TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS FOR YOUR HOME

MAINTENANCE – LEAKS
Finding a leak in a brick veneer wall can be frustrating. The water can flow inside the cavity before entering the interior of the house. Try hosing down the wall, starting slowly at the bottom, while a partner is watching for water inside.

MAINTENANCE – ACID RAIN
Masonry products such as bricks are deteriorating in the eastern half of the US now with the arrival of Acid Rain. If you see hollowed, smooth depressions in masonry, wash the surface once or twice each year with soap and water to slow the deterioration. Repair any faulty downspout joints or gutters that are spilling water onto masonry.

MAINTENANCE – CLEANING
Remove efflorescence, mildew or streaks caused by chalky paint with TSP – available in paint stores. Even paint flecks from the last trim paint job may be removed by allowing a dab of TSP paste to soak in for a few hours, then scrubbing with a stiff brush (do not use a wire brush that might leave steel particles that could rust and stain the wall). Or use mechanics soap with pumice as you scrub with a stiff brush. Do not use muriatic acid without testing first, it may produce blotches weeks later. Oxalic acid (one pound of crystals per gallon of water) removes rust stains. Always use goggles and gloves.

Contact us at 706-579-1607

Brick and Masonry

Do not allow deterioration of the mortar joints or masonry units to go without professional attention; once faults begin to appear, destruction may soon follow. For example, mold growing on the interior of a masonry wall may merely be the result of condensation (masonry walls are often cold enough to cause much condensation). However, it could also indicate water penetration through masonry joints.

Water is the mortal enemy of masonry, and a little preventive maintenance could save thousands of dollars later. In some cases, masonry cracks indicate foundation instability or other problems that may need to be corrected, which can lead to additional expense. If in doubt, seek professional advice.

MAINTENANCE – CRACK REPAIR: The Brick Institute of America says clear sealers that form a film accelerate the deterioration by reducing the brick's ability to breathe out excess moisture. With a few exceptions, they do not have enough body to seal cracks. You can tuckpoint new motar into failed joints. YouTube has a step-by-step demonstration on how to repair using this method (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zfKczqPE8g0&feature=youtu.be)

For additional information, call the Sealant Waterproofing and Restoration Institute at 816-472-7974.

Temporary repair of cracks larger than 1/8" can be accomplished with clear flexible caulk. Caulk is especially recommended for cracks that open and close with the changing seasons or temperatures. Cracks that are due to expansion and contraction of a long wall are especially likely to open and close. Such a crack is likely to be a vertical crack near the midpoint of a brick veneer wall that is at least 50' long. It may run through a door or a window, but it is not likely to extend into the foundation. It occurs because masonry expands when hot and contracts when cold. Closing this crack with hard mortar may cause new cracks to form. Do not tuck point or caulk non-moving cracks that are deep enough to affect structural integrity. Instead consult a specialist.

ROOFS

Maintenance

Homeowners should regularly inspect the roof for leaks; preferably during or just after a heavy rain when the sound of drips can be heard from an open attic access door. Use a powerful flashlight to inspect all visible sheathing surfaces, noting any areas that may be wet.

Be careful not to step off the structural members and fall through the ceiling. Use a dust mask if the attic is insulated with fiberglass. Significant leaks should be repaired by a roofing contractor, if detected. Rot may be a consequence if the problem is not addressed.

Life Expectancy

Most roofs are covered with asphalt shingles. The typical asphalt shingle roof is guaranteed to last at least 15 years, depending on the climate. It is easy to void warranties, and many warranties are sales gimmicks, especially those that promise service for 30 years or more. If the granules begin to release from the shingles, the roof may be approaching the end of its functional life.

Replacement Cost

Depending on the pitch, size, materials chosen, existing damage, asphalt shingles cost is on average $260 per roofing square, plus labor. It could be costly if the old roof needs to be removed and replaced. Any unusual characteristics such as very steep, many valleys, or ridges will also add to the replacement cost.

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BASEMENTS

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Moisture Problems

Virtually all basements leak from time to time. Even basements that have never been damp may someday show moisture or even a trickle of water. Sometimes this happens after an unusually heavy rain. Often, basements spring a leak because silt has accumulated in the gravel backfill/perforated pipe drainage system buried underground. When this happens, water accumulates above the footings, creating water pressure that penetrates tiny cracks in most foundations. No foundation can serve as a reverse swimming pool – keeping out water that builds up above its footings.

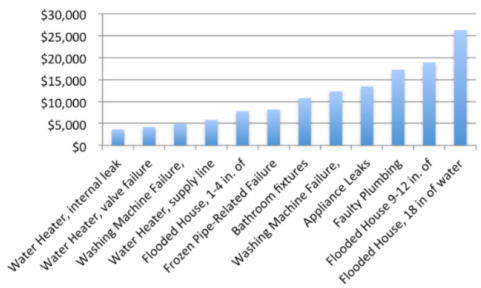
Contributing Factors

Perhaps voids under concrete slabs have created a channel for water to flow next to the foundation. Perhaps a growing tree root has channeled water to the foundation or even cracked the foundation wall. A new flower garden or similar project may have loosened the soil next to the house. Gutters or downspouts may have become clogged and are dumping water near the foundation instead of flowing it away from the house.

Practical Approaches

1. Create positive slope away from the house by raising the soil level next to the house. Be careful not to come within 8” of the siding with the new soil level.
2. Remove excess vegetation from around foundation walls. Do not plant shrubs or trees next to the house.
3. Be sure water from downspouts is routed away from the building. This can be done by putting elbows at the bottom of the downspout and using splash blocks.
4. Be sure to keep gutters and downspouts flowing freely so that water does not overflow around the foundation.
5. Remove large roots from around the foundation. (This might kill the tree)
6. Seal all driveways, steps, and patios where they join the house.
7. Repair any cracks that you notice.

If these approaches don’t solve the problem, you may want to hire a contractor to analyze the situation to recommend potential additional remedies.



GENERAL EXTERIOR

Safety Concerns

Homeowners should examine the exterior of the house annually. The homeowner should check for broken steps or loose bricks on steps or sidewalks. Check for unlevel sidewalks that could present a tripping hazard. Any weak handrails or guardrails should be repaired. If there are balusters (vertical rails) they should be no more than 4" apart. This is to prevent a small child from passing in between them.

Cleaning of Siding

Most siding is designed to be self cleaning with rain; however, rain does not get up under the soffit or in other sheltered areas. Hosing these areas with a garden hose once a year will remove dust, and a little scrubbing will get most of the remainder. If necessary, a biodegradable cleaner may be used to help scrub the really tough dirt.

Mold first appears as tiny gray spots that resemble paint flecks and develops into dark, splotchy areas. Remove mold with a fungicide that will not bleach or fade the siding unless the siding is white or very light, in which case, liquid laundry bleach is best (diluted 1 part bleach to 3 parts water).

Do not clean masonry with muriatic acid without testing; sometimes it causes discoloration months later. Professional siding cleaners can be called upon for cleaning efflorescence from masonry siding and for other cleaning chores that are too difficult for the homeowner.

Glazing Compound Failing

Most single-pane windows use glazing compound (such as window putty) to seal the window glass to the sash. Eventually, glazing compound loses its elasticity and can no longer adjust to the expansion and contraction of the sash and glazing. Cracks can appear, water enters, and further deterioration follows quickly. It is recommended that bad glazing be removed and replaced. Using an electric hot-air gun can break the glass sometimes. Be sure that glazing points, little metal retainers that are pressed into wood sashes, are used to securely fasten the glass. Any bare wood should be primed with exterior wood primer before replacing new compound, and the compound should be painted when finished.

The paint should extend onto the surface of the glazing about 1/8" to provide a weather seal.

Ironwork Deteriorating

Ironwork must be protected from the elements or it will deteriorate. Surfaces must be kept painted. Supports that are set into concrete are especially vulnerable for they must withstand moisture drawn through the concrete by capillary action. The point of support must be carefully caulked to prevent water from standing in puddles around the support. Once ironwork set in concrete begins to rust, the rust itself will allow water into the metal/concrete joint. The force created by this expansion can break concrete. It is recommended that ironwork be painted or sealed often to prevent this from occurring.

Vegetation

Vegetation should not be on or near the house. Vegetation can encourage mold or mildew as well as interior rot and termites. The weight of vegetation can also dislodge siding. Vines can also penetrate the mortar on brick veneer siding. It is recommended that vegetation not be closer than one foot to the house.

Gutters and Leaders

Gutters and leaders should be inspected for debris and/or leaks at least once a year.

Clogged gutters and leaders contribute to water flowing over the sides of the gutter, which can contribute to rot on the fascia boards and soffits as well as leaks in foundations due to water collecting at the base of the house rather than being routed away by the leader pipe.

Any leaks in the gutters can be repaired by the homeowner with gutter sealant, which can be purchased at your local home improvement store.

If the leak is the result of rot, that section should be replaced by a professional.

Painting – Exterior

The exterior paint is very important as protection for the siding against moisture. The following items should **NOT** be done:

- Don't buy cheap paint.
- Don't use clear finishes on surfaces exposed to the weather or direct sunlight.
- Don't paint in direct sunlight unless it is white on white and the temperature is mild.
- Don't paint when the surface is below 50° Fahrenheit.
- Don't paint with a dry brush, dip frequently.
- Don't remove excess paint by scraping the brush across the top of the can. This can ruin the brush.
- Don't spray paint except with airless sprayers, which work well on surfaces without sharply angled recesses.
- Don't use a cheap brush.
- Don't use latex paint that has been frozen.
- Don't mix metals. Don't put an aluminum paint on galvanized metal or steel.
- Don't direct high pressure sprays into cracks between siding members or around windows.
- Don't use a wire brush to remove loose paint.
- Don't use electric drill attachments to remove paint. It can damage the siding.

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SEPTIC

Homeowners should take as many of the following steps as ,possible:

- You should always begin by contacting the county environmental health department when seeking information regarding septic issues.
- Ask to see county records that show your tank size. Check your local codes for variances to these guidelines.
- The same county records should indicate the location of your tank and leach field. Note, this is for when the tank must be pumped.
- Walk the area where the tank and field are located. If you notice odors or soft, wet soil, you may choose to have a professional check for breaks or possibly have the tank pumped.
- Tanks should be pumped every few years. Prices vary. A septic system will rarely function more than 30 years. Avoid using magic crystals or chemicals that may damage healthy systems and shorten the lifespan.
- Avoid colored toilet paper as the dye can harm bacteria that digest sewage. Use the cheapest, white toilet paper. Also avoid facial tissues, "wet-strength" towels, sanitary napkins and diapers.
- Regular use of a garbage disposal can drastically increase the amount of waste you are pumping into the septic tank. Natural bacteria can't decompose the materials quickly enough, meaning your septic tank will need to be inspected more frequently and pumped as much as twice as often.
- Avoid pouring grease, chemical drain cleaners, strong acids, alkalis, and harsh household cleaning agents down the drains. This can immobilize the desirable bacteria.

PLUMBING

Test Yearly

Public water provided in many urban areas has been found to be contaminated. Water from larger cities is likely to be safe, but smaller cities are more likely to have potentially contaminated water. The federal government's General Accounting Office has found that most community water companies fail to follow the government testing guidelines. The chlorine most communities introduce into the water to kill bacteria may produce cancer-causing agents when it interacts with organic debris (such as rotted leaves) in the water. Private wells may draw water that fell as rain or snow hundreds of miles away and is especially likely to be contaminated by intervening farms and factories. Your water company must notify you when contaminants are in the water they provide that may cause illness or other problems.

It is recommended that all water supplies be tested at least once a year. If you are using public water, ask for the latest water quality report and compare it with EPA regulations. It is important that household water be tested to be sure that lead, excess copper or other contaminants are not being introduced into public water. It is especially important that water from water treatment devices found on the property be tested; as they age, these are often major sources of contamination. You can have your water tested by a state certified laboratory. You can find one in your area by calling the **Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791** or visiting www.epa.gov/safewater/labs.

Chemical Drain Cleaners

As a rule, it is best to avoid chemical drain cleaners. According to many articles in Consumer Reports, they rarely clean drains, and these caustic or acidic chemicals may endanger the person who has to repair clogged drains. Some pipes and gelcoat (common in plastic tub/showers) can be damaged by using certain chemicals. Some specialists do recommend them to keep drains open, but pouring a pot of boiling water down the drain each month probably works as well. However, new enzyme cleaners appear to be both safe and effective.

Leaks

Leaks should be fixed immediately, even a small leak can promote unsanitary conditions and may damage the structure. A leak in the basement, or worse yet, crawl space, may cause much damage before being detected. A smart water-leak sensor can lesson the impact of plumbing problems by alerting you the moment a leak is detected.

DWV Lines

Building drains that exit through a basement sidewall are more vulnerable to damage by settling backfill than those that exit through the floor. Tree roots are an enemy of septic lines. Avoid planting trees and bushes near the drain field of a septic system. Never pour grease down the drain. The grease can not only damage pipes, but can destroy the bacteria eating enzymes in the septic tank which help break down solid waste in the tank.

Main Cutoff

The location of the main cutoff valve should be widely known, in case of a catastrophic leak. Wise homeowners hang red tags on the main cutoff valve to help others find it during an emergency. Homeowners must be able to turn the valve's handle. Attempts to open a "frozen" valve with a wrench can result in a broken stem. Prevent this problem by turning the valve a few turns at least once a year to keep it limber. If the valve is totally frozen, you can probably free it by loosening the flange nut slightly, and then trying the handle again. Don't turn the nut too much unless you want to turn the room into an indoor swimming pool. If you doubt your plumbing expertise, call a plumber to free the valve.

Septic Systems

Most septic systems consist of a tank and a seepage system. The tank allows microbes to digest solids, and the seepage system allows surplus water to seep into the ground. The leach field of porous or perforated concrete pipes placed in gravel beds provides better seepage than a sewage pit. In some cases, two fields are used and are switched every few months to allow microbes in the other one to clean it somewhat.

The ground for the seepage field must "perc" (allow enough water to percolate down through the soil so that all surplus water can be accommodated). Old fields that must be replaced may not be approved for replacement by the local sanitarian if they don't pass the "perc" test or if houses have been built nearby and finding a new location for the replacement field may be expensive – especially if the discharge must be pumped uphill to the new site or a filtration/aeration system must be installed.

WATER HEATERS

Many codes require drip pans under water heaters. Often this provision is not enforced. Regardless of code requirements, the prudent homeowner should ask the plumber to install a drip pan when the water heater is replaced. Drip pans are inexpensive and will prevent a major expense should you have a leak.

Tank Size

The American Society of Home Inspectors recommends an 80-gallon tank for a family of four with a dishwasher and washing machine. Most homes do not have a tank that large. Oil fired tanks have the fastest recovery and hold at least 30 gallons for a family of four. Propane and natural gas tanks come next and usually hold about 40 gallons for a family of four. Electric tanks are slowest and even the ones on 30 amp circuits likely use two elements.

Maintenance-Cleaning Inside

Manufacturers recommend draining off a little water a few times a year, which would extend the life of water heater. A thumping noise heard in gas and oil fueled heaters indicates an excessive buildup of sediment in the bottom of the tank. This is a reminder that it is time to clean the tanks. Clean the tank by opening the valve, usually by turning the large round wheel at the bottom of the tank counter clockwise. Some tanks have a valve hidden behind an access door secured with a screw. If no floor drain is nearby into which the water can run, hook a hose to the drain valve before opening it up and drain to the outdoors or into buckets. Allow water to flow until no sediment is visible in the stream. Hissing noises in electric heaters indicate mineral deposits that have coated the heating element. If not cleaned, the elements are likely to burn out soon. Turn off the power, drain the tank, remove the element, soak in a 50% water/vinegar solution, and scour clean before reinstalling them. Installing a water softener will remove minerals that coat the elements.

Caution: Never turn on the power to the tank unless the tank is full of water, especially if the tank is electrically heated.

Tune-up

An oil fueled water heater must be given a tune-up by a professional at least once a year. Gas units shouldn't need professional attention more than once every-other-year. Electric units do not need professional attention until an element burns out or they start to leak.

TPR Valves

To prevent explosions due to faulty thermostats in the heater, a TPR (Temperature/Pressure Relief) Valve is installed on the heater. The TPR valve is a device with a lever usually mounted on the side near the top of the tank. Modern TPR valves should have a metal pipe that extends down the side of the tank to within a few inches of the floor. This pipe protects bystanders during discharge and testers during testing. Current codes require that the pipe be directed to the exterior of the house.

Test the TPR valve by placing a container to catch water flowing from the overflow pipe (if not directed to the exterior); spin the lever a couple of turns to ensure that it is not "frozen"; briefly raise the lever and allow it to snap back. A great volume of water should briefly flow. If only a trickle flows, replace the TPR valve. TPR valves are cheap and the installation is not very expensive.

Life Expectancy and Replacement

Water heaters can fail in three years if handled carelessly or transported horizontally but usually last about 10 years. Tanks with 10 year guarantees sometimes are identical to tanks with only 5 year guarantees but cost more because of the longer guarantee. Tanks with 5-year guarantees are not that expensive and can be installed in a couple of hours or so.

Lighting a Gas Water Heater

- Turn the control valve to "pilot"
- Press down the control knob/button and light the pilot with a long match or BBQ lighter. To light the pilot, you'll probably have to remove the outer cover and the flame shield that protects the combustion chamber.
- Continue to hold the control knob/button down for 60 seconds after the pilot lights.
- Release the control knob/button. If the pilot doesn't stay lit, the thermocouple is probably bad.
- The thermocouple is a small tube that is mounted so that it will be licked by the pilot flame. The flame heats the thermocouple to generate a small voltage that allows the control valve to stay open after you release it, sending gas to the main burner. When the pilot stays lit, turn the control to "on"

Selecting a new water heater

When selecting a new water heater for your home, choose a water heating system that will not only provide enough hot water, but also that will do so energy efficiently, saving you money.

- **Fuel type, availability and cost.** The fuel type or energy source you use for water heating will not only affect the water heater's annual operation costs, but also its size and energy efficiency. If you have more than one fuel type available in your area, it's a good idea to compare fuel costs, especially if you're building a new home. Even if you're replacing a water heater, you may find that you'll save more money in the long run if you use a different fuel or energy source. Contact your utility for current fuel costs or rates.
- **Size.** To provide your household with enough hot water and to maximize efficiency, you need a properly sized water heater.
- **Energy efficiency.** To maximize your energy and cost savings, you want to know how energy efficient a water heater is before you purchase it.
- **Costs.** Before you purchase a water heater, it's also a good idea to estimate its annual operating costs and compare those costs with other less or more energy-efficient models.
- **Type.** The type of water heater you choose will also affect your water heating costs. One type of water heater may use a fuel type more efficiently than another type of water heater. For example, an electric heat pump water heater typically is more energy efficient than an electric conventional storage water heater. Also, an electric heat pump water heater might have lower energy costs because of its higher efficiency than a gas-fired conventional storage water heater, even though local natural gas costs might be lower than the electricity rates.

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ASBESTOS

Limited Asbestos Survey

Mill Creek Environmental can conduct a limited inspection offering the property owner a yes or no answer concerning asbestos containing materials in limited locations of the property. A Limited Asbestos Survey is cost effective and the results can be received quickly with little damage to the property.

Renovation And Remodeling Program Asbestos Survey

With this type of survey a more in-depth site assessment is conducted of the area to be renovated. Sampling of potential asbestos containing materials per EPA Renovation and Remodeling Program rules is performed within all areas that may be disturbed during the project. A more detailed report containing the estimated quantities of any asbestos containing materials is provided. The benefits to this type of survey fulfills the EPD requirements and allows the property owner to estimate any additional costs that may be incurred during the project from the abatement and disposal of asbestos containing materials.

O&M Asbestos Survey

An Operations and Maintenance Asbestos Survey includes a visual assessment of the property in its entirety for any potential asbestos containing materials, a comprehensive sampling plan, and a report detailing the present and potential future condition, location and quantities of any found asbestos containing materials. We offer an asbestos condition inspection for property owners who already have an O&M plan in place.

Demolition Asbestos Survey

The Demolition Asbestos Survey is more in-depth and provides more information than a limited survey. Mill Creek Environmental will review any previous reports, building plans, and conduct a visual assessment of the property in its entirety for any potential asbestos containing materials. A detailed report with results, quantities, locations, and conditions will be provided along with adjacent property information, for risk assessment.

Contact us at 706-579-1607

HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING

Furnace

Owners of fossil-fueled furnaces (gas, oil, coal, wood) should purchase a maintenance contract that includes inspection of the heat exchanger as soon as they obtain possession of the home – especially if the furnace is more than five years old.

The furnace filter should be changed approximately every three months. Owners of units that use natural gas should obtain a maintenance contract through their gas supplier (if available). Suppliers of natural gas typically do not sell furnaces and will not recommend replacing a safe unit just because a trace of gas had been found to get through the heat exchanger in a gas tracer test. Owners of units that use other fuels should get their contract through a trustworthy holder of a mechanical license. Furnace manufacturers all recommend annual inspections and maintenance by a qualified technician

Life Expectancy

Most furnaces last 20 to 30 years. Always consult an HVAC professional. Quotes are almost always free and help identify your heating needs. Your HVAC pro will look at the size, configuration and age of your house to determine the most cost-effective way to heat it. Your location, livable square footage, and energy bills all factor into which furnace type, model and size is right for your home.

Ducts

Dirt in ducts of central heating systems breed dust mites. Dust mites eat organic matter such as skin cells people have shed, and rather than drinking water, they absorb water from humidity in the atmosphere. Dust also contains the feces and decaying bodies of dust mites, and it's the proteins present in this dust mite "debris" that are the culprit in dust mite allergy. Ducts should be inspected once a year. Repair those with loose joints or holes that are losing expensive conditioned air to unfinished spaces. Consult a professional when cleaning metal or flexible ducts is necessary. If the insulation on flexible ducts has separated, it should be repaired to not only avoid loss of conditioned air, but to prevent moisture from collecting in the ductwork which can present health concerns.

Warning

Do not operate an air conditioner when the temperature is below 65°F or in the morning when the overnight low temperature is less than 55°F. Turning on a cold unit can cause liquid “slugging” of the compressor. Liquid (cold) refrigerant won’t compress and a compressor trying to compress it will self destruct.

Replacement

Remember that installation costs remain about the same whether good or cheap parts are used. Spend a little more to have a quality system. Always check out your contractor. If a compressor is found to be bad, the repair cost can be expensive. Having an annual inspection can save you money.

Do you have a question about how to keep your home safe and healthy? Give us a call at **706-579-1607** and we will prescribe the right treatment for you!

MILL CREEK ENVIRONMENTAL

RADON

Radon-Resistant Features

If you're having a house built, ask your builder if they're using a recognized approach If your house was built to be radon-resistant, it will include these basic elements:

1. **Gas Permeable Layer:** This layer is placed beneath the slab or flooring system to allow the soil gas to move freely underneath the house. In many cases, the material used is a 4 -inch layer of clean gravel. This gas-permeable layer is used only in homes with basement and slab-on-grade foundations; it is not used in homes with crawlspace foundations.
2. **Plastic Sheeting:** Plastic sheeting is placed on top of the gas-permeable layer and under the slab to help prevent the soil gas from entering the home. In crawl spaces, the sheeting (with seams sealed) is placed directly over the crawlspace floor.
3. **Sealing and Caulking:** All below-grade openings in the foundation and walls are sealed to reduce soil gas entry into the home.
4. **Vent Pipe:** A 3- or 4-inch PVC pipe (or other gas-tight pipe) runs from the gas-permeable layer through the house to the roof, to safely vent radon and other soil gases to the outside.
5. **Junction Boxes:** An electrical junction box is included in the attic to make the wiring and installation of a vent fan easier. A separate junction box is placed in the living space to power the vent fan alarm. An alarm is installed along with the vent fan to indicate when the vent fan is not operating properly

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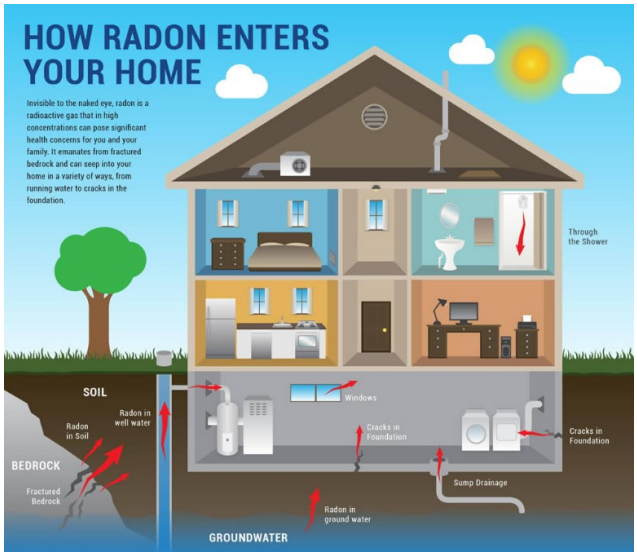
RADON GAS

Protecting Your Family



It is important to test your home or a home you are looking to buy. Since Radon is produced from rocks, soil, and water….it is more prominent in the North Georgia where it is a more mountainous region. Radon is a poisonous gas resulting when Uranium breaks down to a gas, Radon is produced. The gas can seep through cracks and holes of home foundations. All homes do have some radon in them, but it is imperative to know if the levels are elevated to critical levels and is toxic to your family.

If you are looking to purchase a home, you should have the home tested by a certified Georgia Radon Inspector. Since you cannot see, taste, or smell radon gases, the only way to know what a structure's radon level is to have it professionally tested. The Surgeon General suggests having radon tested every 2 years since soil configurations can change over time and building joints can open over time allowing gases that the soil produces to bypass the structures mitigation system.

A radon inspection is a simple procedure where a short-term test (48 hours) is performed in the home. A detector will be set-up where it will take hourly readings. Please note that the testing area site must not be disturbed during the test. Mill Creek Environmental will provide a report of the average reading and indicate if there are any elevated radon levels detected. If there is a radon issue, a certified contractor will need to be contacted to address the situation. It is a best practice to have the inspector to be separate from the radon removal contractor.

Why Is Radon A Big Issue?

If enough radon gas is inhaled over an extended period, it can cause lung cancer. This is the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers. Per EPA, nearly 1 out of every 15 homes in the United States is estimated to have an elevated radon level. The HUD Federal Housing Commissioner requires mortgagees to provide the inspection form to prospective homebuyers at first contact. The form is mandatory for all FHA-insured forward mortgages.

Are There Any Symptoms of Radon Gas Exposure?

Basically, there are not short-term health symptoms that indicate radon exposure. After years of radon exposure, you will start to have the same symptoms similar to those found in lung cancer caused from smoking. Those symptoms include a persistent cough, coughing up blood, shortness of breath, fatigue and recurring infections.

Radon gas is colorless, odorless, and tasteless. It is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States according to the EPA, the Surgeon General, and the World Health Organization.

Don't leave your family open to invisible dangers….get your radon test done today!

MILL CREEK ENVIRONMENTAL

MOLD

Mill Creek Environmental offers Mold Inspection Services for consultation and analysis of residential and commercial properties in the North Georgia and Greater Atlanta areas.

Safety Concerns

Air quality testing is imperative for the safety of your household, especially with the Georgia humidity in high moisture environments that are prime mold growth areas for toxic mold spores.

Is Post-Remediation Testing Necessary?

Yes, it is advised that once you have gone through the mold remediation process to have a follow up mold testing performed. This will ensure that the mold removal has been successful, and the source has been identified & removed. fasten the glass. .

Why Is Black Mold Also Known As Toxic Mold?

Note that not all physically "black" mold is of the type that has the toxic Mycotoxins that most readers think of and fear from. There are serious health problems that can occur with the infestation and prolonged exposure to toxic black mold. This type of Stachybotrys chartarum (black mold) can release spores that grow on common building materials (sub-flooring, carpet, drywall, insulation) and cause several respiratory problems or in severe cases vomiting, nose bleeds, and internal lung bleeding.

Black mold is most commonly found in bathrooms, basements & crawlspaces where the moisture level is higher and tends to carry a musty odor. If you suspect any type of mold in your home or building, it is imperative that you have professional testing performed so appropriate actions can be taken if necessary.

How do I Prevent Mold?

Rule of thumb is if you want to prevent mold, you must control the moisture and humidity levels in the home or building. This includes; proper ventilation and insulation of the structure, proper and timely clean-up from water leaks and flooding, and maintaining outside the residence or building.

Mold and Health

Mold exposure can lead to various levels of health issues. Common health effects include the following:

- Most commonly there are allergic reactions to mold that can cause irritants
- Symptoms include sneezing, runny nose, red eyes, skin rashes, etc.
- Mold can also cause asthma attacks
- Black mold can lead to cold and flu like symptoms like fatigue, sore throat, headaches, rashes
- Serious cases can lead to chronic coughing, hair loss, and even cancer

What Is A Typical Mold Inspection Process?

The inspection process is as follows:

- MCE will conduct a history evaluation that includes a short interview with the property owner.
- Thorough on-site evaluation including:
  - All water areas in the building/Home
  - Interior inspection
  - Exterior inspection
  - Testing/samples are pulled based on the discovered conditions
  - Samples sent to a certified lab for evaluation
- Final report provided with Remediation Plan

MOLD

There are several reasons why you should have a professional mold inspection.

You have had a water leak from one of the following:

- Roof Leak
- Pipe Burst
- Basement Flooding
- You live near a lake, pond, or river
- You smell a musty odor
- You have unexplained health problems, fatigue, or sudden allergy and asthma type symptoms
- You need a pre-inspection for a property sale, included foreclosure properties.
- If a property has had a Mold issue in the past, but was not removed properly, there could be contamination within the structure and nobody realizes it until you start having health related issues.

Our inspectors have the following certifications:

- Certified Indoor Environmentalist
- Certified Residential Mold Inspector
- Certified Allergen Inspector
- NEHA - NRPP Certified Radon Measurement Provider

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MILL CREEK ENVIRONMENTAL

Contact us at 706-579-1607