



The Professional Inspector

Information Publication for Homeowners, Realtors, Mortgage Brokers,
Insurance Brokers and Builders

7 Reasons Why Your Property Won't Sell

To start off the New Year, lets start with something that will help improve the marketing of your home or put your home in a better marketing position to have your Professional Realtor bringing more buyer clients knocking at your door. Listed is seven easy basic reasons why your home may be slow for showings.

1. Your property won't sell because your photos are "less than impressive". The vast majority of home buyers start their search for a home on the Internet, so your property had better look fantastic in print. Not just nice, it has to look downright fabulous. Today an internet view is the same as a "virtual showing" if your house gets past that, then they might (just might) make an appointment to see it in person... You should really consider that your second showing. Today's online viewers are expecting good quality photos and lots of them...the picture to the right... taken from Google Maps... is completely unacceptable. (That's a \$500,000 listing, take a moment and your digital camera), a virtual tour, maybe even a floor plan, and they need to be high quality.

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- Your property won't sell because it's overpriced. It's important to be as objective as you possibly can. Look at the home as though you were a "buyer"... if necessary, make an appointment with your Realtor to view other properties that are priced comparably to yours. Be brutally objective. Given the other options on



the market (and yes, you do have to include short sales and foreclosures on your list... your potential buyers are!), would you buy your home, over the others that are currently available on the market? If the answer is "no", (and try to be as honest as you can) well then you have your work cut out for you, don't you? You either have to "update" your home to meet or beat the competition...(that might

mean an updated bathroom or kitchen, or neutralizing some decorating... remove that old wallpaper that was there when you bought the house or lower your price to adjust for it. If you can't afford to sell it for the price, that you know it should sell for, this may not be the right market for you to sell. Consider taking it off-market.

- Your property won't sell because it shows badly. This could mean almost anything... from the 60 pound Rottweiler, barking and drooling at the potential buyers from behind the safety of the flimsiest child-gate, to the lingering smell of 30-years of smoking. Maybe the carpeting shows traffic-pattern wear, or your windows allow in slightly more than daylight. All things that aren't visible from the Internet, but whoa.... once you get inside the house... they show up, like a cat-urine-soaked-shag carpet on a 95 degree day in New Orleans!

- Your property won't sell because you're invisible. Today's buyer comes from the internet, almost exclusively. Have you (or your agent) simply plopped the property on the MLS, and started praying? Are you on all the websites...(Trulia, Zillow, Craig's List, Google Base, etc...) all the places that buyers are searching? If not, you need to be, now! Don't try to be a secret, in today's electronic world. You want to be found, and the sooner the better.

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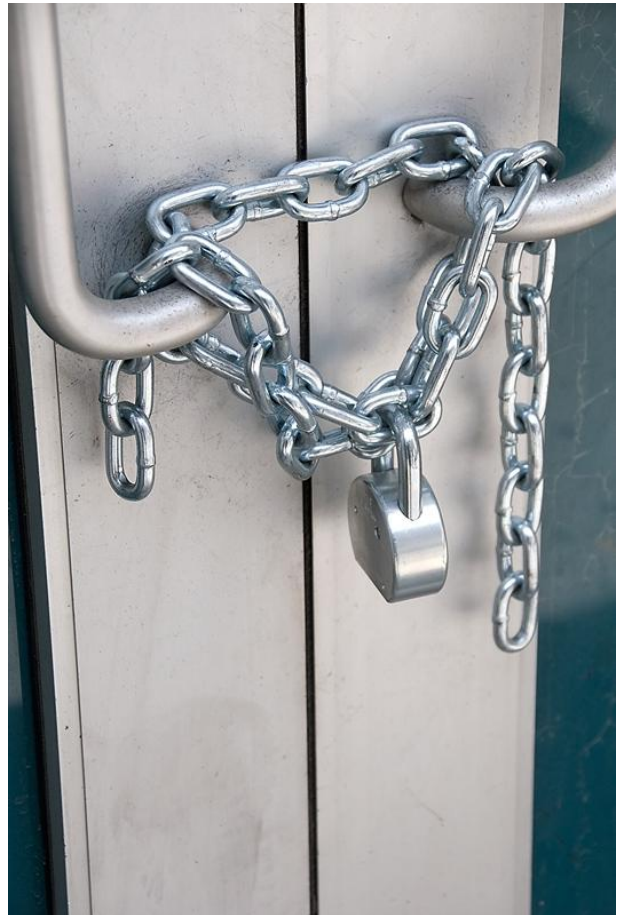
- Your property won't sell because your listing is tired and stale on the market. Okay... yes, you overpriced your home initially when you first came on the market a year and a half ago. But since then you have reduced your price almost monthly, constantly chasing the market down. Now, finally you're truly priced where you



believe should be, but your listing (not your house) has become tired and stale. Everyone who is looking for your of property (ie: 3br/1.1 bath) in your area has already seen the listing online, or in person and they remember that there was "something" about it that they didn't like... but what they don't remember is... what they didn't like.... was the price. Time to take the listing off market. Let it cool off (3-6 months), and bring it back on fresh in the Spring. Yeah, you'll have 6 months worth of holding-costs... but you'll more than make up for it in your purchase price. Resist the temptation to bring the house back on at a higher price, than when you left the market. Just "don't do it"!

6. Your property won't sell because your house won't appraise. The house looks great... you've finally gotten someone to bring you a bid on your slightly over-priced, but beautiful pied-a-terre. But the bank appraiser says it's worth \$20,000 less than your buyer has agreed to pay. Heavy sigh... bite the bullet.... negotiates with them. If you have to drop the price \$20,000 to make it work.... "Make it work" chances are, anybody else trying to buy your house will run into the same problem. If you're not willing to negotiate the difference, you may find yourself with no buyer, and accepting a lower offer somewhere down the line.

7. Your property won't sell because it's unavailable to show. You have a baby, and a 1-year old. And they need their naps. So you've told your Realtor in no-uncertain-terms, that you'll only allow showings between 9:00a.m - Noon, and then again from 2:30-5:30 p.m. And no showings on Saturday or Sundays. "After all", you've told him "we still live here.. it's our home!". Well guess what? They can't buy it, if they can't see it. As good as your online photos are, they're no substitute for an in-person visit. "If they really want to see it, they'll reschedule", you're already answering as you read this. Nonsense! What they'll do, is they'll just move on to the next property in line (there are dozens like yours available) and maybe they'll buy that one instead. Once you put your property on the market it stops being your "home", and has become your "product". And you want your product to be seen by as large a buying audience as possible.



Alan May (Professional Realtor)

Pros and Cons: Asphalt Roofing vs. Metal



Asphalt shingles, such as these from CertainTeed, dominate new home construction and even the reroofing market because they are economical, easy to install, and last about 20 years. If you were to ask a sampling of production builders what is the best roofing material on the market, they're likely to tell you asphalt. The average residential architect, on the other hand, would probably say metal is the real deal. Heaven only knows what a home buyer or custom home client will choose—slate, clay, concrete—or if they'll

even care. The roof is arguably the most important surface in a home, perhaps even more essential than the exterior walls. As the most exposed plane, the roof has a mammoth task. It's under constant assault from the sun and rain, and, if leaky, could result in thousands of dollars worth of direct repair as well as ancillary damage. Still, a roof is one of those things that many consumers don't think about until there is a blizzard, hail storm, or rainstorm.

So what accounts for the discrepancy in material tastes? That builders, architects, and home buyers have opposing views of roofing material is telling, but their preferences speak to individual agendas as much as it speaks to the materials. Most home buyers, for example, care mostly about price and don't care as much about material as long as the roof functions properly and for the foreseeable future. Production builders care about looks and function, too, but affordability is top of mind. And architects want a roof to function well, but they are concerned that it be aesthetically pleasing. Naturally, the asphalt industry says its product is the best roofing you can buy. "Asphalt roofing is easy to find, easy to install, and easy to maintain," the Washington, D.C.-based [Asphalt Roofing Manufacturers Association](#) says. "It's also incredibly easy on the eye. And let's not forget, it's easy on the wallet, too!" Indeed, asphalt is easy to install and produces a decent-looking roof, but most architects and builders say the product is popular mainly because it's economical. Depending on the product line, shingles come with warranties lasting anywhere from 20 to 30 years, though builders in the field say the numbers are often shorter depending on the location of the country and maintenance.

The asphalt roofing industry makes a good case for its product being No. 1 because its product *is* No. 1. Industry estimates claim four out of five roofs are covered with asphalt, though if you drive around most subdivisions—new or established—that number seems woefully low. Asphalt's market share notwithstanding, the metal people say their product is much better. According to the Metal Roofing Alliance in Belfair, Wash., "Longevity is one of the top reasons

consumers report choosing metal roofing for their homes.” The group says “metal roofing can last as long as 50 years or more, requiring very little maintenance and looking beautiful all the while.”



So where does that leave you? The tradeoffs are not so simple. Both materials are versatile, offering a variety of looks. But is it enough to specify an asphalt roof that should last 20 years or more? Or is it worth it to pay three times as much for metal that could outlive the homeowner and the house? Considering how long the average home buyer stays in a house, the answer may be simple.

Here's a handy guide that outlines the pros and cons of asphalt versus metal roofing. Use it to evaluate your options.

Asphalt Roofing

Asphalt comes in basic three-tab products, but higher-end, laminate shingles are also available.

Pros for Asphalt Shingles:

1. An accepted and proven material that builders know and trust. There's a reason so many builders use the product, and it comes down to 100 years of service in the home building industry. Plus, home buyers are comfortable with it, which is extremely important.
2. Economical: The low cost of asphalt is probably its biggest selling point. A basic three-tab shingle roof might set you back about \$100 to \$200 per square (or a 10-foot-by-10-foot area), making it ideally suited to production housing or to entry-level housing.
3. Easy to Work with and Handle: Perhaps no other roofing product is as easy to install. In some cases, a house can be done in one day by professional contractors. Even serious DIYers have been known to tackle roofing projects, though it's highly recommended that they don't because of warranty issues.
4. Easy to Repair: As easy as asphalt is to install, it's equally easy to repair if it gets damaged.
5. Style Options: Asphalt comes in basic offerings for the cost-conscious, but it can be ordered in fancy styles that mimic wood shakes or slate. Basic

three-tab shingles dominate the category, but thicker, high-end laminates are available in many colors and with deep shadow lines.

6. Good Performance Record. Depending on the product line, asphalt shingles come with a 20- to 30-year warranty. Many are fire-rated (as high as Class A), and require minimal maintenance.

Cons for Asphalt Shingles:

1. Can be Boring: Though snappy colors and styles are available, builders tend to select basic single-color products that have a tendency to look dull.
2. Susceptible to Severe Weather: In general, asphalt provides good uplift protection, but the product does not hold up well to severe weather such as hail. The NAHB Research Center says wind- and impact-resistant shingles are available, but they cost about 50 percent more than conventional products. Moreover, asphalt roofs that do not get adequate sunlight can be vulnerable to moss, mildew, and algae, which can shorten lifespan. Longevity questions. Warranties on asphalt roofs are relatively high, but performance is closely tied to a well-ventilated roof deck and homeowner maintenance. Can be heavy. While basic shingles weigh about 200 pounds per square, some laminated, textured, and higher-end architectural shingles can clock in at close to 500 pounds per square. Nascent recycling. According to the Northeast Recycling Council, the U.S. manufactures and disposes of about 11 million tons of asphalt shingles per year. Most—about 10 million tons—is from installation scraps and tear-offs from re-roofing. Moreover, the group cites EPA studies that shingle waste makes up 8% of the total building-related waste stream. The asphalt recycling industry is still young, however, though manufacturers are developing ways to find uses for the material including pavement, new roofing, and road and ground cover, says the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery

Buying or Selling?

An Inspector protects your investment. A certified inspector will provide expert advice about any substantial deficiency in the property based on a visual inspection which is of a magnitude that reasonably can be expected to have some bearing upon the decision regarding whether to purchase the property or whether there is some basis upon which they should negotiate a variation in price.

The British Columbia Institute Of Property Inspectors (BCIPI) is an institute established under the provisions of the Applied Science Technologists and Technicians (ASTT) Act, to represent the professionally certified house and property inspectors in British Columbia. BCIPI assists and supports consumers

by providing ready access to the most highly qualified house and property inspectors in BC. The Institute assumes the role of advocate for consumer in managing issues, providing continuing education ensuring professional development, combined with networking and social programs for BCIPi members.

BCIPi members are registered under provincial statute with the Applied Science Technologists & Technicians of BC (ASTTBC), a self-governing professional association of 9,500+ technology professionals. Formed in 1958, ASTTBC's primary mandate is the certification of technology professionals in a manner that serves and protects the public interest.

Professional credentials you can rely on when choosing a BCIPi member for your inspection, you access a qualified professional who is bound by the ASTTBC Code of Ethics, must follow high standards of practice and will be held professionally accountable for their inspection services.

Why an Inspection?

Real Estate – whether a house, condo, mobile home, or commercial building represents a significant investment. Whether you are buying or selling real estate, an inspection by a professionally certified inspector will provide you with a comprehensive report on the condition of the building.

Media coverage of 'leaky condos' has created uncertainty in the minds of homebuyers and investors. A common concern is... "Is the property I want to buy going to surprise me with unexpected repairs?" A house and property inspection addresses this concern.

Identify potentially costly repairs in advance.

A professional inspector can give you an expert opinion on the soundness of a building and the systems in it ... before you commit to the final purchase. An inspection is an investment that pays huge dividends in peace of mind.

Truth About BC Harmonized Sales Tax

The BC Harmonized Sales Tax in a Nutshell – A Quick Overview of the B.C. HST 12% Tax and How It Influences New Home Buyers of Real Estate.

The Harmonized Sales Tax (also known as the new BC HST) is 12% tax applicable to most goods and services, including new homes, real estate, and property. The new B.C. HST 12% Tax is the combination of the Federal Goods and Services Tax (5% GST) and the Provincial Sales Tax (7% PST). Implementation of the BC Harmonized Sales Tax has taken place since July 1, 2010.

The BC HST is NOT a 12% real estate tax, but a provincial harmonized tax on most goods, services and consumer products including new homes. Currently, new BC and Vancouver homes are subject to 5% GST (federal tax) in which first time homebuyers or investors can receive GST rebates. This 5% GST will be replaced with the higher 12% B.C. Harmonized Sales Tax (HST), a 7% difference in taxes on the total purchase price of a new British Columbia home or property.

The B.C. HST program will give partial rebates for new BC homes priced up to \$400,000. The government will give these homebuyers a partial five per cent BC HST rebate on the provincial tax side which makes any new B.C. home or Vancouver property \$400,000 or less no more expensive than it is today.

Homebuyers looking to buy new Vancouver property over \$400,000 will receive a maximum BC HST rebate of \$20,000, but will see the purchase price above that level subject to the extra five per cent tax rate system.

The British Columbia Harmonized Sales Tax of 12% HST is also applicable to any costs and fees associated with your property/home purchase including legal/notary fees, commissions and other closing costs.

The BC HST transition rules are unclear at this time. It is unknown whether new Vancouver home sales contracts written before July 1, 2010 but completed after the harmonized sales tax HST launch date will be subject to the current 5% GST only or the entire 12% HST new tax.

The cost of new home ownership will increase significantly in British Columbia due to the new BC HST tax of 12%. Not only will your new home or real estate cost more up front, but the 12% HST harmonized sales tax is also applicable to such things like strata fees, residential heating fuel, commercial rents, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, repairs, cable TV, internet, electricity, gas, renovations, painting and other professional services.

Here is a great video of Phil Soper addressing the issue with the slow down of the Real Estate Market and the effect of HST on the market.

<http://watch.bnn.ca/trading-day/august-2010/trading-day-august-16-2010/#clip337097>

Industry News

RBC Report

A report by Royal Bank of Canada suggests that BC's economy will experience significant growth over the decline of 2.4% experienced in 2009. A predicted 3.3% in 2010 and 3.1% in 2011 is due largely to public infrastructure spending and a growing Asian demand for BC's commodities (click onto "RBC report" for full report).

BC Housing Forecast

BC Real Estate Association BC Housing Forecast includes information on MLS residential sales, housing starts, mortgage rates, and regional real estate board statistics and forecasts. (PDF)

Fourth Quarter 2010 Housing Market Statistics For BC

CMHC Housing Now publication summarizes housing market statistics for the province of British Columbia, shedding light on housing starts, completions, dwellings under construction, mortgage rates, home prices, absorption rates and economic factors for the province as a whole and for Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations. (PDF)

Canadian Housing Industry Performance & Trends 2010

Canadian Home Builders Association November 2010 report Canadian Housing Industry Performance and Trends covers New Housing Activity, Residential Construction and the Economy, Drivers of Housing Activity, Projections of Housing Demand, Housing Prices, State of Homeownership Affordability, Challenges Facing Homeownership Affordability, Challenges Facing the Renovation Sector, and Challenges Facing the Rental Sector. (PDF)

Canadian Housing Activity To Moderate in 2011

CMHC fourth quarter Housing Market Outlook, Canada Edition says housing starts are expected to continue to moderate in the last quarter of 2010. Overall, starts are forecast to stabilize at levels consistent with demographic fundamentals in 2011.

Presentations From BC Housing Affordability Symposium

Canadian Home Builders Association of BC offers online access to presentations made at their recent Housing Affordability Symposium.

Causes & Prevention Of Mold In Homes

Consortium for Advanced Residential Building describes how mold can grow, and methods to prevent moisture related mold problems in homes. (PDF)

Lead In Your Home

CMHC and Health Canada online document informs homeowners about lead in

the home, including the most common sources of household lead, lead testing, lead removal and minimizing your exposure to lead. (PDF)

Overview Of Lifts & Residential Elevators

CMHC describes types of residential lifts and elevators that are commonly available in Canada, and some of the things you should consider when you choose and install an elevator or lift in a home.

BC Spring Home Shows

Its that time of year to start organizing once again where your going to place your businesses marking and advertising dollars for the year. One of the best places to pump some of that hard earned money into your business marketing is home shows where the potential customer and client comes to you. Can't afford it you say? What one should be saying to oneself is "can't afford not to".

One of the best Home Shows I participate yearly and have been for the past 12 years is the BC Home Shows Ltd. Started by Mr Jim Rice in 1998, it has grown to 13 shows annually. They are the second largest independent home show producer in British Columbia having now produced over 100 successful events. Today, business's demand continues for home shows that are affordable for local business to participate and BC Home Shows Ltd delivers that standard of quality, service and affordable show pricing.

Attendance at the home shows are very high and the reason for such is their continued policy since the day their show doors opened of "FREE ADMISSION" for the public, which is your customer/client. Plainly, they do not pay an entry fee to gain access to the show like others. Over the years, the feedback is overwhelming positive and the shows attendance is very strong.

The Spring Home Shows this year are located at the following Cities and Towns.

Salmon Arm Home & Leisure Show: February 18 to 20.

Merritt Home & Leisure Show: March 4 to 5.

Penticton Home & Leisure Show: March 25 to 27.

West Kelowna Home & Leisure Show: April 1 to 3.

Vernon Home & Leisure Show: April 8 to 10.

Kamloops Home & Leisure Show: April 15 to 17.

For more information as to event schedules and additional services, visit their website at www.bchomeshows.com or email them at info@bchomeshows.com or just use the old fashion way by phoning at 250 377-8380.

Services Provided By Pacific West Home Inspections

- Pre-Purchase & Pre-Selling Residential & Commercial Inspections
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- Wood Burning Appliance Inspections
- Chimney Inspections
- Grow-Op Inspections
- Mould Inspections
- Indoor Air Quality Investigations
- Home Renovation Consultant
- Seasonal Home Check & Maintenance
- Water Quality Testing
- Radon Testing



Serving Clients For Over 12 Years

About Us

At Pacific West Home Inspections, you will find the home and property information, educational and industry news that will help raise your professionalism and that of the house and property inspection industry as a whole. Dave Brice of Pacific West Home Inspections is the editor and publisher and has been involved in the home and property inspection field since 1998.

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