



# A.R.K. Inspection Services

Accurate ~ Reliable ~ Knowledgeable  
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## In Search of the Perfect House

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### *THE 1% RULE*

When you consider the life cycle of every component of a house, a reasonable annual estimate of the cost of normal maintenance is about 1% of the value of the house. One year you may replace the furnace; a few years down the road you may re-surface the roof. Throw in the odd unexpected repair in between and you average 1% per year. It's incredible but this rule is not far off, both for very expensive and very inexpensive houses.

### *NORMAL MAINTENANCE*

If you strip away the cosmetics, a house is made up of the structure, roof, exterior envelope and the "systems" of the house. The "systems" are things like heating, plumbing, electrical and cooling.

All components and systems eventually wear out. Fortunately, they don't all wear out at the same time. Different components have different life cycles. Houses tend to settle into what you might call a "normal maintenance pattern".

### *WHAT'S THE MESSAGE HERE?*

A homebuyer should arrive at the home inspection with realistic expectations. If you are buying a 12-15 year old home, let's face it, you may need a new roof covering. If you are buying a 60 year old home, you may have to update some plumbing. Don't let this scare you away from a perfectly good home.

### *HOW LONG DOES IT LAST?*

Here is a short list of typical life cycles of the most common components of the home. Please keep in mind that there will be exceptions in every category.

#### **ROOF**

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|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| Conventional asphalt shingles .....     | 12 - 15 years  |
| Top quality asphalt shingles .....      | 25 - 30 years  |
| Low slope shingles .....                | 10 - 15 years  |
| Slate .....                             | 40 - 200 years |
| Tar & gravel roof (built-up roof) ..... | 15 - 20 years  |
| Single ply roof membrane .....          | 15 - 20 years  |
| Roll roofing .....                      | 5 - 10 years   |

#### **EXTERIOR**

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|                                     |                |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| Gutters & downspouts .....          | 20 - 30 years  |
| Copper gutters and downspouts ..... | 50 - 100 years |

|                               |                       |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Aluminum siding .....         | 50 plus years         |
| Wood siding .....             | maintenance dependent |
| Stucco .....                  | maintenance dependent |
| Exterior paint .....          | 4 - 6 years           |
| Deck .....                    | 10 - 20 years         |
| Asphalt driveway surface..... | 10 - 20 years         |
| Driveway sealer .....         | 1 - 3 years           |
| Concrete driveway .....       | 30 - 40 years         |
| Garage door opener.....       | 8 - 12 years          |

## STRUCTURE

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|                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Termite treatment ..... | 10 - 20 years |
|-------------------------|---------------|

## HEAT

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|                               |                             |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Conventional furnace .....    | 20 - 25 years               |
| Mid efficiency furnace .....  | 20 - 25 years               |
| High efficiency furnace ..... | unknown, suspect < 20 years |
| Cast iron boiler .....        | 35 - 50 years               |
| Steel boiler .....            | 20 - 30 years               |
| Copper tube boiler .....      | 10 - 20 years               |
| Humidifier .....              | 5 - 10 years                |
| Electronic air filter .....   | 10 - 20 years               |

## COOLING

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|                                  |               |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| Air conditioning condenser ..... | 10 - 15 years |
|----------------------------------|---------------|

## PLUMBING

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|                                    |               |
|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Galvanized steel supply pipe ..... | 40 - 50 years |
| Copper pipe .....                  | indefinite    |
| Toilet .....                       | 30 - 40 years |
| Sink .....                         | 12 - 20 years |
| Faucet .....                       | 10 - 15 years |
| Whirlpool bath .....               | 15 - 25 years |
| Shower pan .....                   | unpredictable |
| Pump for well .....                | 10 - 15 years |
| Water softener .....               | 5 - 15 years  |
| Sump pump .....                    | 2 - 7 years   |
| Water heater .....                 | 8 - 12 years  |
| Tile bathtub enclosure .....       | 10 - 50 years |

## INTERIOR

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|               |                       |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| Paint .....   | 5 - 10 years          |
| Windows ..... | maintenance dependent |