

Roof--- the key of house inspection

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Generally, clients always express the concern on the roof condition during the house inspection, which make sense that not only the roof is the shield of weather but the sour part to be easily ruined. It is not unusual to cost over 10 thousand to replace a roof. In order to be responsible for the clients, myself and all the home inspectors pay much attention to the roof inspection not simply find out the defects but get to know the existing condition and address it, which make sure the clients know the situation and budget the essential cost for replacement or repair in advance.

We normally walk on the roof in order to do technically visible inspection. Also we know this is what the customer expected. We will inspect the roof material, the workmanship of ridge, valley disposal and gutters, as well as other on-roof components and flashing. Certainly, it is understandable that we cannot get on the roof under some conditions, for example, the steep pitch, wet roof or extreme high which could be only if there is a deck or balcony we can take the advantage to get on. But all these are safety hazard. After all house inspection is not supposed to cause incident. Somebody said the dead inspector did not write a report. In addition, some materials such as clay/concrete tile and metal roof are not that stable to support the weight, plus the suspicious original construction and failed fasteners. But we will climb on the ladder and observe the roof at the eave in different angles with binoculars and DC if necessary. Also we try to crawl in the attic to watch the detail as much as possible.

Speaking of the roof materials, wood shake/shingle, asphalt shingle, concrete/clay tile and newer existing metal and synthetic rubber are the popular types on the market. On the ancient and mansion you may find slate roof but not often. From the view of a house inspector I do not believe any roof material is better than the other. Moreover the workmanship is a critical factor to tell the roof effectiveness and life. We will introduce each common material later. They all have their own pros and cons.

In addition, I do not think the roof is so important to tell the quality of the property unless there is an original configuration defect which is no way to change. Because the life of the roof material is limited any way, it has to be replaced in certain of time finally. But roof condition should be a consideration of the price on the deal, which means you need to budget the cost of replacement right in the near future or it can be waited for another 4 or 5 years. Certainly, if the roof is already failed, that will be a different story. Not only has the roof had to be replaced right away but much concern has to be given to the structure and insulation underneath, which may have rotten. By this stage, it's hard to tell how much has to put on to fix.

In all, roof is a key factor to watch before buying the property but you do not need to be panic. House inspection will be responsible for you and let you know your property well.