


ILLINOIS BUILDING INSPECTION, Inc.



1425 Blue Heron Drive Crystal Lake, IL 60014

 847 705-6800

Jerry Simon, president

BUILDING INSPECTION REPORT

CLIENTS: XXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXX

INSPECTION ADDRESS: XXXXX W. Taylor Chicago, Illinois

DATE OF INSPECTION: July 1st, 2008

TIME: 7:30 AM until 11:30 AM

REPORTED BUILDING AGE: Circa 1880

How to Read This Report

MAJOR REPAIR Problems that I think are likely to cost more than \$500.00 to remedy.
(Bear in mind that bids from contractors often vary widely.)

MINOR REPAIR Problems that I think are likely to cost less than \$500.00 to remedy, and regular maintenance items. These include conditions that you might ignore if you were already owned the building.

SAFETY CONCERN These are conditions that are a real threat to safety or health, regardless of costs to remedy.

INVESTIGATE FURTHER Conditions warranting further investigation by a specialist, including conditions that require destructive/invasive inspection, engineering, or analysis beyond the scope of this visual inspection.

FYI A general explanation of conditions. Things you may or may not want to act on immediately. Also, you can find some useful suggestions in these sections.

There is a Summary Section at the end of this report.

CONDITIONS DURING THE INSPECTION	3
ROOF	4
EXTERIOR WALLS	5
WINDOWS AND EXTERIOR DOORS	6
BASEMENT	7
ELECTRICAL SYSTEM	8
PLUMBING SYSTEM	10
HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS	12
INTERIOR	16
MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS	18
SUMMARY	19
END OF REPORT	24

Notes

This report is CONFIDENTIAL, and is for the use and benefit of the client only. It is not intended to be for the benefit of or to be relied upon by any other buyer, lender, title insurance company, or other third party. DO NOT DUPLICATE WITHOUT PERMISSION. Duplication without permission is a violation of federal copyright law.

Terms and conditions crucial to interpretation of the report are contained in a separate Pre-Inspection Agreement. Do not use this report without consulting the Pre-Inspection Agreement.

The report conforms to the standards of practice of both the State of Illinois and the American Society of Home Inspectors®. Components are identified and their apparent condition is reported. The client should consult the terms of the sales contract to determine whether any of the items contained within must be repaired by the seller prior to closing. Reporting on other issues such as cosmetic damage and suggestions for improvements is included for your information only, and should not be relied upon as items that may or may not be repaired under the terms of your Sales Contract. If in doubt, consult your Sales Contract and/or an attorney to explain your rights and obligations under your Sales Contract. The Inspector offers no warranties or representations as to your rights or obligations under any Sales Contract.

I do not operate systems or components that have been shut-down. Items are most often shut-down for very good reasons and/or for safety concerns. For instance, an electrical circuit breaker may be turned off because of an electrical problem. Turning on the breaker could pose a shock or a fire hazard. I'll identify any such items in the report and recommend they be inspected when they're up and running.

Conditions During the Inspection

The buyer (Tom) and a real estate agent were present during the inspection.

Four of the five apartments were furnished. One was vacant (rear lower), as was the commercial unit

The weather was warm and sunny. The outdoor temperature during the inspection was about 75 degrees.

The soil was wet. A moderate amount of rain fell the past couple of weeks.



ROOF¹

ROOF AREA: ENTIRE BUILDING

The roof type is low slope. The roof was examined by walking on it.

The roof covering is modified bitumen with a smooth surface. Based on visible wear, its age was estimated to be fourteen to fifteen years.

Observations and Recommendations

The roof decking felt solid under-foot.

The parapet walls are in adequate condition.

The roof membrane is intact where it meets the parapet walls (a common point of leakage).

I didn't find any blisters, bubbles, or ripples in the roof covering.

FYI There is a low spot in the roof where water has been ponding. Ponding water will magnify the sun's destructive ultra-violet rays, and such will cause this low area to suffer quicker-than-normal roof membrane deterioration. Have this spot checked yearly and patched as/if needed.

Here, in this area...



¹ This report is not intended to be conclusive regarding the lifespan of the roofing system or how long it will remain watertight in the future. The inspection and report are based on visible and apparent conditions at the time of the inspection. Nothing in the inspection of report constitutes a warranty, guarantee, or policy of insurance. I strongly advise you to ask the Seller, point blank: "Has the roof ever leaked?" If it has, you'll want to know when, where, and if repairs were done. If the roof needs repairs now, a qualified, licensed person who will offer some warranty should do the work. All roofs require periodic maintenance to achieve typical life-spans; and, all roofs should be inspected annually.

EXTERIOR WALLS

Description

The primary wall cladding on the building is brick.

Some areas are clad with a smooth, stucco-like material.

The eaves are metal.

Observations and Recommendations

The exterior surfaces were observed while walking around the exterior of the building. They were found to be in need of repairs; see notes below.

The eaves were found to be in need of repairs; see notes below.

Major Repair At the SE corner of the commercial unit, one of the steel beams/lintels is severely corroded, and the cracking in the wall above suggests the lintel/beam is failing. Have the beam/lintel replaced or bolstered as needed.

Up here...



FYI Aside from the cracking in the wall mentioned above, a few areas on the east side of the building have some minor masonry wall deterioration. The sooner this deterioration is patched, the better. Left unchecked, such deterioration tends to rapidly worsen. I don't know if this will be a Major Repair Item or a Minor Repair Item; it could go either way. Talk with a mason contractor about what it will take and cost to address this.

FYI A couple spots of the metal eaves are rusted-though. I don't know if this will be a Major Repair Item or a Minor Repair Item; it could go either way. Talk with a carpenter contractor about what it will take and cost to address this.

WINDOWS AND EXTERIOR DOORS

Description

The windows are hung style.

The windows for the most part have insulated glass. Some older ones do not have insulated glass.

The exterior doors are wood and metal.

Observations and Recommendations

The exterior doors are in adequate condition.

The windows were examined and found to be in poor condition. Extensive repairs are needed; see notes below.

Safety Concern Buildings of this era were usually painted with lead based paints. This cannot be confirmed visually. Lead is a severe health risk to infants and children particularly, with the potential to cause brain damage. Lead paint in good condition represents little risk. It is only when it is ingested or inhaled that it becomes a problem. This can occur when paint is flaking, when old wood windows (like the ones in the rear first floor apartment) are operated, grinding the paint, or during remodeling when paint is sanded or scraped. Federal regulations require that buyers be notified of the risks and be given time to test for the presence of lead paint. If this is a concern to you, contact an environmental testing firm to perform testing.

Major Repair A lot of the windows have fogged insulating glass/breached glass insulating seals. I also saw a cracked window pane in the front upper apartment. It will cost quite a bit of money to replace this defective glass.

BASEMENT²

Description

The walls are not covered. They are readily visible.

The basement floor is concrete.

The basement columns are wood posts.

The floor structure of the building is conventional wood framing with wood beams.

The basement does not have a drain tile/sump pump system installed; such a basement is more susceptible to having seepage versus a basement with such a system.

Observations and Recommendations

Signs of past water entry were observed in the basement; see notes below.

The basement floor is in adequate condition; typical cracks are present.

The basement foundation walls are in adequate condition; typical, normal cracks were observed.

I saw some minor problems with the basement ceiling framing; see notes below.

Safety Concern The low headroom all about the front basement area poses a head-collision hazard.

FYI The ends of the floor joists along the west side of the front basement area are severely rotted. The added support below appears to be compensating for the rot, but installing a new support beam under the rotted joists would be better than individual columns under each joist.

FYI In the rear basement section, the foundation is allowing seepage along the east wall. If you want a dry basement, talk with a basement waterproofing company about what it will take and cost to stop the seepage.

FYI In the rear basement section, I have no idea where the puddle of water in the middle of the basement floor came from. It might be from the above-mentioned seepage.

² This report reflects conditions that were apparent at the time of the inspection, and includes no predictions on whether or not the basement (or the crawl space if present) will eventually get wet. It's impossible for me – or anyone else – to make an accurate long-term prediction. I strongly advise you to ask the Seller, point blank: “Have you ever seen water in the basement (or crawl space)? If so, when and how much?”

ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

Description

The 120/240 volt, 200 amp service enters the building from overhead.

The main disconnect is a 200 amp cartridge fuse block located in a box on the interior wall behind the area where the exterior service entrance cables are located.

Sub-panels are located to the side of the main disconnect box. A sub-panel is also located in the commercial unit.

Service grounding connections were observed at a metal water pipe.

The readily visible wiring is copper in rigid and flexible metal pipe.

Receptacles are primarily the three-slot grounded type. Some are the older two-slot ungrounded type.

Observations and Recommendations

Electrical systems require regular maintenance for safety reasons. I recommend that you have a licensed electrician perform annual inspection and maintenance.

I inspected the interiors of the electrical panels. Problems were observed; see notes below.

I tested a random number of receptacles using a testing device. Accessible receptacles tested as being properly wired and grounded.

Light switches and permanently installed light fixtures were tested. I found minor deficiencies; see notes below.

Electrical ground-fault devices were not found. This is typical for the age of the building. Installation is recommended; see notes below.

Safety Concern Some of the lower branch circuit wiring is older “rag” wire. This type of wiring is obsolete. (All wiring cables have a limited lifespan due to deterioration of the insulation on the wires.) At this age, the insulation on the wires is typically deteriorated to the point that the risk of fire is increased significantly. I recommend you have an electrician replace the older wiring.

Minor Repair In the back west storage closet in the upper front apartment, the ceiling light fixture is simply hanging by its wiring. Have the light properly re-installed.

Safety Concern I found electrical wiring boxes without protective covers. All wiring connections are required to be fully enclosed to reduce the risk of fire that could occur in the event of a fault that might cause sparking or overheating. This is a potential hazard that can be corrected by installing covers on the boxes. Locations: all about the two basement areas ceilings.

Safety Concern A ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) is a modern electrical device, either a receptacle or a circuit breaker, which is designed to protect people from electric shock. In the event of a fault in an appliance that you are touching, the current that passes through your body to ground is detected and the circuit is shut off, protecting you from potentially fatal shocks. GFCI devices are now required in new houses in wet or damp environments such as at the kitchen at countertops, in bathrooms, in the garage, at spas, hot tubs, fountains, pools, in crawl spaces, near laundry tubs, and outdoors. This building does not have GFCI's in any or all such locations, and I recommend upgrading to this level of protection. This will considerably improve electrical safety for occupants of the building.

Safety Concern I strongly recommend that you have an electrician install hard-wired smoke detectors in each of the apartment bedrooms (worst case, battery-operated ones).

Safety Concern The components inside the electrical panel located in the commercial unit are highly corroded, and corroded electrical components can promote dangerous over-heating. Have the panel replaced, now.

With regards to the various sub-panels in the back of the building, I found the following concerns:

Safety Concern Wires are improperly double-tapped off some of the circuit breakers. Such multiple-tapped wires can loosen and over-heat, posing a fire hazard.

Safety Concern I saw 20-ampere size circuit breakers that do not provide safe or proper overload protection for their #14-copper wire circuits (the breakers should be 15-ampere sizes).

Safety Concern The two separate 120-volt circuit breakers for the central air conditioning's 240-volt circuit should have their trip-legs linked together so that they both would shut off at the same time.

Safety Concern Some of the panelboard enclosures have open knockout holes. Electrical boxes should fully enclose the wiring inside to contain sparks or arcs that may occur during an electrical short; this is a fire-prevention item. Also, if the box is readily accessible, children tend to stick their fingers in such open holes, posing a shock hazard. And, mice like to get inside electrical boxes through such holes and ingest the wiring insulation; this would pose a fire hazard. All open holes should be capped.

Safety Concern In the left panelboard, wires are dangerously tapped off the main disconnect lug screws. These wires pose a fire hazard.

Note: The inspection does not include low voltage systems, telephone wiring, intercoms, alarm systems, cable TV wiring, timers or the operation of smoke detectors.

PLUMBING SYSTEM

Description

The water is supplied by the municipal system.

The waste system is municipal sewers.

Readily visible plumbing supply pipes are galvanized iron. (Most of the piping is concealed and cannot be identified.)

Readily visible waste pipes are metal.

I estimate the ages of the two water heaters to be thirty+ years old and 25+ years old.

Temperature pressure relief valves are present on the water heaters.

The main shut off valve for the water supply piping was found in the basement.

The main gas supply line shut-off valves are located at the interior meters.

Observations and Recommendations

The readily visible supply piping system is in functional condition.

The readily visible drain piping system is in functional condition.

Water was run through all fixtures and drains. Poor functional flow was observed; see notes below.

Drainage problems were observed; see notes below.

I found problems with some of the gas pipes; see notes below.

Valves and fixtures were operated. All fixtures were functional.

Toilets were flushed multiple times and all properly evacuated. The toilets are secure to the floors. Leakage was not observed.

Be aware of the risk of scalding from water temperatures above 120° F. The risk is especially acute for infants, children, and the elderly. Water temperatures should never be set higher than 120° F. Newer water supply valves contain anti-scalding mechanisms to prevent scalding. These can be retrofitted. Note that higher water temperatures are not necessary for modern dishwashers, which heat the water.

The temperature pressure relief valves on the water heaters should be tested on a regular basis. This is an important safety device that prevents the water heater from exploding in the rare event of a defect in the built in operating and safety controls. I do not test these valves.

Adequate bath ventilation was observed (operable fans or windows).

I saw problems with the water heater flue piping; see notes below.

Safety Concern In the back basement section, the water heater's safety relief valve extension pipe is too short, posing a scalding hazard. A new pipe should be installed, one that runs to within 6" of the floor.

Safety Concern In the front part of the basement, piping from the water heater temperature/pressure relief valve has been reduced in size. This piping is required to be the same size as the valve throughout its length. This is potentially hazardous. In the event the controls became defective and failed to stop heating, the smaller pipe may not be able to carry the discharge from the valve if it activated. In this case, the tank would be likely to explode. While the risk from this is relatively small, it does happen with catastrophic results. A 30 gallon water heater explodes with the force of one pound of dynamite.

Safety Concern In the front basement section, part of the single-wall water heater flue pipe is lacking the safe and required 6" clearance to the combustible basement ceiling joists near the flue pipe. The heat from the hot flue pipe dries out the combustible material and lowers its kindling temperature (pyrolysis). This poses a fire hazard. Safe and proper clearances should be attained ASAP. (And, the loose flue pipe draft hood atop this heater needs to be secured to the top of the heater; should it fall off, such would pose a carbon monoxide hazard.

FYI The water heaters are old; expect the need for replacement at anytime.

Safety Concern The gas piping feeding the basement furnace is (very) loose; loose gas pipes pose an explosion hazard. Have the line braced/properly secured.

Major Repair The water supply functional flow about most all of the building is poor. It's likely the old galvanized water piping still being used is clogged-up with calcium and sediment deposits. If this is the case, the piping will need replacement. A plumber should be consulted to see what it will take and cost to attain better water flow. Costs to replace water piping are significant.

Minor Repair In the upper rear apartment, the bath sink does not readily drain. The drain is probably clogged, but more significant problems may be present. Have a plumber check this and make repairs as needed.

Minor Repair In the first floor rear apartment, the bathtub does not readily drain. The drain is probably clogged, but more significant problems may be present. Have a plumber check this and make repairs as needed.

Minor Repair Each of the rear apartments has some minor wall tile deterioration around the bathtubs. (I more-than-gently rapped on these tiled walls, and the substrate is solid.)

HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS

Description

The commercial unit and one of the apartments are heated by a single boiler.

Two of the apartments are heated by separate gas-fired, forced-air furnaces.

Two of the apartments are heated by separate boilers.

Two window air conditioners are present in the apartments.

The commercial unit is cooled by a package-unit air conditioner.

Two of the apartments are cooled by separate, split-system air conditioners.

Observations and Recommendations

Note: The report should not be read as a prediction of the remaining lifespan of the system. Typical lifespans of equipment may range from 20 - 25 years, but there are many exceptions to this. Be advised that defects or failure can occur at any time, and that the inspection in no way lessens the risk or likelihood of repairs or replacements being needed at any time in the future, including the day after the inspection. Any mechanical equipment can fail without warning at any time.

I recommended that all equipment be serviced at least once a year. Regular service is very important for efficient operation and to achieve maximum lifespan.

Boilers: Two, for two rear apartments

Water in the boilers is heated by the heat exchangers which is the most critical component. Failure allows water to leak out into the combustion chamber and/or out of the boiler. Some leaking heat exchangers can be repaired. Others may necessitate replacement of the boiler. Typical lifespans vary widely. Failure cannot be accurately predicted. The heat exchangers were examined using a mirror and flashlight. Conditions were adequate.

Piping, valves, and the circulating pumps appear to be functional. Valves are not operated during a building inspection.

The expansion tanks are not leaking. I rapped on the tanks and they sounded *hollow* (as they should...the tanks gives water space to expand as it heats-up).

The pressure relief valve is an important safety device that prevents pressure from building up and reaching a dangerous level. The valves should be tested on a regular basis thereafter. Relief valves are not tested during a building inspection. Pressure relief valves are installed correctly.

High temperature limit switches are installed. This is a safety device that prevents water in the systems from boiling and rupturing the boilers or piping.

Combustion System: Boilers

The supply of combustion air appears adequate.

The flue drafting was observed during operation and found to be adequate.

The condition of the flues is otherwise adequate.

Burners were observed during operation and are clear in adequate condition.

The flames were observed during operation. The flames are normal.

Clearance to combustibles was observed and is adequate. Be sure to maintain clearance from combustibles for safety reasons.

Boiler: Commercial Unit/One Front Apartment

Major Repair The boiler in the front part of the basement does not work, and the boiler jacket is severely corroded. This boiler is also old (actually, it's ancient). I suppose it could be fixed, but assume the need to have a new boiler installed to serve the commercial unit and the front second floor apartment.

Combustion Systems: Two Apartment Furnaces

The supply of combustion air is adequate.

The flue drafting was observed during operation and found to be adequate.

The condition of the flues is otherwise adequate.

The flue chimney for the basement furnace is deficient, though; see notes below.

Burners were observed during operation and are adequate condition.

The flames were observed during operation. The flames are normal.

Furnace clearance to combustibles was observed and is adequate.

The blower motors properly functioned. The blower wheel vanes are clean.

The heat exchanger is the chamber in the furnace where combustion takes place. The heat exchanger separates the house air and the combustion air. When cracks or holes develop in the heat exchanger, potentially toxic gases can mix with the house air. Replacement of the furnace is required at that time as replacement is not practical or cost effective. The average life span is twenty years. The presence of holes or cracks usually cannot be determined during a house inspection; the furnace would have to be taken apart by a heating technician to be sure if indeed holes or cracks are present, and such is beyond the scope of this visual inspection.

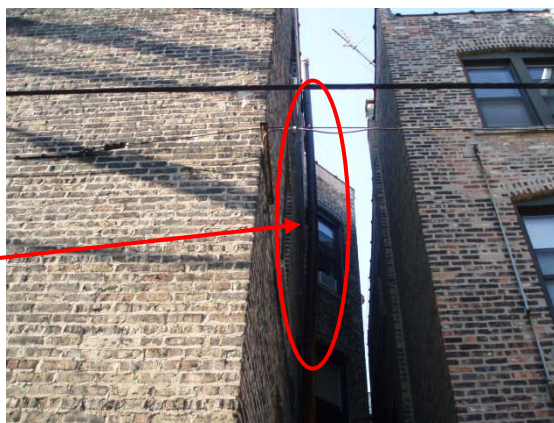
The heat exchanger for the basement furnace could not be examined due to configuration of the furnace. Condition is unknown and specifically excluded from the inspection and report.

The heat exchanger for the front upper apartment furnace was observed using a mirror and a flashlight; conditions appear adequate.

The fan limit switches were not tested during inspection. They're internal, inaccessible type switches.

Minor Repair The exterior flue chimney serving the basement furnace is loose and needs to be re-secured to the west exterior wall.

This loose chimney...



FYI The furnace in the front upper apartment is about 23 years old. Furnaces last about 20 years, maybe 25 if you're lucky. (And, the spent matches lying near this furnace's pilot light suggest the furnace is problematic.)

Regular service and inspection of the heating systems is strongly recommended.

Defective boilers, furnaces and blocked flues can be fatal due to carbon monoxide poisoning.

The installation of a UL listed carbon monoxide detector in each apartment in the commercial unit is strongly recommended.

Central Air Conditioning: Two Apartment Units

The central air conditioners were operated during the inspection using the normal operating controls. The temperature differentials were measured and found to be 19 & 20 degrees. This is the number of degrees the system is cooling (or heating) the condominium air. Normal range for this number is 16-22 degrees when operating the system during hot weather, higher when ambient temperatures are lower.

The suction lines at the air handlers were found to be cold and sweating which is normal. The liquid lines were found to be warm which is normal.

Fins on the condensing units were examined and found to be clean and in functional condition.

The evaporator coils are sealed inside the supply plenums and could not be observed.

Motors and fans were found to be in functional condition. No unusual noises were observed.

The condensate drain lines were inspected where readily visible. The drains are functional.

Air Conditioning: Commercial Unit Package Unit

The package-unit air conditioner was operated during the inspection using the normal operating controls. The temperature differential was measured and found to be 24 degrees. This is the number of degrees the system is cooling (or heating) the condominium air. Normal range for this number is 16-22 degrees when operating the system during hot weather, higher when ambient temperatures are lower.

The suction line at the air handler was found to be cold and sweating which is normal. The liquid line was found to be warm which is normal.

Fins on the condensing unit were examined and found to be clean and in functional condition.

The evaporator coil is sealed inside the supply plenum and could not be observed.

Motors and fans were found to be in functional condition. No unusual noises were observed.

The condensate drain line was inspected where readily visible. The drain is functional.

FYI The two rooftop air conditioners are each over 20 years old; air conditioners last about 20 years, maybe 25 if you're lucky.

Ductwork:

Filters should be cleaned or changed on a regular basis. This helps keep the system and the house clean and reduces operating costs.

Air flow was noted to all of the accessible registers.

Visible ductwork was observed where readily accessible and found to be in adequate condition.

WINDOW AIR CONDITIONERS:

The two window air conditioners were operated and found to be in proper operating condition.

INTERIOR

Description

The walls and ceilings are plaster.

Floors are wood and tiled.

Interior cabinets are wood and metal.

Observations and Recommendations

Minor cracks are found on interior surfaces in all buildings and are typically cosmetic in nature. This type of cracking is usually caused by settlement, shrinkage of building components or thermal expansion and contraction. Small cracks of this type are not mentioned in the report.

I cannot determine the condition of floors underneath carpet and other coverings. The condition of concealed floors is specifically excluded from the inspection and report.

Walls and ceilings were found to be in need of repairs; see notes below.

Interior floors were found to be deficient; see notes below.

Interior cabinets were found to be in adequate condition.

Interior doors were found to be in adequate condition.

FYI In the second floor front apartment, there is quite a bit of damaged wall and ceiling plaster. (This damage is from a defective main support beam; see later related report notes.)

FYI The floor in the second floor front apartment is sloped; not a little, a lot. (This damage is from a defective main support beam; see later related report notes.)

FYI There is quite a bit of floor covering damage all about the first floor rear apartment.

Safety Concern Some of the floor tiles in the first floor rear apartment are the old 9x9 type. These likely contain asbestos. Some of the tiles are not intact, and there is a slight possibility of asbestos contamination in the apartment. Since asbestos can cause lung cancer, I recommend you consult with an asbestos abatement contractor about this.

STAIRWAYS:

The rear interior stairway is in adequate condition. Headroom is adequate, tread widths and riser heights are consistent (within 3/8's of an inch), and the hand rails and side protective railings are in adequate condition.

Safety Concern The low headroom at the base of the stairway leading from the commercial unit down to the front basement area poses a head-collision hazard.

Major Repair (And Significant Safety Concern...) The front main stairway is on the verge of collapsing. Don't even think about using this stairway. The stairway is collapsing due to a defective main support beam that runs directly above the west wall in the commercial unit. (This is also why the walls are cracked and the floors are sloped in the second floor front apartment, as mentioned earlier in this report.) Most of this defective beam is covered with finish materials, so I don't know the extent of the beam damage, but above the kitchen ceiling in the commercial unit, I can see part of this obviously-failed beam. **Fixing the defective beam, the collapsing stairway, the sloped apartment floors, and the cracked apartment plaster is going to cost a lot of money.**

This is where I saw the failed main structural support beam section...



Safety Concern The middle metal stairways, between the front and rear apartments, have **very** wide spaces in their side protective rails, and such wide spaces pose a child-safety/falling hazard. Have these rails altered or replaced so the rail spacing is no greater than four inches. Do this now.

Safety Concern The short section of basement stairway just outside the rear basement area should have its missing safety hand-railing installed.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Observations and Recommendations

FYI The fireplaces are not functional.

FYI There is an oil tank in the front basement section. If this is a concern to you, contact a company specializing in removing oil tanks.

FYI A Word about Mold and Other Indoor Air Contaminates

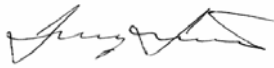
Susceptibility to mold and other contaminants has become an issue for some building owners. There are no acceptable or unacceptable levels of mold contamination set by the Center for Disease Control, the Environmental Protection Administration, or any other independent authoritative source.

I do not inspect for or provide an opinion on the potential for, or the existence of mold or related damage in the building. If you have concerns about mold or other indoor air quality issues I recommend that you contact specialists in the field such as the CDC, the EPA and other experts.

For further information regarding the issues of mold and other indoor air contaminants I recommend that you visit the Center for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/asthma/factsheets/molds/default.htm> and the Environmental Protection Administration at http://www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/i-e-r_plan.html

End, summary follows.

Inspector: Jerry Simon, president Illinois Building Inspection, Inc.



Illinois License #450.0000114 Expires 11-30-08

SUMMARY³

1.	FYI---- There is a low spot in the roof where water has been ponding. Ponding water will magnify the sun's destructive ultra-violet rays, and such will cause this low area to suffer quicker-than-normal roof membrane deterioration. Have this spot checked yearly and patched as/if needed.
2.	Major Repair At the SE corner of the commercial unit, one of the steel beams/lintels is severely corroded, and the cracking in the wall above suggests the lintel/beam is failing. Have the beam/lintel replaced or bolstered as needed.
3.	FYI---- Aside from the cracking in the wall mentioned above, a few areas on the east side of the building have some minor masonry wall deterioration. The sooner this deterioration is patched, the better. Left unchecked, such deterioration tends to rapidly worsen. I don't know if this will be a Major Repair Item or a Minor Repair Item; it could go either way. Talk with a mason contractor about what it will take and cost to address this.
4.	FYI---- A couple spots of the metal eaves are rusted-though. I don't know if this will be a Major Repair Item or a Minor Repair Item; it could go either way. Talk with a carpenter contractor about what it will take and cost to address this.
5.	Safety Concern Buildings of this era were usually painted with lead based paints. This cannot be confirmed visually. Lead is a severe health risk to infants and children particularly, with the potential to cause brain damage. Lead paint in good condition represents little risk. It is only when it is ingested or inhaled that it becomes a problem. This can occur when paint is flaking, when old wood windows (like the ones in the rear first floor apartment) are operated, grinding the paint, or during remodeling when paint is sanded or scraped. Federal regulations require that buyers be notified of the risks and be given time to test for the presence of lead paint. If this is a concern to you, contact an environmental testing firm to perform testing.

³ **Re-Inspection Policy:** I'm often asked if it would be possible to re-inspect the problem areas disclosed in the inspection, after repairs are made. I have a minimum fee of \$350.00 for this service. This fee covers a re-inspection of any deficiencies contained in the original inspection report, and does not include a written re-inspection report, which is \$75.00 extra.

6.	Major Repair A lot of the windows have fogged insulating glass/breached glass insulating seals. I also saw a cracked window pane in the front upper apartment. It will cost quite a bit of money to replace this defective glass.
7.	Safety Concern The low headroom all about the front basement area poses a head-collision hazard.
8.	FYI---- The ends of the floor joists along the west side of the front basement area are severely rotted. The added support below appears to be compensating for the rot, but installing a new support beam under the rotted joists would be better than individual columns under each joist.
9.	FYI---- In the rear basement section, the foundation is allowing seepage along the east wall. If you want a dry basement, talk with a basement waterproofing company about what it will take and cost to stop the seepage.
10.	Safety Concern Some of the lower branch circuit wiring is older “rag” wire. This type of wiring is obsolete. (All wiring cables have a limited lifespan due to deterioration of the insulation on the wires.) At this age, the insulation on the wires is typically deteriorated to the point that the risk of fire is increased significantly. I recommend you have an electrician replace the older wiring.
11.	Minor Repair In the back west storage closet in the upper front apartment, the ceiling light fixture is simply hanging by its wiring. Have the light properly re-installed.
12.	Safety Concern A ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) is a modern electrical device, either a receptacle or a circuit breaker, which is designed to protect people from electric shock. In the event of a fault in an appliance that you are touching, the current that passes through your body to ground is detected and the circuit is shut off, protecting you from potentially fatal shocks. GFCI devices are now required in new houses in wet or damp environments such as at the kitchen at countertops, in bathrooms, in the garage, at spas, hot tubs, fountains, pools, in crawl spaces, near laundry tubs, and outdoors. This building does not have GFCI’s in any or all such locations, and I recommend upgrading to this level of protection. This will considerably improve electrical safety for occupants of the building.
13.	Safety Concern I found electrical wiring boxes without protective covers. All wiring connections are required to be fully enclosed to reduce the risk of fire that could occur in the event of a fault that might cause sparking or overheating. This is a potential hazard that can be corrected by installing covers on the boxes. Locations: all about the two basement areas ceilings.
14.	Safety Concern I strongly recommend that you have an electrician install hard-wired smoke detectors in each of the apartment bedrooms (worst case, battery-operated ones).
15.	Safety Concern The components inside the electrical panel located in the commercial unit are highly corroded, and corroded electrical components can promote dangerous over-heating. Have the panel replaced, now.

16.	Safety Concern Wires are improperly double-tapped off some of the circuit breakers. Such multiple-tapped wires can loosen and over-heat, posing a fire hazard.
17.	Safety Concern I saw 20-ampere size circuit breakers that do not provide safe or proper overload protection for their #14-copper wire circuits (the breakers should be 15-ampere sizes).
18.	Safety Concern The two separate 120-volt circuit breakers for the central air conditioning's 240-volt circuit should have their trip-legs linked together so that they both would shut off at the same time.
19.	Safety Concern Some of the panelboard enclosures have open knockout holes. Electrical boxes should fully enclose the wiring inside to contain sparks or arcs that may occur during an electrical short; this is a fire-prevention item. Also, if the box is readily accessible, children tend to stick their fingers in such open holes, posing a shock hazard. And, mice like to get inside electrical boxes through such holes and ingest the wiring insulation; this would pose a fire hazard. All open holes should be capped.
20.	Safety Concern In the left panelboard, wires are dangerously tapped off the main disconnect lug screws. These wires pose a fire hazard.
21.	Safety Concern In the back basement section, the water heater's safety relief valve extension pipe is too short, posing a scalding hazard. A new pipe should be installed, one that runs to within 6" of the floor.
22.	Safety Concern In the front part of the basement, piping from the water heater temperature/pressure relief valve has been reduced in size. This piping is required to be the same size as the valve throughout its length. This is potentially hazardous. In the event the controls became defective and failed to stop heating, the smaller pipe may not be able to carry the discharge from the valve if it activated. In this case, the tank would be likely to explode. While the risk from this is relatively small, it does happen with catastrophic results. A 30 gallon water heater explodes with the force of one pound of dynamite.
23.	Safety Concern In the front basement section, part of the single-wall water heater flue pipe is lacking the safe and required 6" clearance to the combustible basement ceiling joists near the flue pipe. The heat from the <u>hot</u> flue pipe dries out the combustible material and lowers its kindling temperature (pyrolysis). This poses a fire hazard. Safe and proper clearances should be attained ASAP. (And, the loose flue pipe draft hood atop this heater needs to be secured to the top of the heater; should it fall off, such would pose a carbon monoxide hazard.
24.	FYI---- The water heaters are old; expect the need for replacement at anytime.
25.	Safety Concern The gas piping feeding the basement furnace is (very) loose; loose gas pipes pose an explosion hazard. Have the line braced/properly secured.

26.	Major Repair The water supply functional flow about most all of the building is <u>poor</u> . It's likely the old galvanized water piping still being used is clogged-up with calcium and sediment deposits. If this is the case, the piping will need replacement. A plumber should be consulted to see what it will take and cost to attain better water flow. Costs to replace water piping are significant.
27.	Minor Repair In the upper rear apartment, the bath sink does not readily drain. The drain is probably clogged, but more significant problems may be present. Have a plumber check this and make repairs as needed.
28.	Minor Repair In the first floor rear apartment, the bathtub does not readily drain. The drain is probably clogged, but more significant problems may be present. Have a plumber check this and make repairs as needed.
29.	Minor Repair Each of the rear apartments has some minor wall tile deterioration around the bathtubs. (I more-than-gently rapped on these tiled walls, and the substrate is solid.)
30.	Major Repair The boiler in the front part of the basement does not work, and the boiler jacket is <u>severely</u> corroded. This boiler is also old (actually, it's ancient). I suppose it could be fixed, but assume the need to have a new boiler installed to serve the commercial unit and the front second floor apartment.
31.	Minor Repair The exterior flue chimney serving the basement furnace is loose and needs to be re-secured to the west exterior wall.
32.	FYI---- The furnace in the front upper apartment is about 23 years old. Furnaces last about 20 years, maybe 25 if you're lucky. (And, the spent matches lying near this furnace's pilot light suggest the furnace is problematic.)
33.	FYI---- The two rooftop air conditioners are each over 20 years old; air conditioners last about 20 years, maybe 25 if you're lucky.
34.	FYI---- There is quite a bit of floor covering damage all about the first floor rear apartment.
35.	Safety Concern Some of the floor tiles in the first floor rear apartment are the old 9x9 type. These likely contain asbestos. Some of the tiles are not intact, and there is a slight possibility of asbestos contamination in the apartment. Since asbestos can cause lung cancer, I recommend you consult with an asbestos abatement contractor about this.
36.	Safety Concern The low headroom at the base of the stairway leading from the commercial unit down to the front basement area poses a head-collision hazard.

37.	Major Repair (And Significant Safety Concern...) The front main stairway is on the verge of collapsing. <u>Don't even think about using this stairway.</u> The stairway is collapsing due to a defective main support beam that runs directly above the west wall in the commercial unit. (This is also why the walls are cracked and the floors are sloped in the second floor front apartment, as mentioned earlier in this report.) Most of this defective beam is covered with finish materials, so I don't know the extent of the beam damage, but above the kitchen ceiling in the commercial unit, I can see part of this obviously-failed beam. Fixing the defective beam, the collapsing stairway, the sloped apartment floors, and the cracked apartment plaster is going to cost a lot of money.
38.	Safety Concern The middle metal stairways, between the front and rear apartments, have very wide spaces in their side protective rails, and such wide spaces pose a child-safety/falling hazard. Have these rails altered or replaced so the rail spacing is no greater than four inches. <u>Do this now.</u>
39.	Safety Concern The short section of basement stairway just outside the rear basement area should have its missing safety hand-railing installed.
40.	FYI There is an oil tank in the front basement section. If this is a concern to you, contact a company specializing in removing oil tanks.

While I make an effort to identify existing or potential problems, it is not possible for a building inspector to predict the future. I recommend that you budget several thousand dollars a year for unforeseen repairs and maintenance. This would hold true for any building you were considering.

SUPPORT AFTER THE INSPECTION

YOUR QUESTIONS: Ask all the questions you want, and I'll do my best to answer them. All I ask is that you read the whole report first. Feel free to call me tomorrow, next week, or even next year.

THE QUESTIONS OF OTHERS: If a seller, a seller's representative, or a seller's repair person calls me with a question about your inspection, I'll politely inform them that I can't talk about your inspection, unless you're in on the conversation or unless you give me specific permission to do so. I'll suggest they set up a conference call with you, and call me back.

If a seller or a repair person calls and asks how to fix something, I'll politely decline. It's not because I don't know how to fix things, it's because I'm not willing to boss a repair job by remote control. (It's also to protect you from unqualified repair people, and to protect me from people who might just forget what I told them between the time of the phone call and the actual job.) And, if you think about it, if someone doesn't know how to fix something, they probably shouldn't be the one doing the fixing.

LASTLY...

- Perform a diligent final-walkthrough (don't let anyone rush you...damage or problems can arise between the time of the inspection and the day of closing).
 - If repairs are going to be made with regards to this inspection report, I recommend you obtain paid, itemized receipts for such repairs, as well as any related repair warranties.
 - Unless this is a new building, buy new smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and install them in each apartment and in the commercial unit.
 - Re-key the door locks.
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END OF REPORT