



Home Tips®



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Q & A

Lead Screening Requirements?

The October issue of Home Tips explained what Title X required, but could you tell us what is involved in a lead paint inspection or a risk assessment and approximately what they will cost?

Home buyers will get a 10-day period during which time they may obtain a lead-based paint inspection or risk assessment at their own expense. The regulation does *not* require purchasers to investigate lead hazards, *nor does it require* sellers to take any specific action to fix lead problems.

• PAINT INSPECTION

According to EPA guidelines the inspector must test all surfaces where lead paint may be present. Any painted surface must be individually tested in each room and outside the house. This will include baseboards, windows, doors, chair rail, crown molding, walls and ceilings. A paint inspection tells you the lead content of every painted surface in the house. It will not tell you whether the paint is a hazard or how you should deal with it. There may be between 200 to 1000 separate tests conducted in a single residence. The inspection must be performed by an EPA Certified Inspector, may take up to 8 hours to complete and probably will range between \$350.00 to \$2,000.00 per inspection.

• RISK ASSESSMENT

A risk assessment includes all of the sampling required in a paint inspection, but will include additional items as required by EPA guidelines. A risk assessment tells you if there are any sources of serious lead exposure (such as peeling paint or lead dust). It also tells you what actions to take to address these hazards. Pricing for a risk assessment is determined on an individual basis only. Obviously it will be more expensive than a lead inspection.

• NON-EPA APPROVED INSPECTION

Although not required, the expectation is that purchasers will opt to include language making their sales contract contingent upon a satisfactory lead evaluation. In this case, the purchaser may cancel the contract if high levels of lead are found. If the purchaser waves this right in writing, a standard lead test may be conducted, by any inspector, to determine the presence of lead. If lead is found, the purchaser

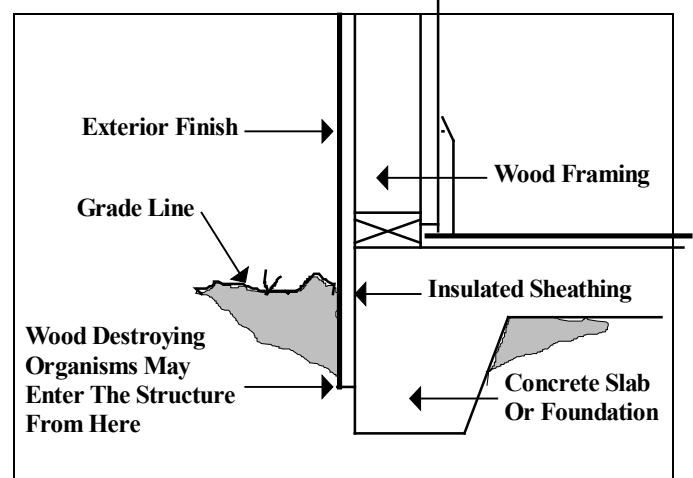
will not be able to cancel the contract. This may be an acceptable option for many buyers.

Dryvit Below Grade?

We have Dryvit on the exterior of our house. We are trying to sell the home and the Pest Control company, we called for the Termite Letter, refused to issue the letter because the Dryvit extended below grade. What is going on here?

Dryvit is just one of the many synthetic stucco systems that is actually called *Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems* or EIFS for short. EIFS has been used on many homes in the Atlanta area over the last twenty years.

It has been determined that many of the installers have not finished or sealed the bottom lip of the system where it extends below grade. This allows the insulated sheathing



to be exposed and is a perfect environment for wood destroying organisms to enter the structure. Even if the system is properly sealed, any small openings in the finish could allow the entrance. The organisms simply crawl up the insulated sheathing into the wood framing. The problem is: *you cannot visually tell if the structure has infestation since the area is totally covered.*

The manufacturer's installation instructions require all EIFS to terminate a minimum of 6" above the grade which allows a visual inspection of the foundation wall.

This is also a problem for all slab on grade homes with perimeter insulation around the foundation as required by the Georgia Energy Code. The new code allows the builder to omit the foundation insulation if the difference is made up in the insulation in the walls or ceiling.

