

Visual Property Inspection

130 Kalmar Ave
Toronto, ON M1N 3G7

Prepared for :

The Weir Team

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Inspected by :

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Report Commentary

Date: 04-Mar-2016

130 Kalmar Ave, Toronto, ON M1N 3G7

This summary is not the entire report. The complete report may include additional information of concern to the client. It is recommended that the client read the entire report.

1.0 Exterior

1.1 **Basement Walkout**

Install handrail for safety

2.0 Roof Structure

2.1 **Main Roof**

Shingles are in good condition.

3.0 Basement/Structure

3.1 **Railing**

Install handrail to promote safety

4.0 Electrical Service

4.1 **Service Size**

100 amp service, copper wire.

4.2 **Circuit Wires/Receptacles**

Consult qualified electrician to correct various safety hazards :

-Install GFCI receptacle in 2nd level washroom

-Install cover plate on receptacles

-Secure receptacles to wall

5.0 Heating

5.1 **Heating System**

High efficiency furnace is 13 years old and functioning.
Typical life expectancy is 20 years.

5.2 **AC**

Ac unit is 25 years old. Typical life expectancy is 15 years.

Testing A/C unit during low outdoor temperatures will cause system failure. Determine function during cooling season.



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6.0 Plumbing Components

6.1 **Hot Water Tank**

Hot water tank is 6 years old. Functioning as intended at time of inspection. Typical life expectancy is 15 years.

7.0 Interior Living Spaces

7.1 **Window**

Windows are in good condition.

Property and Site

Limitations

- Vegetation/Tree/Shrub Vines Debris/Obstruction
 Snow/Ice Cover
AGE OF HOME 75+

The hot tub was not inspected.

Conditions

- Sunny/Mostly Sunny Cloudy/Mostly Cloudy Rain/Wet Conditions
 Snow/Ice Conditions
Approx. Temperature -2 celsius

Building

- 2 Story Duplex Condo Townhome

Recommend CO detector installation as required by law within 15 feet of all bedrooms for occupant safety.

All smoke detectors over 10 years old should be replaced for safety as a precautionary measure. Some have a limited lifespan and older technology detectors are not as effective as newer ones.

Inspection limited by furnishings throughout the home including but not limited to furniture, blinds, curtains, wall & floor coverings, possibly fresh paint, boxes, appliances, clothes, items stored under some or all sinks, and storage items

This is not a building code inspection. Local codes, city and county, can vary significantly and change regularly over time, and are not a part of this home inspection.

Landscaping

- Bushes/Hedge/Flower Bed Vine Slopes To House

Driveway

- Concrete Gravel Gravel Needs Regrading Asphalt

Fill and seal cracks to reduce water penetration and further separation .

Walkway/Path

- Slopes to House Concrete Paving Stone Patio Stone/Brick

Front Porch

- Crack Wood/Composite Concrete Brick/Block/Paving Stone

Paint/seal and maintain porch to promote intended weathering protection.

Front Porch Rail

- Wood Metal Composite



Date: 04-Mar-2016

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Property and Site

Front Porch Light

Operational

- Unsecured Appears to be sensor activated Representative # Inspected/Tested

Deck(s)/Patio(s)

- Slopes to House Wood/Composite Paving Stone/Block/Brick
 Typical Cracking Concrete

Deck Railing

- Wood Metal Composite

Exterior

Limitations

- Insulation Conceals Clearance Debris/Obstruction
 Obstructed/No or Partial Access Bushes/Vines/Tree Obstructions Snow/Ice Cover

Foundation Wall

- Stone/Flagstone Brick Concrete Block
 Preserved Wood Partially Concealed Hairline Cracking-typical
 Completely Concealed

Exterior Walls

- Wood/Composite Stucco Vinyl/Aluminum Brick/Stone
 On Wood Framing

Fill and seal exterior holes to prevent rodent entry.

Window Exterior

- Wood Metal Vinyl Wood Int/Vinyl or Metal Cla

Window Well

- Improper Drainage Corrosion - treat/Repair Metal Wood

Exterior Lighting

- Not all lights tested Unsecured - repair Representative # Inspected/Tested

Operational

Basement Walkout

- Drain Noted No Drain - A Potential Concern

Install handrail for safety

Roof Structure

Inspected By:

- Binocular Roof Edge Walk On No Access

Limitations

- Deck/Patio Solar Panels Gravel Cover Steep Slope Height
 Snow/Ice Cover Rain - Too Slippery Material Too Slippery

Main Roof

- Flat Gable Hip/Valley Shed

Estimated Age 10 years

Shingles are in good condition.

Gutter/Downspout

- Galvanized Plastic Aluminum Copper Below Ground Discharge
 Above Ground Discharge

Install gutter system on front dormer and extend to lower gutter system to reduce premature shingle wear.

Fascia/Soffit

- Moisture Staining evident - Monitor Aluminum/Vinyl Wood

Covering

- Concrete/Clay Tile Wood Shingle/Wood Shake Asphalt/Composite Shingle
 Metal Other Flat Roof Membrane Tar & Grav

Estimated # of Layers 1

Life Expectancy

- Typical Middle End Exceeded

Accessory

- Vent Stack Solar Panels Skylight(s) Vent Caps

Flashing

- Not Checked/Concealed Chimney Drip Edge Flat Roof Skylight
 Roof to Wall Stack Valley Roll Roofing Replace When Re-roofing
 Aluminum/Galvanized Tarring/Concealed

Limitations

- No Access/Sealed Insulated Stored Items Looked In/Insp from opening
 Entered Hatch Pull Down

Structure

- Truss Rafter Stains

Sheathing

- Condensation Boards Plywood/OSB Stain(s)

Insulation

- Concealed/Not Visible/Finished Fiberglass Foam Rock Wool Fiberglass
 Blown In/Loose Batt Other Cellulose
Estimated Depth 12 inches

Ventilation

- None Turbine Mechanical Soffit Roof/Ridge Baffles
 Gable end Turbine

Exhaust Duct

- Concealed Into Attic Metal Flex

Basement/Structure

Limitations

- Finished/Partially Finished
 Dry Ground
 Clutter/Obstruction
 Dry Weather/Drought

Basement structure material/conditions determined by representative amount as visible in furnace/laundry utility room. Less than 10% of components visible.

Floor

- Crack(s) - Typical. Seal + Monitor
 Concrete
 Carpet
 Ceramic
 Vinyl
 Structural Wood Floor
 Structural Concrete Floor

Wall

- Crack
 Concealed
 Concrete
 Block
 Brick/Stone
 Wood
 Drywall/Plaster

Ceiling

- Unfinished
 Wood
 Tile
 Drywall/Plaster

Window

- Binds - Adjust/repair
 Not Tested
 Thermal
 Single Pane
 Fixed Pane
 Metal
 Wood
 Vinyl
 Representative # Inspected/Tested

Operational

Door

- Binds
 Damaged
 Pocket
 Hinged
 Wood
 Metal
 Hole(s)/Damaged
 Representative # Inspected/Tested

Operational

Lighting

- Minimal
 Unsecured
 Representative # Inspected/Tested

Operational

Heat Source

- None
 Electric
 Air Register
 Radiant/Baseboard

Basement Stairway

- Unsecured
 Carpet
 Wood
 Worn

Railing

- Metal
 Wood
 Incomplete
 None

Install handrail to promote safety

Floor Joist

- Concealed
 Engineered Joists
 Solid Wood
 Stained

Bridging

- Concealed
 Continuous
 X-Metal
 X-Wood
 Solid Wood
 None

Basement/Structure

Sill Plate

All Concealed No Anchors Partially Concealed

Beam

Unsecured Concealed Metal Wood

Post

On Slab Concealed Wood Concrete Metal Brick/Block
 Stone

Pipes/Ducts

Unsecured Leak Insulated

Electrical Service

Service Entrance

No Conduit Overhead Underground 120/240V

Entrance Cable

Concealed Aluminum Copper

Main Disconnect

Switch/Cartridge Fuse Breaker

Service Size

Have Electrician Evaluate

Amps 100

100 amp service, copper wire.

Distribution Panel

Not Opened Non Standard Installation Obstructed

Location Bottom of basement stairs

Panel Rating

Room For Expansion

Amps 125

Fuse

Breaker GFCI Breaker AFCI Breaker Over-Fused Cartridge Glass

Circuit Wires/Receptacles

Aluminum Copper Representative # of Outlets Inspected/Tests Switched Outlets

Consult qualified electrician to correct various safety hazards :

-Install GFCI receptacle in 2nd level washroom

-Install cover plate on receptacles

-Secure receptacles to wall

Grounding

Concealed Ground Rod Water Main

Bonding

Concealed Water Pipe Gas Pipe Meter By-Pass

Heating

Ignition

- Electronic Pilot & Thermocoupl

Heat Shield

- Missing Corrosion Soot None

Burn Chamber

- Advise Adjustment Soot

Motor/Blower

- Direct Drive Noisy Other

Operational

Filter

- Disposable Missing Inoperable Undersized Damaged

Duct/Joint/Housing

- Unsecured Corrosion

AC

Not Applicable

- Not Checked Dirty Central Room Unit
Approx. Age 25 years Approx Size - Tons 1.5

Ac unit is 25 years old. Typical life expectancy is 15 years.

Testing A/C unit during low outdoor temperatures will cause system failure. Determine function during cooling season.

Cooling Fuel Source

- Electric

Condensation Line

- Improper Drain Corrosion

Refrigerant Line

- Unsecured Not Insulated

Plumbing Components

Limitation

- Finished Basement Private System

Public Supply

- Concealed Lead Galvanized Plastic Copper Metered
 Not Metered

Shut Off Location: East basement

Public Shut-Off Valve

- Not Tested Corrosion Tagged/Labeled for Convenience

Water Pressure

- Low Typical High

Water Quality

- Discoloration Debris Odor Advise Well Water Quality Tes Typical

Hose Bibb

Not Applicable

- Not Checked Shut-Off Valve Unsecured Frost Free

Determine operation when weather permits. Hose bibb currently winterized

Distribution Piping

- Concealed Plastic Galvanized Copper

Cross Connection

- Kitchen Laundry Hose Bibb None Visible

Waste Drainage

- Concealed Cast Iron Plastic Copper Pump/Inspect Septic System

Sewer lines in old homes such as this are prone to tree root damage, low spots, fractures, or collapse due to deterioration over time. If line has not been replaced in modern time, it may well need to be in the near future. The best way to determine condition of the drain line requires camera/scope evaluation by a drain professional.

Floor Drain

- None - a potential concern Drain Appeared Functional During Test

Main Cleanout

- Concealed

Location Behind laundry tub

Plumbing Components

Hot Water Tank

Operational

- With Heating System Gas Electric Some Corrosion Noted - Typical
Age 6 years Estimated Capacity -Litres 151

Hot water tank is 6 years old. Functioning as intended at time of inspection. Typical life expectancy is 15 years.

Life Expectancy

- Typical Exceeded Middle Middle/End

Fuel Shut-Off

- Concealed
Location beside

Relief Valve

- No Test Lever Corrosion Other

Discharge Tube

- Undersized Discharge

Venting

- Flue Sidewall Improper Rise Unsecured Corrosion Soot

Burn Chamber

- Not Checked Needs Adjustment

Sump Pump

Operational: Yes

- Not Checked Submersible Cover Missing -Install for safety Float Checked
 Permanent Connection Corrosion To Exterior Grade

Laundry

Floor

- Worn No drain

Wall

- Patched Unfinished Crack - Typical Uneven

Ceiling

- Patched Unfinished Crack - Typical Uneven

Window

- Binds - Adjust/Repair Not Tested Thermal Pane Single Pane
 Treat Wood To Preserve/Protect Storm Windows

Operational

Lighting

- None Unsecured

Operational

Tub/Faucet

- Unsecured Plastic Slow Drain Corrosion

Operational

Trap/Drain

- Drain stop disconnected/inoperable-repair if possible Inoperative Trap Slow Drain Corrosion

Washer

- Tested On/Off Function Only
 Make Kenmore # CS2045601

Operational: Yes

All appliances were turned on using regular operating controls if they are connected or not shut down. All functions and different systems are not tested. The test simply comprises turning the appliances on to verify some basic functionality.

Dryer

- Tested On/Off Function Only
 Make Kenmore # XD85106769

Operational: Yes

Dryer Vent

- Unsecured To Crawlspace Mostly Concealed Plastic Duct

Dryer vent cleaning is recommended to increase efficiency and for fire safety. Inspect/clean on a regular basis.

Interior of dryer vent condition concealed-not inspected

Heat Source

- None Thermostat Electric Air Register Radiant
 Radiator/Convactor

All Baths

Location

Basement 1st Floor 2nd Floor 3rd Floor

Water Flow

Normal Suspect Low

Floor

Worn Minor Cracking - Typica Stains/Minor Damage

Wall

Uneven Patched - Typical Ceramic

Ceiling

Uneven Minor Patching - Typical Minor Cracking - Typica

Window

Binds - Adjust/Repair Not Tested Treat Wood To Preserve/Protect Thermal Pane
 Single Pane Storm Windows Representative # Inspected/Tested

Operational

Door

Binds - Adjust/Repair Damaged Representative # Inspected/Tested

Operational

Lighting

None Unsecured

Operational

Exhaust Fan

Advise Installation Dirty - Clean for best function Noisy - Service/Repair/Replace

Operational

Sink

Worn Chip/Scratch Steel/Ceramic

Faucet

No Shut-off Unsecured Corrosion Minor Leakage at Handle - Repair

Operational

Trap/Drain

Drain stop disconnected/inoperable-Repair Slow Drain-Clean/Repair Corrosion - Monitor for leaks

Vanity

Worn/Scratches Missing/Loose Hardware Prior Stains-No Leakage Now

Counter

Unsecured Minor Damage - Scratches/Stains Caulk at Backsplash

All Baths

Toilet

Operational

- No Shut-Off Unsecured Crooked - Monitor for leakage

Tub/Enclosure

- Ceramic/Tile Solid Surface/Marble Fiberglass Plastic Panels
 Minor Mildew Stains-Treat/Clean Worn - Scratches/Chips

Determine cause of decreased drainage in tub and correct as required

Tub Faucet/Mixer

Operational

- Not Tested Unsecured Leaky-Secure/Repair/Replace

Shower Head

Operational

- Not Tested Unsecured Leaky-Secure/Repair/Replace

Heat Source

- None Thermostat Electric Air Register Radiant
 Radiator/Convactor

Basement washroom

Location

Basement 1st Floor 2nd Floor 3rd Floor

Water Flow

Normal Suspect Low

Floor

Worn Minor Cracking - Typica Stains/Minor Damage

Wall

Uneven Patched - Typical Minor Cracking - Typica

Ceiling

Uneven Minor Patching - Typical Minor Cracking - Typica

Window

Binds - Adjust/Repair Not Tested Treat Wood To Preserve/Protect Thermal Pane
 Single Pane Storm Windows Representative # Inspected/Tested

Operational: Yes

Door

Binds - Adjust/Repair Minor Damage/Hole In Door Representative # Inspected/Tested

Operational: Yes

Lighting

None Unsecured

Operational: Yes

Exhaust Fan

Advise Installation Dirty - Clean for best function Noisy - Service/Repair/Replace

Operational: Yes

Sink

Worn Chip/Scratch Steel/Ceramic

Faucet

No Shut-off Unsecured Corrosion Minor Leakage at Handle - Repair

Operational: Yes

Trap/Drain

Drain stop disconnected/inoperable Slow Drain - Clean/Repair Corrosion - Monitor for leaks

Vanity

Worn/Scratches Missing/Loose Hardware Prior Stains-No Leakage Now

Counter

Unsecured Minor Damage - Scratches/Stains Caulk at Backsplash

Basement washroom

Toilet

No Shut-Off Unsecured Crooked - Monitor for leakage

Operational: Yes

Tub Faucet/Mixer

Not Tested Unsecured Leaky-Secure/Repair/Replace

Operational: Yes

Shower Enclosure

Ceramic/Tile Solid Surface/Marble Fiberglass Plastic Panels
 Minor Mildew Stains - Treat/Clean Worn - Scratches/Chips

Shower Head

Not Tested Unsecured Leaky-Secure/Repair/Replace

Operational: Yes

Heat Source

None Thermostat Electric Air Register Radiant
 Radiator/Convactor

Floor

Worn Minor Cracking - Typica Stains/Minor Damage

Wall

Uneven Patched Minor Cracking - Typica

Ceiling

Uneven Patched- Typical Minor Cracking - Typica

Window

Binds - Adjust/Repair Not Tested Thermal Pane Single Pane
 Treat Wood To Preserve/Protect Representative # Inspected/Tested Storm Window

Operational

Door

Binds - Adjust/Repair Minor Damage/Hole(s)

Operational

Patio Door

Binds - Adjust/Repair Sliding Hinged Dead Bolt
 Minor Damage/Wear Weather Stripping

Operational

Lighting

None Unsecured Representative # Inspected/Tested

Operational

Sink

Worn Chip/Scratch

Faucet

No Shut-Off Valve Unsecured Corrosion Minor Leakage at Handle - Repair

Operational

Trap/Drain

Slow Drain - Clean/Repair Corrosion - Monitor for Leakage

Counter

Unsecured Caulk at Backsplash Minor Damage/Scratches/Worn

Cabinet

Worn/Scratches Missing/Loose Hardware Representative # Inspected/Tested

Range Hood

Cooktop Exhaust No Exhaust No Light Noisy

Operational

Exhaust vent

Unsecured Ductless Concealed To Exterior

Kitchen

Filter

Missing - Install for safety Unsecured Damaged Greasy

Major Appliances (Built-in)

Tested ON/OFF only. Did not Test All Functions/Cycles

All appliances were turned on using regular operating controls if they are connected or not shut down. All functions and different systems are not tested. The test simply comprises turning the appliances on to verify some basic functionality.

Dishwasher

Brand Bosch

Operational

Stove/Cooktop

Brand Kenmore # VF22112811

Operational

Refrigerator

Brand Whirlpool # ECL5101936

Operational

Heat Source

None Thermostat Electric Air Register Radiant
 Radiator/Convactor

Interior Living Spaces

Floor

- Worn Minor Cracking - Typica Staining/Minor Damage

Wall

- Uneven Patched - Typical Minor Cracking - Typica
 Wood Frame w/drywall/plaster

Ceiling

- Uneven Patched - Typical Minor Cracking - Typica
 Wood Frame w/drywall/plaster

Window

- Binds - Adjust/Repair Not Tested Fixed Pane Single Pane Thermal Pane
 Treat Wood To Preserve/Protect Representative # Inspected/Tested

Windows are in good condition.

Operational**Lighting**

- None Unsecured Representative # Inspected/Tested

Operational**Ceiling Fan**

- None Unsecured

Operational**Interior Doors**

- Binds - Adjust/Repair Hinged Closet door off track
 Floor guides missing Representative # Inspected/Tested

Operational**Stairway**

- Carpet Wood Worn Squeaks - Typical

Railing

- Wood/Metal Incomplete None

Exterior Doors

- Binds - Adjust/Repair Weather Stripping Missing/Improper Dead Bolt
 Minor Damage - Dent/Split/Worn Sliding Hinged

Operational**Heat Source**

- Air Register Electric Radiator/Convactor None
 Radiant-Concealed



Date: 04-Mar-2016

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Additional Comments

General Comments

This is a Prelisting Inspection performed for the seller of the home in preparation for putting the home on the market for sale. This inspection is completed to ASHI and OAHl standards, is visual in nature, and does not address building code compliance issues which are the purview of municipal building inspectors.

Property and Site

Building



Rear image

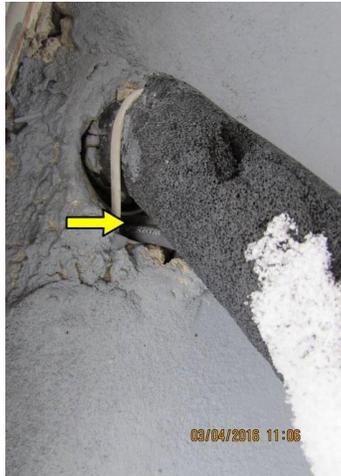
Front Porch



Peeling paint on porch steps

Exterior

Exterior Walls



Fill exterior holes

Basement Walkout



Missing handrail at basement walkout

Roof Structure

Main Roof



Shingles in good condition



Gutter/Downspout



Large volume of water flowing off dormer

Attic
Structure



Attic

Basement/Structure
Railing



Missing handrail

Electrical Service
Distribution Panel



Electrical panel

Circuit Wires/Receptacles



Missing cover plate



Unsecured electrical receptacle

Heating

Smoke Detectors



Replace old smoke detectors

Heating System



High efficiency furnace

Plumbing Components

Public Supply



Water meter and main shut off

All Baths

Tub/Enclosure



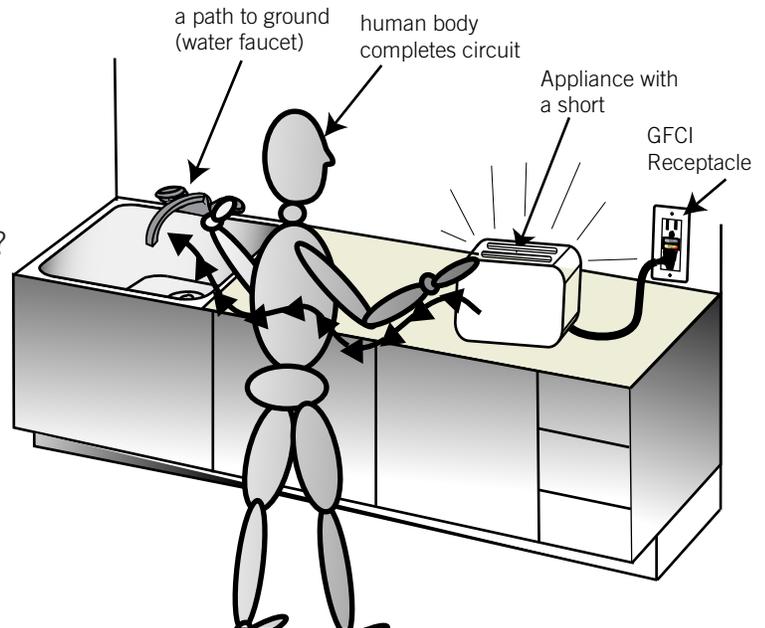
Slow drainage

Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter

A ground fault circuit interrupter, or GFCI, is an inexpensive electrical safety device that can protect you and your family members from a serious electric shock.

Have you ever had an electric shock? While it is an unpleasant experience, it is not usually fatal. However, given the right conditions, the same shock could be fatal! If your body makes a solid connection to the ground, the shock could easily kill you. Here are two examples of a solid ground connection:

- If you are physically standing or touching the ground outside
- If you touch something conductive, such as any part of the plumbing system in your house, that is also touching the ground outside



In other words, if you decide to operate your hedge trimmer in your bare feet and you get a shock, you may not survive it.

How Can a GFCI Help?

A GFCI is a special electrical outlet that prevents electric shocks in situations such as the ones described above. The GFCI monitors the electrical current leaving from and returning to the outlet. The current leaving the outlet should be the same amount as the returning current. If the current returning is less than that which leaves, the missing current could be passing through somebody's body to the ground. The GFCI detects the mismatch and shuts off the electrical outlet in a split second.

Where Should GFCI Outlets Be Located?

GFCI outlets should be installed in any area that presents a risk of an electric shock with a direct path to the ground. In other words, anywhere you might directly touch the ground outside or anywhere where you might touch a part of the plumbing system. Some smart GFCIs locations are:

- Exterior outlets
- Kitchen counter outlets (not common in Canada)
- Bathroom outlets
- Garage outlets
- Outlets in unfinished basements

Information Series

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This is not a complete list. Areas near swimming pools, hot tubs, and so on should also include this type of outlet.

GFCIs are not perfect, however, and have been known to “nuisance trip” when connected to certain types of electrical equipment. For this reason, exceptions to the suggested (or required) locations for GFCIs exist. For example, a regular outlet would be a better choice for a freezer in your garage since the potential for nuisance tripping of the GFCI is high and might go undetected for days, leading to spoiled food in the shut-off freezer.

Remote GFCI

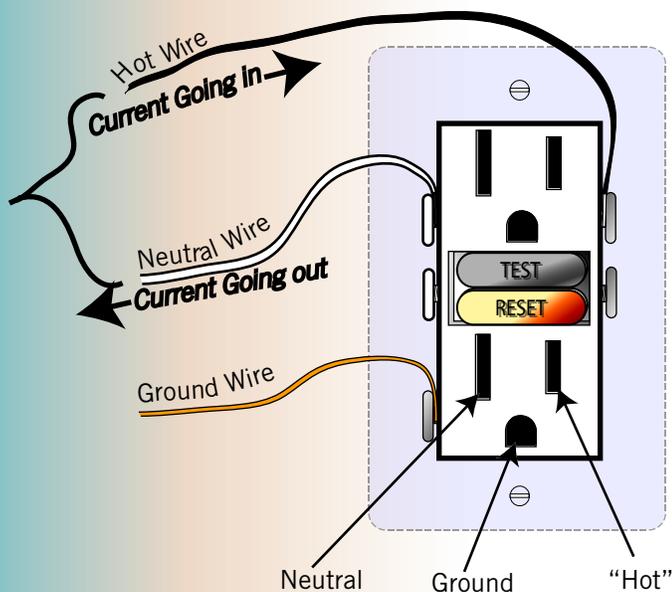
Several electrical outlets usually connect to a single circuit in an average home. A single GFCI outlet will protect all of the outlets in the circuit, even if the other outlets are not GFCIs. But the GFCI outlet must be the first outlet in the string in order for it to properly protect the other outlets, and, of course the connections have to be properly made.

Remote GFCIs sometimes cause confusion for home owners in the following ways:

- A home owner thinks the bathroom does not have a GFCI because the outlet looks like a standard one. The standard outlet under the protection of a remote GFCI should have a sticker indicating its GFCI protection. The problem is, the sticker does not stick forever. A Pillar To Post® inspector can test this for you.
- A standard outlet that does not appear to work in a bathroom or kitchen may actually be attached to a remote GFCI outlet that has nuisance tripped. Before calling an electrician, check the GFCI outlets in other bathrooms and in other locations around the house.

Testing

GFCIs are easy to test and should be tested every month. Simply press the test button on the outlet. You should hear a pop as the reset button pops out a little. To reset, just press the reset button. If the GFCI fails to trip, or if you are unable to reset it, it is time for an electrician to replace it.



Special breakers also provide GFCI protection to the entire circuit. These breakers can be installed instead of GFCI outlets. The GFCI breaker should also be tested monthly. You will recognize this breaker from the test and reset button.

GFCIs can help prevent injury and death from electric shock. It is a small device worth having to ensure the safety of your family members.

Pillar To Post®, *the home of home inspection*

We welcome your comments and suggestions for future Information Series topics
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Railings and Guards

The CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Injury Prevention) estimates that 40% of all unintentional deaths around the home are due to falls. One in five injuries that require a visit to an emergency room is due to a fall. Over 50% of these are falls that happen at home and most of these are falls from stairs and steps.

Railings and guards are designed to keep people from falling and injuring themselves. There is no doubt that properly installed railings and guards could help to improve these statistics.

A railing is something to grip onto when you go up and down a staircase. A guard is something that keeps you from falling off a staircase, deck or balcony. On a staircase, sometimes the railing doubles as a guard.

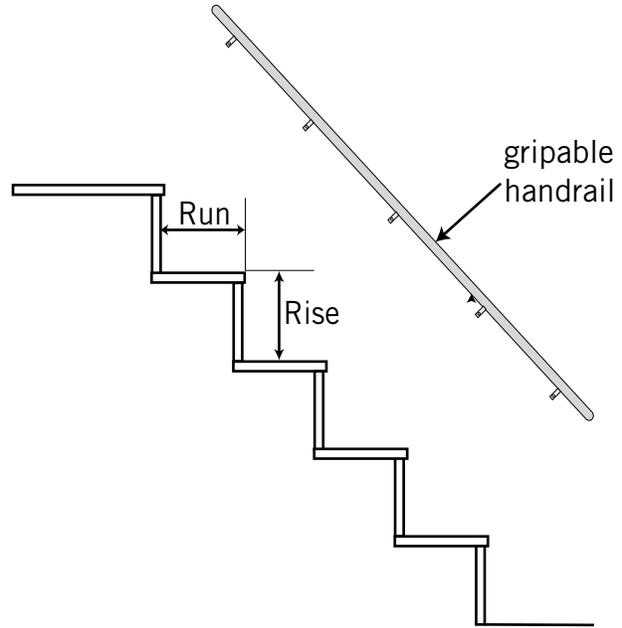
Many homes have missing or inappropriate railings and guards. One reason is that older homes did not have the same requirements as we do today. Home owners are not required to upgrade their homes to modern safety standards. If we had to upgrade, everybody would have to renovate their home every year just to keep up.

Pillar To Post home inspectors inspect your home with this in mind. We don't believe people should have to renovate their homes every year. Your railings and guards may be perfectly adequate for the time they were installed. At the same time we are concerned for your safety. We believe the solution is to provide you with information on common safety issues and let you decide if you would like to address the issue as a discretionary upgrade.

Here are a few common issues:

Missing railings: Sometimes a staircase has no railing at all, either because the previous owner removed it to make more room to move furniture up the stairs or because it was never installed in the first place. Ideally there should be a railing on any staircase that has more than two or three risers. The actual requirement depends on your area and when the home was built.

Missing guard: A common scenario is there is no guard on an open staircase to a



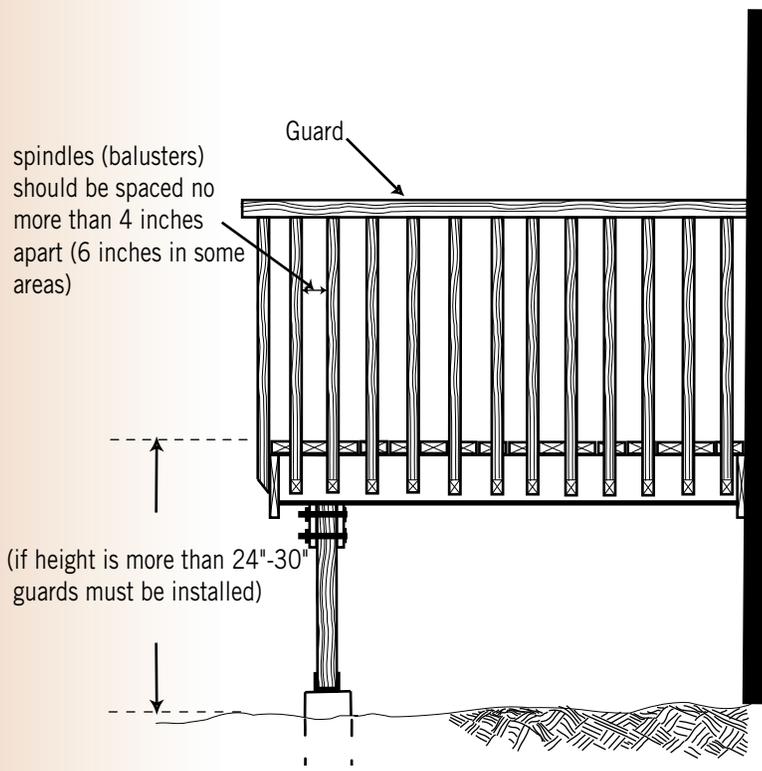
basement. In many areas, a guard was not required as long as there was a wall on one side and the basement unfinished. Today, many home owners have turned their basement into a recreation area or a playroom for children. The open staircase is now a danger. Ideally, a railing and guard should be added.

Guard too low: In some cases, an old home will have very low guards on staircases or balconies. This was the design at the time the home was built. Ideally, a guard should be 36 inches high, unless it's part of a staircase handrail in which case 34 inches would be ideal. In many areas, if the drop is six feet or more, a guard of 42 inches is required.

Railing or guard has large openings: Railings and guards may have vertical spindles (called balusters). These keep people from falling through. In some cases, the spacing between the spindles is so wide that a child could fall through. The requirements have changed over the years and also vary from area to area but most authorities believe that a maximum opening of four inches offers the best protection.

Other things to look for:

- Guards that incorporate climbable elements are not ideal. An example is a bench built into a guard or horizontal slats between the spindles on the guard. The concern is that children can climb them and fall over.
- Appropriate lighting for a staircase is a must. A dark stairwell is dangerous. That's all there is to it.
- Uneven stairs and stairs with non-uniform riser height are dangerous.



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Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide, or CO, a byproduct of incomplete combustion of fossil fuels, is a colorless, odorless gas. Breathing CO reduces the blood's ability to carry oxygen. In severe cases, CO can cause death.

Defective or malfunctioning fossil fuel appliances, or inappropriate use of appliances that burn fossil fuel close to or inside the home can pose a serious health hazard. Here are a few examples of dangerous operations:

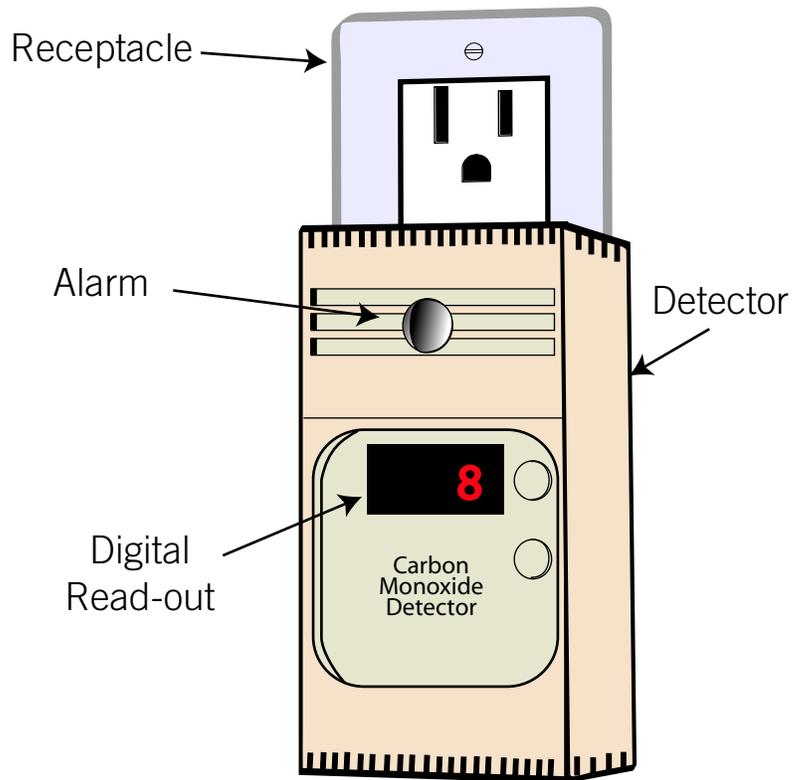
- Running an automobile or gas lawn mower inside the garage
- Operating a barbeque inside the home
- A gas or oil burning furnace with a blockage in the chimney
- Kerosene space heaters
- Operating a generator in the home during a power failure

Symptoms of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning include headache, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, weakness, chest pain, confusion, and loss of consciousness. Carbon monoxide poisoning can lead to death. Low level poisoning may go unnoticed because it may be mistaken for the flu.

Carbon Monoxide Detector

You should have at least one carbon monoxide detector in your home. In some geographic areas, a CO detector is required by law. The CO detector should be placed where you can hear it if it goes off when you are asleep. A CO detector does not have to be placed on the ceiling, since unlike smoke, CO has approximately the same weight as air so it mixes



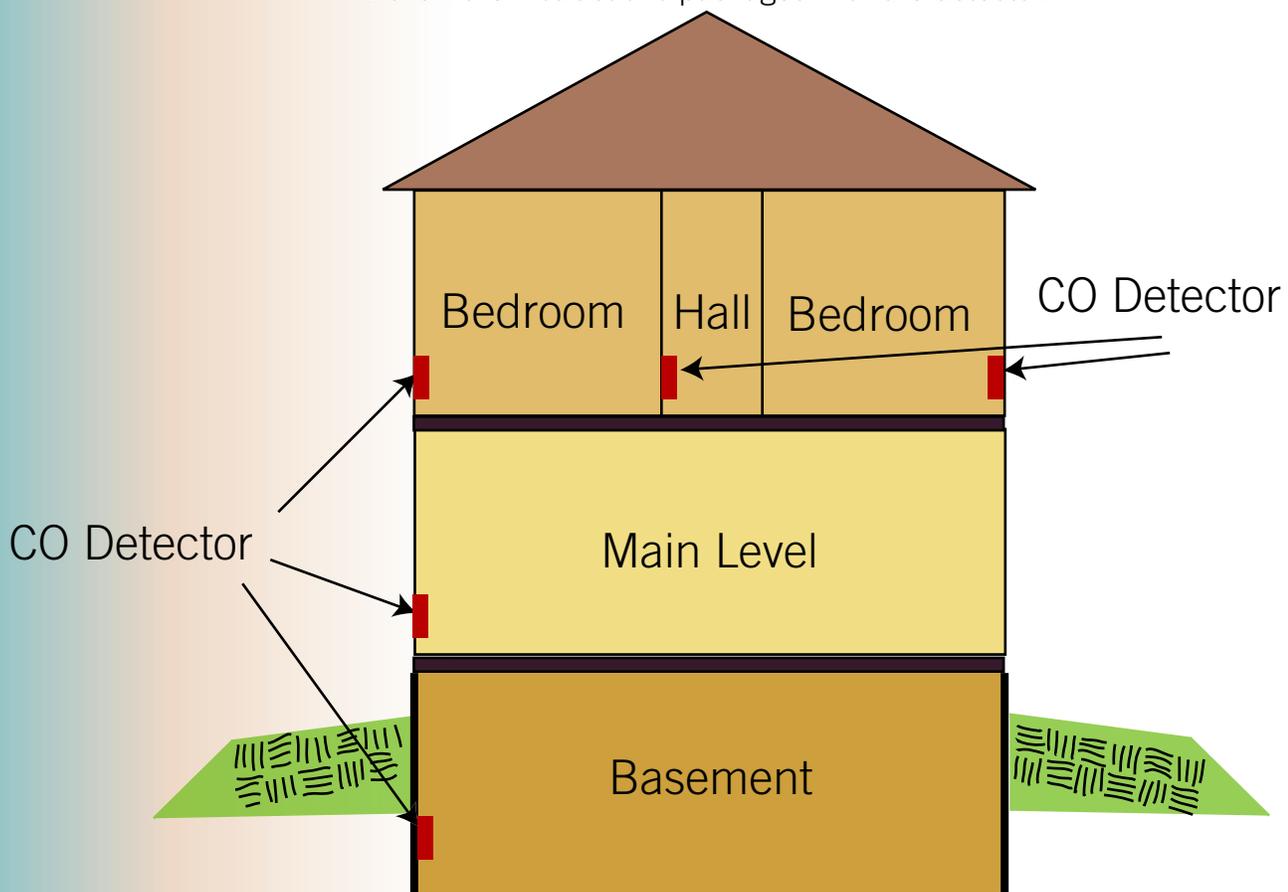
uniformly throughout the room rather than floating up to the ceiling. To avoid false alarms, do not install the detector next to heating and cooking appliances, vents, flues, or chimneys. Make sure you read and follow the operating, placement, and testing instructions that come with the detector.

If the carbon monoxide detector alarms, take it seriously.

Avoiding CO Poisoning

- Have your heating systems serviced every year by a qualified technician.
- Have your fireplace chimney cleaned and inspected every year.
- Install at least one CO detector in your home and replace the batteries twice per year.
- Open the garage door prior to starting your car; drive the car out promptly. Do not leave it idling in the garage. Do not use a remote car starter when the car is in the garage.
- Do not use a charcoal or propane barbeque in the home.

If you are installing only one carbon monoxide (CO) detector, it should be located where you can hear it if it goes off when you are sleeping. For greater safety, multiple CO detectors can be installed throughout the home. Follow the instructions packaged with the detector.



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