



HomeNotes

Home Maintenance Information from INSPECT & REPORT



INSPECT & REPORT

Homes - Mold - Radon

1-800-358-7019

Inspector@TZNET.com

Reverse POLARITY

A homeowner can check the wiring in a receptacle using a voltmeter or receptacle tester/analyzer. Using a voltmeter, the voltage between the hot (narrow) prong and the ground (semicircle) prong should measure approximately 100 to 125 volts. There should be no reading between the neutral (wide) prong and the ground prong. Reversed readings indicate reverse polarity.

To correct this problem, the receptacle should be removed and rewired. First, the hot (black) wire is connected to the brass screw (or the side with the narrow prong).

Next, the neutral (white) wire is connected to the silver screw (or the side with the wider prong). Lastly, the ground (bare) wire is connected to the green screw.

It is important that the person rewiring the receptacle turn off all power to the outlet. He should verify that the power has been cut off before trying to repair the outlet. Of course, it is always best to trust electrical work to a qualified professional.

Cyber Home Tips

Here are a few tree-mendous links on the Web to see what a tree specialist can do for you.

Ask An Arborist!

oak-wood.co.uk/forum/treecare

Why Hire an Arborist?

isa-arbor.com/consumer/consumer.html

Your Home and

THE SICK HOUSE SYNDROME

Sick House Syndrome – the result of poor air quality in a home – can result in allergies, asthma, chemical sensitivity, migraines, cancer, and emphysema. Many people in our country may be subjected to the syndrome, and children, women, and the elderly have increased susceptibility.

Numerous particles, fibers, and gases may be found in indoor air, and many of these foreign particles may be of concern. Some are called irritants, others allergens, while still others are labeled sensitizers or toxins. These particles of concern include lime and silica dust (which are found in concrete), pet dander, chips of lead paint, carbon (from fireplaces or candles), and body parts of dead microscopic insects. Fibers of concern include asbestos, animal hair, and carpet fibers, while gasses of concern include carbon monoxide and volatile and semi-volatile organic compounds.

These substances find their way into the property in various ways. They may be emitted from building, furnishing, and cleaning materials, tracked in on shoes, or flow through leaks in the house. They may also grow like molds and mites inside the home itself.

So what's a homeowner to do? Well, to improve air quality indoors, it is best to audit the home (either personally or professionally) to locate typical sources of problems. The audit should also assure that heating, ventilation, and air conditioning equipment is serviced on a regular basis. A professional touch may be preferable, as do-it-yourself renovation and clean-up projects often cause more problems than they solve.

If the homeowner wants to upgrade to improve his home air quality, he should consider the following nineteen tips:

1. *Install improved filters; HEPA vacuum cleaners*
2. *High efficiency furnaces and hot water heaters; Duct cleaning*
3. *Maintain a seal in all sewage traps*
4. *Use bathroom and kitchen exhausts and heat recovery ventilators*
5. *Avoid toys, mattress covers, and other soft materials containing latex, vinyl, or neoprene*

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The Home Maintenance Guide Series

Identifying Signs of **ATTIC LEAKS**

Even though most roofing shingles are designed to last 15 years, problems often develop when the roof reaches eight to ten years of age. Often leaks are difficult to find and can cause significant structural damage later. Therefore, it's best to know the following signs of attic leaks/moisture:

- 🔍 Structural sagging, wavy roof frame and sheathing
- 🔍 Damaged, worn or missing shingles
- 🔍 Moss growth
- 🔍 Corroded flashing around chimney, dormer or vents
- 🔍 Raised shingles along the bottom of the roof
- 🔍 Icicles hanging from gutter
- 🔍 Stained/discolored or delaminating sheathing
- 🔍 Rusted nails and rust stains on sheathing
- 🔍 Damp or discolored insulation
- 🔍 Water spots or black marks on the ceiling or at junction between walls and ceiling
- 🔍 Water marks around ceiling fixtures

There are numerous contributing factors to leaks in the attic. Some tell-tale indicators that leakage may be – or become – a problem include poor roof slope design, improper shingling, deteriorated chimney or exposed nails on the roof. Such problems do not stand up as well to elements such as wind, rain, moss or water vapor.

HomeNotes™ contains basic information on the home and general topics of interest. Due to the variations in homes, individual recommendations require a comprehensive evaluation. To reprint any article in this newsletter, please contact our office. (HNFA03) © 2002-2003. All rights reserved.

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6. *Mite proof mattress and pillow covers; purchase non-allergenic blankets*
7. *Air seal all gaps around windows and doors*
8. *Waterproof the basement*
9. *Disconnect downspouts from weeping tile*
10. *Avoid flannel pajamas and blankets*
11. *Avoid detergent and anti-static residues*
12. *Wash all new clothing in Borax*
13. *Avoid using pesticides and synthetic fertilizers*
14. *Remove paints, solvents, pesticides, and fertilizers from inside the house; store outdoors or in a shed*
15. *Replace porous surfaces with smooth surface materials*
16. *Use front door mats*
17. *Use products that are solvent free, low toxic, or hypoallergenic*
18. *Use carbon filters on showers to reduce chlorine exposure*
19. *Avoid using unvented appliances, germicidal products, air fresheners, and perfumes*

The Benefits of a **MOLD TEST**

1. **Peace of Mind** - Knowing if you have areas suspect to moisture intrusion that may be conducive to fungal growth. The intent of this survey is to identify areas that may be in need of microbial sampling. You will know if there are any current moisture problems that need fixing, and what sampling should be done to see if any fungal growth now exists.
2. **Healthy Home** - Make your home as healthy as possible for you & your family. The presence of certain mold and mold spores in housing can result in mild to severe health effects in humans and can deteriorate the building materials in the dwelling resulting in structural damage. Health effects include, but are not limited to: asthma, allergy symptoms, watery eyes, sneezing, wheezing, difficulty breathing, sinus congestion, blurry vision, sore throat, dry cough, aches and pains, skin irritation, bleeding of the lungs, headaches, memory loss and fever. As humans vary greatly in their chemical make-up, so does the individual's reaction to mold exposure. For some people, a small number of mold spores can cause ill effects. In others it may take a more substantial exposure.
3. **Knowing the health condition of the home you are buying.** The more information you have about the home you are buying, the better you will be at making an informed decision about purchasing it.

Visit www.InspectAndReport.com and www.MoldSurveyor.com today!

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