



# Home Tips®



• CHRISTIAN BUILDING INSPECTORS, INC., 3697 HABERSHAM LANE, DULUTH, GEORGIA 30096, 770-849-0920 • APRIL 2004 •

## Q & A

### New Home Inspections?

*We are planning to build a new home. Since the different phases are going to be inspected by the county, do we need a private inspector too?*

Clark Howard had an excellent program on WSB news called "Clark Howard's Warning To Homebuyers. Government Inspections May Not Provide Protection."



Homebuyers are becoming more educated and most would not even consider buying a used home without a home inspection. New construction is a different story. Many buyers assume since the construction was inspected by the county or municipal inspectors, the construction meets all of the building codes. Anyway, if anything goes wrong, it is covered by the builder's warranty. Right?

Gary Lewis, president of the Georgia Association of Home Inspectors, said private contractors can spend between three to six hours on a job whereas county inspectors, "Just don't have the luxury of having that amount of time."

Most of the county or municipal inspectors are over worked and can only spend around five minutes at each inspection. Private inspectors can spend between two to four hours doing the same inspection. Are the inspections the same? You decide. Many of the county or municipal inspectors are required to inspect between 30 to 40 homes a day. Most private inspectors can only inspect two.

#### How Do You Choose An Inspector?

Question to ask a potential inspector:

- Are you a member of ASHI? The American Society of Home Inspectors is the nation's largest and oldest organization of professional inspectors. See [www.ashi.org](http://www.ashi.org).
- How long have you been in the home inspection business?
- Does the company offer to do any repairs or improvements based on the inspection? This may cause a conflict of interest.
- How long will the inspection take? The average is two to three hours for a typical single-family home. Anything less may not be enough time to do a thorough inspection.
- What will the inspection include? Get the specifics.
- Does the inspector prepare a written report? Is it available at the site? Does the report include digital photos?
- Does the inspector encourage the client to attend the inspection? This is a valuable educational opportunity. If the inspector refuses, this should raise a red flag.
- Does the inspector participate in continuing education programs to keep his or her expertise up to date? What other organizations is he/she a member of? An inspector's commitment to continuing education is a good measure of his professionalism and service.

Georgia has its own organization which is called the Georgia Association of Home Inspectors. GAHI was founded in 1989 as a state-wide organization of professional inspectors dedicated to improving the service and reputation of the home inspection industry. Its primary goals are:



- Enhance the public awareness of the benefits of home inspections.
- Improve the inspection skills and the professional knowledge of each member.
- Provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and information for its members.

Their commitment to high standards is reflected in their membership requirements which are among the highest and most challenging of all professional home inspection organizations. Members must successfully complete written exams, perform a minimum of 250 inspections and attain certification by the International Code Council as a One and Two Family Dwelling Inspector. This certification is unique to all other home inspection organizations and permits its members to adequately perform inspections for newly constructed residences by being "Code Certified." Most builders require the inspectors to be CABO certified.

Few professional home inspectors, like craftsmen in other trades and professions, reach a high level of competency in a short period of time. Because of the variety of materials, construction practices and construction skills, and the time period over which communities develop, much of the

