



# BUILDING INSPECTIONS

## The Professional Engineer's Approach

Buying a home or building can be the largest investment anyone will ever make.

The protection of a thorough inspection is needed – and only the highest quality inspection will do!

Here's how to find it!



### The P.E. is the Best Choice

1. **Professional Engineers** often bring 10 years or more training and experience to each inspection. **Professional Engineers** are *committed* to their careers.
2. The **Professional Engineer's** experience assures the ability to *evaluate* unusual conditions not covered in brief training programs. These are often the *most important* considerations in a building inspection.
3. **Professional Engineers** are accountable for their work; legally, ethically and morally.
4. **Professional Engineers** who specialize in building inspections bring a vast amount of engineering "know-how" to the inspection process.
5. **Professional Engineers** who specialize in building inspection are truly consulting engineers in the service of the public.
6. **Professional Engineers** depend on their good standing with the State Board of Registration for their chosen career. You can count on their best efforts at every inspection.
7. **Professional Engineers** are ethically bound to serve only the best interests of their clients. No interest in any other aspect of the transaction is permitted.
8. **Professional Engineers** are proud of their ability and their license. They will willingly provide proof of their registration.



### The National Academy of Building Inspection Engineers (NABIE)

NABIE is a non-profit, professional society which accepts as members only state registered **Professional Engineers** specializing in the practice of building inspections. Licensed architects are also admitted as members. The purpose of NABIE is to lead and advance the integrity, value and understanding of the practice of **professional engineering** as it applies to the inspection, investigation and evaluation of buildings and homes. Member qualifications and NABIE Standards of Practice, the highest in the industry, may be viewed on NABIE's website: <http://www.nabie.org>. NABIE can also be contacted by writing to the National Academy of Building Inspection Engineers; P.O. Box 522158; Salt Lake City, UT 84152 or calling 1-800-294-7729.

© 2004 The National Academy of Building Inspection Engineers



## The Good Sense Of A Home Or Building Inspection

It simply doesn't make sense to spend tens of thousands of dollars without a careful look at what you're getting for your money. But a careful examination of a building is not as easy as it sounds. What do you look for? How do you judge the quality of construction?

Few of us have the expertise to make an adequate evaluation. The emotional experience of buying a home often blinds us to the facts of the conditions of the home. It takes a registered **Professional Engineer** who specializes in home and building inspections to provide a sound and independent evaluation.



## The Benefits Of A Home Or Building Inspection

A quality inspection *saves money and aggravation.*

Before buying a home or building, it is critically important to identify problems that may exist and repairs that will have to be made. This enables you to plan financially. And it *avoids expensive surprises* – a leaky roof or unstable foundation.

A quality inspection can provide a basis for planning and budgeting over the next 5 to 10 years of ownership.

At the very least, an inspection provides peace of mind. It's comforting to know that the home or building you're buying is safe and sound, and the largest investment of your life is a sensible one, based on your having information of value and worth.



## Are Inspectors All The Same? No!

Some are well qualified. Some are not. Some inspectors have little or no prior training or experience. Be aware of the differences.

Some associations have developed voluntary standards of practice. While some states have laws regulating private providers of building inspection services, not all have such regulations. Some associations test or certify prospective inspectors, but engineering or architectural education is not required among their minimal qualifications and training. The **P.E. (Professional Engineer)** designation is the only one regulated by every state government to assure proper education, training and experience to serve the public. To obtain a state license as a professional engineer, an individual must meet these requirements:

1. Four years of college level engineering education, that requires coursework in aspects of structural, mechanical, and electrical engineering. Engineering specialty training follows.
2. Four years of professional engineering experience.
3. Sixteen hours of successful completion of a written examination, administered by the State Board.

By law, in virtually all states, a **Registered Professional Engineer** is the only one who can legally render an opinion on the structural stability of an existing building. States often stipulate that only a **Registered Professional Engineer** can render an opinion on mechanical and electrical systems adequacy.



## Why A Professional Engineer Is Needed

A **Professional Engineer**, well-versed in all aspects of structural and mechanical components of the building, can recognize clues that signal unseen problems. Because the inspection is based on visible evidence, the inspector must have the best experience available. Interpretation of visible evidence is often the only way to identify hidden problems.



## What Should A Home Or Building Inspection Include?

An examination of your building, from roof-top to basement, will include evaluation of the structural integrity of the building and its foundation and an examination of the heating, ventilating and air-conditioning, plumbing, and electrical systems.

A skillful inspection would also evaluate interior and exterior finishes and provide a basis for maintenance planning.



## Services You Should Expect Beyond The Inspection

The inspection is only part of a professional service. To be of maximum benefit to you, the inspection results must be communicated clearly and effectively in a thorough written report, prepared uniquely for the property.

In addition to complete confidentiality, the code of ethics for **Professional Engineers** also requires inspectors to avoid conflicts of interest, prohibits them from being involved in any real estate transaction that could benefit from them financially as a result of their inspection work, and "hold paramount that the safety, health and welfare of the public in the performance of their professional duties."