, we want to thank you for the many referrals.

We know there are many inspection firms to choose from. At AccuPro we strive not only to provide you with the most comprehensive inspection possible, but also provide superior service, educate you on inspection and other related issues and be a resource that you can count on. In short, we believe in long-term relationships. That is why we continue to serve you, even after your inspection has concluded and you are well situated in your new home.

Referrals are the best compliment you can pay us and we appreciate your continuing confidence.

Best Regards,

Jayne Schaefer  
Vice President

## Ensuring Home Quality Throughout Construction

By Rich Schaefer, Certified Inspector

Building a new home means everything will be built to code and you won't have any construction defects, right? Not so.

An increasing number of forward-thinking home buyers are employing independent inspectors to watch over their new home while under construction. There is a prudent decision considering the high number of housing starts in the greater Phoenix area, the increased pressure on municipal building inspectors, builders and developers to accelerate construction schedules and generate profits, and the limited pool of available skilled labor.

The greater Phoenix area currently has less than 50 certified municipal building inspectors. Each building inspector is responsible for performing a minimum of four inspections per house. With nearly 5,000 new housing starts per month in over 700 subdivisions, that means each inspector would have to do 20 inspections per day, including travel time. And this does not include inspections required for remodeling, which number in the thousands each month.

The average independent inspector will spend from two to four hours doing a detailed construction inspection,

depending on the phase of construction the house is in.

However, the municipal building inspector may have only a few minutes to spend at the site, potentially missing defects that occur during the construction phases.

Builders and developers are under tremendous pressure to repay lenders as quickly as possible as interest rates on short-term construction loans eat into profits. Schedules must be maintained at all costs, and sometimes follow-up or "pick-up" work from various subcontractors goes uncompleted as interior and exterior walls must be installed to avoid delays.



*Roof battens should be evenly spaced, allowing for proper drainage and preventing future damage.*

The independent inspector identifies defects during the construction

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## Construction Insight *(Continued from page 1)*

process and before these defects can be covered. Without this preventive measure, defects may reappear months or even years later, creating extensive, and often expensive, repairs that may or may not be paid for by the builder.



*Nails come dangerously close to electrical wiring in this attic, posing a potential safety hazard*

It is estimated that over 50% of the residential construction workers in the Phoenix area do not speak English. Many of the builders' site supervisors are not bilingual and rely on others to convey corrections and concerns about construction defects. With the large number of housing starts, the limited educational facilities for unskilled labor and the language barriers, defects can and do occur.

Each of the two to four-hour phased inspections that an independent inspector does allows the inspector to fully examine every aspect of the construction, often identifying defects before the defect is propagated to other homes in the development due to poorly trained or supervised workers.

In choosing an independent inspector, it is important to verify that he/she is current on the latest building codes. While many local home inspection companies offer construction inspections, Arizona home inspection certification does not require home inspectors to

have knowledge of current building codes. Ideally, the inspector you select will have additional training and certification as a Residential Building Inspector, ensuring the same level of expertise as the local municipal Building Inspector.

While we would like to think that building a new home means zero defects and that most of our local builders and developers are truly dedicated to building a quality home, many different workers and technicians will spend time on the project over the three to four months it takes for the average home to be constructed. Mistakes will happen. The low cost of an independent inspector will help ensure that defects are identified early in the construction process and well before serious injury or extensive repairs and expense become necessary.



*A mirror placed under a door frame reveals a large gap and untreated wood, providing an entry point for insects and water.*

*AccuPro Inspection Services is certified by the ICC as a Residential Building Inspector and Residential Electrical Inspector and performs Construction Inspections to the latest building code (IRC 2003). Should you or someone you know be interested in learning more about having an independent inspector watch over your construction project, please feel free to send us an e-mail or call us at (480) 456-8809.*

## Frequently Asked Questions About Construction Inspections

**Q. I thought the municipal building inspector ensured that all building deficiencies were caught during their inspections?**

A. The building inspector has very limited time on the site and only examines major systems and components, such as foundations, sewer systems, framing, and, most importantly, ensures paperwork is completed.

**Q. The builder I chose is considered one of the highest quality builders in the Valley, why would I need an independent inspector to verify their work?**

A. A modern home today takes over 25 different subcontractors to complete. Each subcontractor may need to move or modify something a prior subcontractor has installed. Defects often occur. It is the responsibility of the builder's supervisor to catch them and have them corrected before the next construction phase. It is a daunting responsibility, and these supervisors are normally happy to have someone else looking over their shoulders to ensure things are not missed.

**Q. What remedies do I have should the builder/contractor not resolve issues that are identified during a construction inspection?**

A. The independent inspector has no legal power to stop or red tag a construction project—only the local municipal building inspector can do this. The defect is, however, documented for reference, should the resulting defect contribute to future losses. When defects are identified, the independent inspector will suggest that the client have the

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## HVAC Insight: Think It's Hot? Think Again!

**Contributed by: Larry Monus, Arizona Comfort-Dynamics & Refrigeration, Inc. (480) 460-9134**

It's not nearly as hot as it would be if your air conditioner malfunctioned! Following are a few tips to increase the odds your A/C will not break down during the hottest days of summer.

Clean the outside coil. This increases heat dissipation of the condenser, lowering operating pressure and allowing the equipment to operate more efficiently.

Replace the air filter(s). Dirty or plugged filter(s) restrict the air flow

and can cause problems ranging from an iced indoor coil to a damaged compressor.

Make sure the overflow pan and drain are clean. If the primary drain becomes clogged, the overflow pan and drain are what will keep water from pouring out from the ceiling.

A preventative maintenance agreement on your HVAC system is always a good idea as it addresses these and many other issues that can be corrected before there are more serious

problems. Another advantage to having a preventative maintenance agreement is priority scheduling. If a service call is required during the hottest days, preventative maintenance agreement customers receive scheduling ahead of non-preventative maintenance agreement customers.

*For further information, contact Larry Monus. Commercial and residential services available 24 Hours.. License #C169242*

**“Go often to the house of thy friend; for weeds soon choke the unused path.”**

*Scandinavian Proverb*

## Home Management Insight: 5-Minutes To Organization

**Contributed by: Janice Bean, SpaceTime Solutions (480) 363-8484**

You've spent hours, days or even weeks organizing your home. Maybe you even hired a professional organizer. You got rid of clutter and found a place for everything. It's beautiful! Now what?

Getting organized is easy. STAYING organized is the real challenge. What do you do about those “chaos elves” that constantly mess things up? You can blame it on your husband, wife or the kids, but what if it's actually you? Picture placing a video camera inside your front door or home office. As you return home—arms loaded with mail, client paperwork, groceries—watch what you do during the first five minutes. Did you put everything away, or did you leave a trail of clutter? Hmm...

That first five minutes is critical to staying organized. By resisting the urge to just drop everything, you can handle up to 90% of new clutter. If you don't put everything away, you're speeding right back into chaos. Five

minutes each day, multiplied by seven days a week, and doubled if you enter twice a day, is equivalent to spending over one hour per week making a mess on purpose! I can make a pretty big mess in just one hour, how about you...

*For more information or help with organization, contact Janice Bean, Professional Organizer.*

### FAQs (Continued from page 2)

builder respond in writing and/or provide evidence from a qualified professional that the defect is acceptable in that municipality.

#### Q. What are the most frequent kinds of defects that an independent inspector might find during the construction process?

A. Due to the large number of subcontractors working on a home, a wide range of defects can occur. The most common defects are those

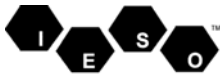
that become covered up in later stages of construction. These include: window flashings; distribution and protection of wiring, sewer and vent piping; unprotected wood in contact with concrete; disturbed earth not being re-treated after slab modifications; and improperly installed roofing systems.

#### Q. What does an independent inspector charge for a complete series of construction inspections?

A. While prices and the number of phased inspections may vary from inspector to inspector, there are generally four separate inspections: pre-slab; pre-drywall; mechanical, wall cladding and roofing; and the final walk-through inspection with all power and appliances functioning. Prices for the complete series of inspections can range from \$800 to \$1,500 depending on the square footage of the home.



**Phone: (480) 456-8809**  
**Fax: (480) 456-6139**  
**AccuPro@cox.net**



**Setting the Standard  
for Building Safety™**

**CERTIFICATIONS:**

AZ Certified Home Inspector  
# 39316  
 IESO Certified Residential Mold  
Inspector # 12253  
 ICC Certified Residential Building  
Inspector # 5224729  
 ICC Certified Electrical Inspector  
# 5224729

**MEMBERSHIP:**

ASHI # 212017  
 AZ ASHI # 212017  
 IESO (Indoor Environmental Standards  
Organization) # 12253  
 ICC (International Code Council)  
# 5224729

**AccuPro Inspection Services, LLC**  
**805 W. Baseline Rd., Suite # 4-142**  
**Tempe, AZ 85283**

**Home Care Insight: House Work Pays Off**

**Contributed by: Marlon Minchuk, West USA Realty (480) 820-3333**

Let's face it — not many people like housework, thinking of it as an unwelcome chore. At the same time, many people pay a gym \$25 to \$50 a month to “get in shape.” What most people don't realize are the benefits you can get from everyday housework. These activities can keep your weight down and improve cardiovascular condition. The following chart shows calories burned per hour of activity for a 140-pound person. If you weigh more or less than 140 pounds, you will burn more or less calories, accordingly.

Activity	Calories Burned
Dusting	100
Ironing	140
Vacuuming	180
Weeding the	230
Cleaning Windows	250
Raking	450
Mowing the Lawn	470

**Indoor Air Quality Insight: A Breath of Fresh Air**

According to the EPA, indoor air pollution is considered one of America's top environmental health concerns. Dust mites, smoke, mold and bacteria tend to be trapped and sealed indoors in today's modern built homes. Studies show that the air inside your home may be five times more polluted than the air outside your home. Compounding the health risk, it is estimated that families spend more than 90% of their time indoors.

While cleaning and vacuuming are the best methods to remove these pollutants, many of these pollutants are suspended in the air, escaping traditional cleaning methods. However, modern technology is now available to neutralize these particles, defusing their effects and odors and causing them to fall from the air where they can be wiped or vacuumed away.

Studying how the earth's atmosphere works to rid itself of pollutants, scientists have discovered four key elements: positive and negative

ionization; Ultra Violet (UV) light; ozone; and hydroxyl molecules. Use of any one of these by itself is not an effective remedy for solving indoor air pollution. And, while small amounts of ozone are helpful in eliminating pollution, ozone production must be carefully monitored as too much can be harmful to your health. Hydroxyl creation, on the other hand, is one of the most effective ways that nature uses to cleanse the air. And, since hydroxyls exist for only a very short period of time (about 1 second before they become involved in an air-cleansing action), there is no build-up or known health hazards associated with them. The best indoor air purification units will use a combination of all four technologies.

If you are looking to reduce the air pollution in your home, be sure to understand the methods employed in the particular solution you are evaluating, both for maximum effectiveness and safety.

