

## TEN MOST COMMON HOME PROBLEMS

**In a recent survey the most common home problems identified were as follows. It is interesting to note that four of the top ten problems involved water.**



### **1. Improper Surface Grading and Drainage**

- By far the most frequent problem, it is responsible for the most common household aggravations, including water penetration into the basement or crawlspace and most basements eventually leak.

**2. Improper Electrical Wiring** - A number of respondents found this to be a significant defect. This includes such situations as insufficient electrical service, inadequate overload protection, and amateur (often dangerous) wiring connections.

**3. Roof Damage** - Leaking roofs are a frequent problem. Old or damaged shingles or improper flashing and drainage will cause this.

**4. Heating Systems** - Defect items in this category include broken or malfunctioning controls, blocked chimneys and unsafe exhaust venting.

**5. Poor Overall Maintenance** - A common problem with a number of homes. Signs of poor maintenance include cracked, peeling or dirty painted surfaces; crumbling masonry; makeshift wiring or plumbing; and broken fixtures and appliances.

**6. Structurally Related Problems** - As a result of problems in one or more other categories, damage is sustained by such structural components as foundation walls, floor joists, rafters and window and door headers.

**7. Plumbing** - Plumbing defects include the existence of old or incompatible piping materials, as well as faulty fixtures.

**8. Exteriors** - Flaws in this category, such as windows, doors and wall surfaces, rarely have structural significance but may pose discomfort to the occupants due to water and air penetration. The most common culprits are inadequate caulking and/ or weather-stripping.

**9. Poor Ventilation** - In an effort to save energy, many homeowners have "over sealed" their homes, resulting in excessive interior moisture. Significant moisture can lead to rotting and failure of both the structural and non-structural elements.

**10. Miscellaneous** - This category includes walkways, decks, patios, bushes and trees.

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## CAMELOT'S NEWEST INSPECTOR



Camelot Home Inspections is pleased to announce that **Pete Gregel** joined the company as a certified inspector. Pete brings a wealth of experience in the construction and remodeling industry, working with clients such as Cleveland Housing Network, Cuyahoga County Dept. of Community Development, City of

Cleveland Dept. of Community Development and East Cleveland Dept. of Community Development.

Additionally, he has been the Superintendent on various commercial, institutional and industrial construction projects for a leading Lake County developer and Operations Manager for a housing rehabilitation contractor involved with energy efficiency programs, lead paint remediation, mold remediation, general housing construction and remodeling. As a former licensed Lead Paint Abatement contractor, he has extensive knowledge of home construction, remodeling and rehabilitation. Pete is a U. S. Navy veteran who has personally owned and rehabbed six homes.

## Crawlspace Ventilation

Mold & mildew is often the price we pay for today's airtight homes. Armed with a little knowledge, however, we can often avoid these problems. Keeping moisture out of the home is important, but equally important is to maintain a good airflow in the non-heated portions of the home, such as crawlspaces and attics.

Crawlspace ventilation is an item often overlooked. While inspecting sub-floor areas that are normally dry, lately we have found a lot of damp earth, musty odors, and even standing water.

Even when rising ground water unavoidably forces dampness into the crawlspace, we should take advantage of the moisture-absorbing capacity of the air by ensuring adequate ventilation.

Crawlspace vents should be passively circulating fresh air year-round; a small fan will help to actively move moist air at times such as these, when we are experiencing unusually high moisture. An added benefit of venting crawlspaces is a reduction of radon gas levels, which would otherwise rise into the living area.



## ASK THE INSPECTOR

**What can I do to make my bathroom exhaust fan draft-proof?**

*Erick's Response:*

A bathroom fan is never going to be 100% draft-proof, but it could be that your exhaust fan has lost its damper flap. There is a passage that runs to the exterior of the wall, and as that goes through the wall, inside there's a little damper or flap that covers it. It's not very heavy, but it's heavy enough to keep a major draft from blowing in.

When wind wants to blow up it, the wind actually pushes the damper shut. But if that is missing, you are going to get a lot of air coming back at you through that passage. Some dampers have louvers instead of a flap, but the same thing will result if a louver is missing or they aren't closing tightly. Either way, you should be able to repair or replace the damper relatively inexpensively.

