



Inspection Number:

Inspection Address:

Attached is the inspection report for your new home. Your report will be helpful to you in understanding the overall condition of your home. It documents current conditions of its systems and components and has recommendations for repairs, improvements, and maintenance.

We recommend you take the following steps to ensure a smooth home purchase:

- **Report:** Please be sure to read the entire report carefully. If you have questions about this report or the on-site inspection, please call our office and leave a message for your inspector. He will call back at his first opportunity.
- **Follow-Up Repair Request:** Consult your real estate professional and/or attorney to decide if you wish to request credits from the seller or have the seller repair/replace any issues identified in your inspection report. Be sure this is done promptly. Your Agreement of Sale stipulates the time period within which requests must be made. If repairs are provided by the seller, be sure to obtain documentation for the repairs made from the respective professionals hired to perform the work. Review them carefully and verify the condition of the repairs and their function as applicable prior to closing.
- **Pre-Settlement Walk-Through Inspection:** Just prior to settlement you will have an opportunity to conduct a “walkthrough” inspection of the house. During this time, be sure to examine the house carefully. There may be defects that your inspector could not observe due to personal goods storage, carpeting, wall hangings, etc. Also conduct a check of all plumbing fixtures and appliances...except the air conditioning system unless weather conditions permit.

Thank you for allowing Tri-County Inspections to have been of service...and best wishes to you and your family in your new home.

*Bucks/Mont Area*  
215-295-2030  
215-752-3700

*Lehigh Valley*  
610-346-7880

*Chester County*  
610-296-2004

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**TYPE OF HOUSE:** Cape Cod

**APPROXIMATE AGE:** 57 years

**WEATHER CONDITIONS:** Clear, Upper 30's

**ATTENDED:** Buyer with Family

**STATUS:** Unoccupied for an undetermined period of time

**PROPERTY DISCLOSURE STATEMENT:** Not Received nor Reviewed

**INSPECTION DATE:** February 18, 2012

**INSPECTOR:** Jack H. Milne, Jr., ASHI® #4138

**NOTE:**

- This Report summarizes our findings for subject property on the day of the inspection and is based on our visual observations of the structure only.
- If the seller's Property Disclosure Statement is not provided, Tri-County shall not be liable for any damages or claims for the discovery and/or assessment of any condition identified or disclosed on the Property Disclosure Statement.
- This report does not represent an opinion on the value of the home nor do we advise whether or not you should purchase the property.
- Because settlement typically occurs well after the inspection and conditions may change, Tri-County strongly urges that you check all major systems, appliances, and bathroom fixtures during your presettlement walkthrough. Furnishings and personal possessions may have limited our access and visibility.
- Tri-County Inspection Co., Inc. does not offer a guarantee or warranty.
- Be sure to obtain a wood destroying insect certification from an exterminator since this is not part of our inspection.



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## **EXTERIOR**

### **ROOF:**

Due to the Cape Cod style of construction, I was limited to walking the breezeway roof and doing a visual inspection of the shingles. Currently the one layer of fiberglass shingles was found to be in satisfactory condition. No missing or cracked shingles were noted. Staining was noted on the roof surface due to local plant growth. 1x6 tongue and groove roof decking was evident from the attic but visibility was limited as the rafter bays were insulated.

### **FLASHINGS:**

A small cover was installed on the rear vent stack that can be removed. Current staining was noted in the ceiling of the lower rear bathroom, which may be caused by the stack. This should be verified and the appropriate repairs made. Where visible, aluminum flashings were present where roofs meet walls. Closed valleys were noted. It is not possible to determine the condition of the flashings since they are mostly concealed nor is it possible to confirm their weathertight integrity during a typical visual home inspection. Flashings are installed to divert water but under unusual weather conditions, they may allow water penetration. As the roof system ages resealing of the flashings may be needed.

### **CHIMNEY:**

The chimney consisted of block with a mortar coat. The step and counter flashings were in satisfactory condition. I could not determine the condition of the crown as I could not walk the roof. This also goes for the flue liner. The cleanout cap at the base of the chimney was removed and the area was found to be clear.

### **GUTTERS and DOWNSPOUTS:**

Aluminum K type gutters were installed. It was found to be sagging along the rear fascia board and should be reset and pitched properly. Various downspouts lead into underground drains, however I am not able to verify where they empty. This should be verified. If the drains do not perform, then I would suggest extending the downspouts to drain at least 3 to 5 feet away from the foundation wall.



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### **SIDING:**

The house was primarily of frame construction. Block with a mortar coat was applied. Some surface cracking was noted but typical. The rear dormer had aluminum siding while the front cross gable and porch had vinyl siding. A loose panel was noted on the rear side. Keep vegetation a minimum of 1-2 feet away from the house walls.

Wall openings, connection points and utility penetrations should be caulked as necessary to maintain a weathertight exterior house "envelope".

### **FOUNDATION:**

The foundation consisted of cinder block. Heavy efflorescence and parging of the walls was evident due to water penetration. Drill holes were installed along the base of the walls to allow for the release of hydrostatic pressure. The property also did show evidence of termite damage to the stair horse in the basement as well as to one of the door jams. The property should be treated at this time for the presence of wood destroying insects. Wood destroying insects, their cause and effects, are not part of our service.

### **FASCIA, SOFFITS, EAVES:**

These were capped in aluminum and/or vinyl and appear to be in satisfactory condition. I could not assess the present condition of the material beneath the caps.

### **EXTERIOR TRIM, DOORS, WINDOWS:**

Because aluminum windows are installed, the framework was kept to a minimum. Where visible, however, no signs of deterioration were noted. I would recommend eventually updating the windows to vinyl products.

### **SCREENS and STORMS:**

At the time of the inspection, no screen panels were in place. Verify their presence as part of your presettlement walkthrough.

### **PORCHES, DECKS, PATIO:**

The front concrete patio pitches back towards the dwelling allowing for the heavier efflorescence found. It should be removed. The small concrete pad found at the front left corner should also be removed. Portions of the walkway on the rear were pitched back. Evidence of settlement was noted to the patio at the breezeway. This area should be



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resealed. The two 2x4's that support the right cheek were not in contact with the slab. They should be replaced. The porch roof consisted of 4x4 posts, 2x4 headers, 2x8 roof rafters, and plywood sheathing.

The front porch did show signs of settlement. The metal roof and fiberglass roof line were adequately secured.

### **WALKS and DRIVEWAY:**

As mentioned, any of the concrete walks that pitch back towards the structure should be removed. The rear stairway to the basement entry does contain a drain with some screening over it. Keep this area clear of debris at all times.

The asphalt driveway is shared by the various homeowners.

### **GARAGE:**

A semi-detached 2-car garage was provided. It consisted of block construction with 2x6 roof rafters and 1x6 tongue and groove roof decking. Older stains were noted throughout the roof surface. The roof itself is consistent with the main structure. The left garage door was completely disconnected at the springs and it should be restored to working order. The right garage door worked satisfactorily. The receptacles that were found along the outside wall should be properly mounted. This task can be completed while the electrician is onsite. For the 60 amp fuse box located within the garage, all fuses were found to be oversized. I would recommend eventual replacement of the Federal Pacific fuse box with circuit breakers.

### **DRAINAGE and GRADING:**

Additional topsoil should be installed along the right and rear of the home. Because this basement does take on a significant amount of water, I would suggest following the guidelines as found under the patio paragraph and gutters and downspouts.

### **INTERIOR**



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### **ATTIC, VENTILATION, INSULATION:**

Access into the attic is by way of various kneewalls found on the front and rear of the home. At the time of the inspection, the rafters were found to be insulated and as we discussed, I would recommend that the insulation be removed. In order to reinsulate the house properly, 3 ½ inches of batt insulation should be installed in the kneewall cavities. Access should be made to the top of the ceiling and reinsulate this area with a cumulative total of 9 inches of insulation. Air baffles should be installed in the slants to provide appropriate airflow. In the future, the soffits should be opened. This will work in conjunction with the various gable end vents that were currently in place. A centrally mounted 1200 CFM attic fan should also be installed, setting the thermostat for 90 degrees. Bath fans should be installed in any bathroom containing a shower and allowed to vent to the exterior, preferably the soffit. No fan was available in the basement bathroom. I was unable to determine the type and amount of insulation in the exterior walls; however, vermiculite was commonly installed in the pours of the block.

### **BATHROOMS:**

Two powder rooms and two full bathrooms are provided. The powder room in the basement had a toilet with a slower drain, but this is considered typical as it sits directly on the waste line. A small crack was noted in the sink fixture. I would recommend that the toilet be updated with an air assist system. In the first floor powder room, drainage was found to be slow to the sink. A registered plumber should be contacted at this point to make the appropriate repairs. In the hall bathroom, the toilet was found to be actively running, the sink fixtures leak, and stains were found in the ceiling. Again, this may be from the vent stack but while the plumber is on site, it should be verified. The tub fixture is also leaking and the shower head sticks. In the second floor bathroom, drainage was slow as well as refill to the toilet. The sink and tub fixtures were difficult to operate, most likely due to lack of use and drainage was found to be slow to the tub. As we discussed, when a house sits longer than 6 months, anticipate some repairs to the fixtures and drains. Regrouting and caulking around the tub, shower, and fixtures should be considered routine maintenance.

### **KITCHEN/KITCHEN APPLIANCES:**

When first entering the kitchen, power was available to the receptacles. The microwave was installed on an extension cord and once I plugged it in, the circuit blew. None of the appliances, including the garbage disposal, dishwasher, or microwave were functioning. The oven did have power but the burners nor oven cavity functioned. This is mostly due to the electrical work conducted within the home, which will be discussed later under the



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electrical paragraph. All kitchen devices should be restored to working order prior to settlement.

### **LAUNDRY UTILITIES**

Recommend the use of stainless steel hoses for the clothes washer. The discharge is designed to go into the laundry sink. The hot and cold fixtures were backwards to the sink and should be corrected while the plumber is on site. Currently the dryer vents to the exterior, but if you switch to gas, which is recommended, metal tubing must be utilized. As washers and dryers are not fixed appliances, their operation is not part of our inspection.

### **WALLS and CEILINGS:**

Plasterboard, paneling, and/or wallpaper were used throughout the majority of the home. The first floor had been repainted but active stains were found in the ceiling of the hall bathroom. Paint in houses of this age may contain lead. Some minor drooping was noted to the ceiling tiles, but typical.

### **FLOORS:**

1x6 tongue and groove flooring was evident from the basement. Newer carpeting was installed throughout the first floor. Pine flooring was found on the second level.

### **WINDOWS and DOORS:**

Double-hung and sliding style windows were noted. Again, they should be updated for energy savings. In the front right second floor bedroom, the window frames are loose and care should be taken when used. The interior doors and closet doors were found to be functional.

### **STAIRS and RAILINGS:**

The stairs as well as the railings were found to be well secured to the walls.

### **FIREPLACE:**

None provided



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### **BASEMENT/CRAWL SPACE:**

Structurally the basement consisted of 2x10 and 3x10 floor joists with 1x6 tongue and groove flooring set diagonally. The main beam consisted of steel and was supported by 4-inch columns. As mentioned earlier, wood destroying insect damage was noted to the bottom of the stair horse as well as to one of the door jambs. A large sump pit was found in the rear right corner of the basement. The pump was functional but no check valve was installed. As mentioned earlier, this basement has a history of taking on water. Through our discussions it is my understanding that a professional waterproofing system is to be installed. I would recommend that a water actuated sump pump be considered in lieu of a battery backup sump pump in case of power loss. Although the sump pump was taking on water, it has not rained in the area for the last several days. Again, a high water table may be present in this area. We cannot predict the frequency or amount of future water penetration.

### **AIR QUALITY/MOLD/MILDEW:**

Mold and/or mildew can be found in any environment. Mold spores can enter buildings through the air and be transported by people and animals. Presence of mold does not always present a health problem. There are very few case reports that molds inside buildings can cause unique or rare health conditions. Some people, however, are sensitive to certain molds. **It is beyond the scope of this inspection to detect or test for mold, mildew, or other air quality concerns.** No fee is being charged for such testing and Tri-County's insurance coverage expressly excludes coverage for inspection, detection, or testing for mold, mildew, or any other air quality concerns. Inspection for mold, mildew, and indoor or outdoor air quality should be performed, detected, and evaluated by other qualified and insured specialists of the customer's choice and hire. To our knowledge, only an industrial hygienist is qualified to perform tests to determine the presence of molds or other air quality issues that may be considered a health concern and no maximum contaminant levels have been established to determine remedial action. We do offer the following advice to limit mold growth and exposure: 1. Keep the humidity level of the building below 40 percent. 2. Use an air conditioner or a dehumidifier during humid months. 3. Be sure the building has adequate ventilation, including the kitchen, bathrooms, crawl space, or any other enclosed spaces. 4. Add mold inhibitors to paints before application. 5. Clean bathrooms or any damp areas with mold killing products. 6. Use a bleach solution to clean any impervious surfaces where molds may have formed. 7. Remove or replace previously wet carpets, upholstery, or other absorbent surfaces as needed. *Much of the information stated above is from the National Center for Environmental Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Environmental Protection Agency. You can contact the above agencies for more information about mold and other indoor air quality issues, or visit the EPA website at [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov).*





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## **SYSTEMS**

### **ELECTRICAL:**

Two overhead services were installed; one for the garage and one for the main structure. As mentioned earlier, all of the fuses in the garage panel were oversized and should be corrected. I would recommend that the box be mounted on a wood backing and updated to circuit breakers. The loose receptacles found within the garage should be properly anchored to the wall. For the home, the 60 amp service entered a raceway or trough that fed a large disconnect for 35 amps. This may serve the oven. Typically a self-cleaning oven would require the minimum of 50 amps. A double-tap was noted on the main lugs of this disconnect that services the dryer. Although a breaker was available, this is still an improper electrical connection. For the primary panel, as you are only allowed 6 main disconnects, this house has 9. FHA may not approve a 60 amp service to the home and typically we would recommend a 100 amp upgrade. I would suggest allowing for additional funds for a 200 amp service. Be willing to contribute to this cause. Dangling wires were found in the rear kneewall of the attic and by the boiler. Both should be encapsulated. Two prong receptacles were found throughout the majority of the home. No ground fault protection was offered, but should be considered especially when updating appliances or fixtures. Upon possession, when all work is completed, the circuits should be relabeled. The service was grounded.

### **HEATING:**

A gas hot water boiler was installed. Excessive charring and rusting of the metal was evident on all three sides of the boiler. The burner tubes at the base of the boiler had fallen away. Because this is an extreme safety hazard, I found it best to shut the gas valve off until a registered plumber or qualified heating/cooling contractor can replace the boiler. Pressure for the boiler should be 12 to 15 pounds. You should verify the operation of the safety switch. The heat distribution medium consisted of either cast iron radiators or baseboards. Once the boiler is replaced, then a heating certification should be made available by the contractor to verify the presence of heat throughout the building. I would recommend a second zone for the second floor. As water is currently found within the building, the boiler issue should be addressed **immediately.**

### **COOLING:**

A central air conditioning system was not installed at this property.



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### **WATER HEATER:**

A gas-fired 40 gallon water heater was provided. It was found to be in satisfactory condition, and hot water was available at all faucets. The water heater thermostat should be adjusted to maintain a water temperature of between 120 and 125 degrees at the faucets. Anti-scalding devices are recommended on all hot water fixtures when water temperatures exceed 125 degrees. Do not insulate this type hot water heater. The pressure relief valve was extended to within 6 inches of the floor. After ignition, I restored the thermostat to its original position.

### **PLUMBING:**

Deterioration was noted to the cast iron waste line below the first floor bathroom. While the plumber is onsite, these areas should be properly addressed. Excessive corrosion was noted to the other cast iron components. The line had been opened at one point at the sump pit. Water pressure was adequate, but drainage was slow to various fixtures as mentioned in the report. The water main shut-off is located at the front left corner of the basement. The gas main shut-off is located at the gas meter. Exterior plumbing systems, excluding hose bibs, are not included in our inspection. The various hose bibs were tested and functional.

### **HOME SAFETY SYSTEMS**

Inspections of certain recommended property and life safety systems are outside the scope of a home inspection including, but not limited to:

1. Smoke Detectors: Be sure there are functioning smoke detectors on each level of the house. Change the batteries at least annually. Detectors should be replaced at least every five (5) years.
2. Carbon Monoxide Detectors: All homes with oil and/or gas-fired appliances and/or with fireplaces should also be protected with carbon monoxide detector(s). Check with your local utility for recommendations.
3. Fire Extinguishers: A readily accessible and correct type of fire extinguisher should be located in or near the kitchen.
4. Door Locks: Door locks, keys and deadbolts should be changed and updated as needed for safety.



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5. Security System: If the house has an existing home security system check with the seller and/or a security service contractor to be sure it is functioning normally. Secure the operating instructions. The access codes should be changed. If no security system is in place consider having one installed.

For maximum safety these systems should be in place and functional at all times. Have the appropriate professionals check and service the systems as needed.



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### **MATERIAL DEFECTS:**

Definition: "A problem with a residential real property or any portion of it that would have a significant adverse impact on the value of the property or that involved in unreasonable risk to people on the property. The fact that a structural element, system, or subsystem, is near, at or beyond the end of a normal useful life of such a structural element, system or subsystem is not by itself a material defect." In our opinion, these are conditions that constitute serious defects or deficiencies in the item, component, or system inspected. These conditions should be immediately addressed, repaired, or remedied. If not addressed, substantial damage or impairment may result to that item, component or system, and potentially, other items or systems. It is recommended that any deficiencies and the components/systems related to these deficiencies noted in the report be evaluated/inspected and repaired as needed by licensed contractors/professionals **PRIOR TO THE CLOSE OF ESCROW**. Further evaluation **PRIOR** to the close of escrow is recommended so a properly licensed professional can evaluate our concerns further and inspect the remainder of the system or component for additional concerns that may be outside our area of expertise or the scope of our inspection. Please call our office for any clarifications or further questions. Refer to the report for additional conditions or comments.

1. Have a registered plumber make the repairs as found in the bathrooms, laundry, and heating paragraphs. He should also determine the source of the water staining found in the hall bathroom.
2. Have the property treated for the presence of wood destroying insects as damage was noted to the bottom of the basement stair horse and door jamb.
3. The concrete patio on the front should be removed as well as any sidewalks replaced where pitched towards the home.
4. When the professional waterproofing system is installed, I would recommend the use of a water actuated sump pump backup system.
5. Replace the post that is no longer in contact with the patio and caulk between the patio and the building.
6. Repair the left garage door and restore it to working order.
7. Have a licensed electrician make the repairs as found in the electrical paragraph.
8. Restore all kitchen appliances to working order.
9. While the plumber is on site, have him review the leaching of the cast iron waste lines and make the appropriate replacement as necessary.



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### **INSPECTOR'S TIPS:**

These represent practical suggestions for maintenance and care of an item, component or system to achieve intended function, performance, or useful life.

1. Resupport the rear gutter and make sure it is appropriately pitched to the corners. Verify the operation of the underground drains and if they have failed, extend the downspouts at least 3 to 5 feet away from the foundation wall.
2. Secure the loose siding to the cheek of the rear porch.
3. Keep the drain clear at the bottom of the basement entryway.
4. Maintain a service contract with the wood destroying insect company that treats the property.
5. Update the aluminum windows to vinyl products.
6. Regrade along the front, right, and rear sides of the home.
7. Reinsulate and ventilate the home as found in the report.
8. Do a preclosing check of all plumbing fixtures and appliances.
9. Follow the guidelines provided in the laundry paragraph.
10. Install a check valve on the sump pump discharge line.
11. Consider updating the service from a minimum of 100 amps to 200 amps.
12. Obtain any warranties and guarantees for the boiler installation. Consider a second zone for the second floor.
13. Adjust the temperatures of the water heater to suit personal needs.