



FOR SELLERS

SELLER'S PRE-LISTING CHECKLIST

Most deals that fall apart after inspection do so over things the seller could have handled for a few hundred dollars — or simply disclosed up front. **The goal isn't a perfect house.** It's no surprises: fix the cheap stuff, document the expensive stuff, and make everything easy to reach.

01 THIRTY DAYS OUT — GATHER THE PAPERWORK

- ☐ **Septic pumping receipts and any inspection reports.** Buyers up here will ask, and “a few years ago” is not an answer.
- ☐ **Well log, water test results, and pump or tank service records.**
- ☐ **Permits for additions, decks, docks, seawalls, and finished basements.** Unpermitted work surfaces late and stalls closings.
- ☐ **Roof, furnace, and water heater invoices** with install dates.
- ☐ **Any radon test or mitigation documentation.**
- ☐ **Appliance and system warranties** still in effect.
- ☐ **Survey, easements, and any road maintenance agreement.**
- ☐ **Propane tank details** — owned or leased, and which supplier.

02 THE CHEAP FIXES THAT PREVENT REPAIR REQUESTS

- ☐ **Replace every dead bulb.** An inspector must report a fixture that doesn't work, and the buyer reads “electrical issue.”
- ☐ **Install working smoke and CO alarms** on every level and in each sleeping area.
- ☐ **Fix dripping faucets and running toilets.**
- ☐ **Re-caulk tubs, showers, and exterior penetrations.**
- ☐ **Replace the furnace filter** and have the system serviced.
- ☐ **Fix loose railings, handrails, and deck boards.**
- ☐ **Correct grade and extend downspouts** away from the foundation — the most common finding we write.
- ☐ **Clean the gutters.**
- ☐ **Repair damaged window and door screens** and free up windows painted shut.
- ☐ **Add GFCI protection** at kitchen, bath, garage, and exterior outlets.
- ☐ **Clear the dryer vent** and confirm it discharges outdoors.
- ☐ **Address any musty smell** before showings — buyers read odor as mold.

NORTHERN MICHIGAN SELLERS: THREE THINGS BUYERS WILL ASK ABOUT

Septic: have it pumped and inspected before listing, and keep the paperwork. **Well:** run a current bacteria and nitrate test so the result is yours, not a surprise. **Ice dams:** if there is staining at the eaves or upstairs ceilings, address the attic cause and document the repair. Unexplained water stains cost far more in negotiation than the fix would have.

03 ACCESS — WHERE INSPECTIONS ACTUALLY GET DELAYED

Anything the inspector can't reach is reported as "not inspected" — a phrase that invites a second visit or a worst-case assumption.

- ☐ **Attic hatch** — clear the closet floor and shelf beneath it.
- ☐ **Crawl space entry** — unlocked and free of stored items.
- ☐ **Electrical panel** — three feet of clear space in front.
- ☐ **Furnace, boiler, water heater** — nothing stacked against them.
- ☐ **Well head and pressure tank.**
- ☐ **Septic tank lids and risers** — locatable; mark if buried.
- ☐ **Garage, sheds, outbuildings** — unlocked or keys left out.
- ☐ **Under-sink cabinets** — emptied to show the plumbing.
- ☐ **Exterior perimeter** — move firewood and stored items off the walls.
- ☐ **Pilot lights on** for every gas or propane appliance.

04 INSPECTION DAY

- ☐ **Plan on three to four hours**, longer with added testing.
- ☐ **Leave the property**, and take pets with you or crate them securely.
- ☐ **Leave all utilities on**, including water, power, and fuel.
- ☐ **Leave keys for locked spaces** and a note on anything unusual.
- ☐ **Clear the driveway** — in winter, plow and salt it before the appointment.
- ☐ **Don't stage over problems.** Anything hidden gets found and costs trust.

SHOULD YOU GET A PRE-LISTING INSPECTION?

It buys the one thing sellers lack: time. You learn what a buyer's inspector will find while you can still get competitive quotes rather than negotiate under a deadline. Most worth it on older and rural properties.

05 SELLING A SEASONAL OR WINTERIZED PROPERTY

- ☐ **Know the tradeoff:** a winterized home can't have plumbing, fixtures, or often heat tested.
- ☐ **Offer to de-winterize for the inspection** — it usually pays for itself.
- ☐ **Document the winterization:** who did it, when, and what was drained.
- ☐ **Run a dehumidifier** if the home is closed up, and check it monthly.

DISCLOSE IT — THE REPAIRED PROBLEM IS NOT THE RISK

Michigan sellers complete a Seller's Disclosure Statement, and inspectors find evidence of past water, repairs, and pests. A disclosed, repaired issue with a receipt is a non-event; found after closing, it is a legal problem.

LISTING SOON? KNOW BEFORE THEY DO.

Pre-listing inspections, radon, mold, well water, septic, and sewer scope across Northern Michigan.

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