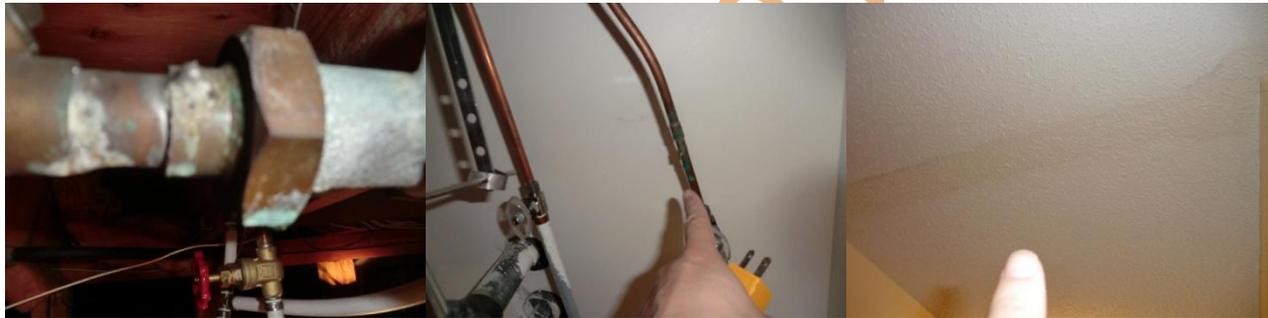


Pipes and Leaking

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One of the key parts during the home inspection is to find out the material of the pipes and confirm their condition. This is also concerned by clients. Once there is leaking, the damage & repair cannot be avoided. If the whole pipe line is not in the good condition and has to be replaced, it will be costly.

We have introduced "grey pipe" Poly-B. The other common distribute pipes include copper, Pex & galvanized pipe. The last one was installed by 1950s. For its life expectancy less than 50 years most have been replaced with other material pipes. Copper pipes are traditional and durable normally last as long as 50 years even longer. But copper is sensitive to chemicals especially acid. It could be corroded rapidly under acidic moisture or soil. Their thickness and installation are critical to the durability. Without proper length support and clips the pipe could be worn out by expansion and contraction. Frankly rust caused leaking is the main problem in our inspection (figure). Pex was emerging in the middle of 90s & quickly accepted by the market due to its corrosion and heat resistant, moderate cost and ease of installation. At



the same time because the metal resources kept going up, Pex took the major position in the plumbing. We normally do not have too much worry on Pex pipes during inspection. However, recently CBC exposed the negative news on Pex blast, which is involved in the Kitec made from 1995 to 2007 mostly orange yellow and blue color. This taught us that nothing is 100%. The actual observation & experience are the objective judgement

Most drain and vent pipes are black ABS and few is whit PVC. Both are allowed in the newer building code & belong to the good drain material. We still have chance to see cast iron, galvanized or copper drain pipe in old buildings but not much for the upgrade. Once you encounter these kinds of drain, be prepared to replace it when it fails in a certain time.

Leaking (figure) to some extent cannot be avoided in homes. A long as it has been fixed; there is no adverse effect on building. What we should be alert is the latent leakage which is invisible and could seriously damage the structure and undermine the health of building. This is the challenge of our inspection.