



# Home Inspection Report

214 Giants Neck Beach Road, Niantic, CT



Inspection Date:  
February 17, 2010

Prepared For:  
Giants Neck Beach  
Association

Prepared By:  
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Report Number:  
10021684B\_GNBA

Inspector:  
Thomas Hauswirth, Managing Member



# Report Summary

IMPORTANT PLEASE NOTE: This summary is intended to provide a convenient and cursory preview of conditions and components that we have identified in the following report as needing repair and/or further evaluation. To make this summary more concise, any diagrams and pictures in the main body of the report are omitted. This summary may not be a complete list of all findings in the report and is obviously not comprehensive. It should not be used as a substitute for reading the entire report, nor is it a tacit endorsement of the condition of the home's components or features that may not appear in this summary, but may appear in the following report. Items under the Discretionary Improvements headings are not included in this summary. In accordance of the terms of our Home Inspection Contract, the recommendations that we make in this summary and throughout the report should be addressed before close of escrow by licensed qualified specialists or contractors who may identify additional defects or recommendations.

## ROOFING RECOMMENDATIONS / OBSERVATIONS

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- The downspouts should discharge water at least 5 feet from the home. Storm water should be encouraged to flow away from the home at the point of discharge.
- Overhanging tree branches should be trimmed back from the home to allow more sunlight and air circulation around the roof surface, minimize the amount of debris on the roof surface, decrease the chance that falling limbs or branches will damage the roof, and help keep the gutters free of debris.
- We recommended that gutters and downspouts be installed on the garage to avoid spilling roof runoff around the garage - a potential source of water entry or water damage. Downspouts should discharge water approximately 5 feet from the garage and storm water should be encouraged to flow away from the garage at the point of discharge. We recommend that you consult with a licensed qualified gutter installer.
- The gutters required cleaning to avoid spilling roof runoff around the home (a potential source of water entry or water damage) and protect the fascia board and surrounding components from deterioration and water damage.

## EXTERIOR RECOMMENDATIONS / OBSERVATIONS

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- We recommend further evaluation and repairs of the ramp as or if deemed necessary by a licensed qualified general carpenter/contractor for the following reasons:
  - Ramp supports did not appear to be pressure treated. This will make them more subject to decay over time possibly affecting the ramps structural integrity. The ramp felt springy underfoot in places. Overall the ram had the appearance of a "homeowner" level of workmanship.
  - There looked to be no flashing at the ramp's attachment to the home. This could allow water entry and related damage.
  - The ramp did not look to be treated with any surface coat (e.g. stain) to protect it from the elements. Carpeting can trap moisture against untreated surfaces and cause deterioration and possibly affect ramp safety.
- We recommend repairs as deemed necessary by a licensed qualified general carpenter/contractor of the following:
  - Deterioration was noted at entry door sills.
  - The rear storm door latches were in need of adjustment.
  - The loose section of trim cladding at the garage should be re-secured.
  - The bathroom vent cover was damaged and should be replaced to prevent insect and animal entry.
- Exterior components (e.g. wood trim, front storm door, and metal rails) were in need of paint and caulk maintenance to protect them from the elements. Any holes in vinyl siding should be sealed to prevent moisture entry and related damage.
- Vegetation should be removed from the front steps to improve safety.
- Grading should be improved around the foundation perimeter of the home to encourage water to flow away from the home. A slope of one inch per foot for the first five feet is typically accepted practice. When adding soil to improve drainage, care should be given to keep soil at least six inches away from the bottom edge of the exterior wall covering.
- Vegetation around the home looked to be too close to the siding. There should be approximately a one foot clearance between any vegetation and the exterior walls. This will help reduce the risk of insect entry and damage and allows air circulation around the home to help keep the siding clean and dry. Vegetation should be trimmed where appropriate. Vines should be removed.

## STRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS / OBSERVATIONS

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- The surface of the foundation, where visible and accessible, had a crack at the front that may be of structural concern. It is not possible to determine the extent of any structural movement from a onetime visit to the home because there is no past observation to compare it to. The crack was vertical, approximately 1/4" wide, and, its opposing sides felt offset from each other. This is typically of greater concern than cracks where the opposing sides feel even with each other. This crack and the other smaller shrinkage/settlement type cracks noted should be patched by a licensed qualified foundation contractor to help prevent water penetration and allow for monitoring. If changes in the cracks are noted (i.e. cracking of the patching material or widening of the cracks), we recommend further evaluation and repairs as or if deemed necessary by a licensed qualified structural engineer at that time.
- There was significant damage to the sill plate and a wall plate in the garage. It appeared to be from termites as shelter tubes and mud was noted. The garage was built close to grade therefore making it more conducive to wood destroying insect activity. We recommend repairs to the garage structure as deemed necessary by a licensed qualified framing contractor.
- Given the evidence of termite activity in the garage and possible carpenter ant frass in the home's crawlspace, we recommend further evaluation and treatment as or if deemed necessary by a licensed qualified pest control company.

## ELECTRICAL RECOMMENDATIONS / OBSERVATIONS

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- We recommend further evaluation and repairs as or if deemed necessary by a licensed qualified electrical contractor of the following:
  - The main lugs in the main electrical panel were doubled tapped to provide service to the sub panel. This is an unsafe method of extending service to a sub panel as it provides no over current protection to the sub panel. In addition the wires serving the sub panel were too small for the 100 amp load at the main lugs. Double tapped circuits may cause arcing and heat buildup, a possible cause of electrical fires.
  - Typically accepted installation practices call for sub panels to have their grounds and neutrals separated and neutrals to be "floating" (not bonded) to the panel. Neutrals and grounds were noted on the same bar in the electrical sub panel. The bar appeared to be bonded to the electrical sub panel.
  - When tested with a receptacle tester the 3-prong receptacle in the garage indicated that they it was not grounded, posing a safety hazard from shock or electrocution.
  - When tested with a receptacle tester, the receptacle to the left of the kitchen sink had reversed polarity. Reversed polarity is a safety hazard. Some appliances or lamps plugged into a receptacle with reversed polarity may have power passing through the device before reaching the on/off switch. Under certain conditions, anyone touching a device with reversed polarity can inadvertently provide a ground path for current and be shocked.
  - The area where the SEC enters the meter was in need of caulking maintenance to prevent water penetration and related damage.
  - The moderately rusty meter pan should be evaluated during other repairs.
  - Missing electrical panel cover screws should be installed.
  - Receptacles had been painted over. These receptacles cannot be reliably cleaned. We recommend they be replaced. Scraping the paint off the front is not an effective means of remediation. Paint may be present on the contacts which could prevent a proper connection which in turn can lead to arcing and the possibility of fire.
  - Wires in the utility closet should be better protected from damage.
  - The light switch in the oil tank storage shed was loose posing a safety hazard.

## HEATING RECOMMENDATIONS / OBSERVATIONS

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- We recommend further evaluation, service, and repairs of the furnace as or if deemed necessary by a licensed qualified heating contractor for the following reasons:
  - The furnace was located in a closet. There may be insufficient combustion air for the furnace. Lack of sufficient combustion air can cause a carbon monoxide hazard.
  - The storage closet was crowded. Proper clearance to the furnace and its vent pipe to combustibles should be maintained per manufacturer's recommendations. Lack of combustibles clearance could pose a fire hazard.
  - There was no firematic sensor above the furnace. A firematic sensor is a safety device that shuts off power to the furnace in case of fire. Typically accepted installation practices call for a firematic sensor to be installed when no firewall exists above the furnace. Given the proximity to bedrooms, installation of a firematic sensor would be a logical safety improvement.
  - There were no service tags visible to indicate service in the past year.

## PLUMBING RECOMMENDATIONS / OBSERVATIONS

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- We recommend further evaluation and repairs as or if deemed necessary by a licensed qualified plumbing contractor of the following:
  - Leaks were noted at drain pipes in the crawlspace.
  - The toilet was loose from the floor and should be retightened to the floor. The floor around the toilet tested damp with a moisture meter when compared to an assumed dry area of the same material. The extent of any moisture intrusion should be investigated. Any moisture damaged building components should be repaired or replaced as necessary.
  - A drain pipe in the crawlspace looked to have a flat slope which may affect its ability to drain effectively.
  - An "S" trap was noted in the drain pipe under the kitchen. "S" traps are subject to siphoning problems, occasionally allowing sewer odors to emanate from the drain. We recommend further evaluation and replacement with a "P" trap as deemed necessary by a licensed qualified plumbing contractor.
  - The water main pressure gauge was significantly rusted preventing it from operating effectively.
- Raising the oil fill and vent pipes higher above the oil tank storage shed roof line may help prevent water from entering the tank during period of significant snow accumulation. We recommend that you consult with a licensed qualified heating contractor regarding improvement options.
- There is the potential for lead content in the drinking water within the home. Lead in water may have two sources; the piping system of the utility delivering water to the home and/or the solder used on copper pipes prior to 1988. This can only be confirmed by independent laboratory analysis. An evaluation of lead in water is beyond the scope of this inspection. For more information, consult the Environmental Protection Agency (E.P.A.) and CT Department of Health for further guidance and a list of testing labs in your area. More information can be found at the links below:
  - <http://www.epa.gov/lead/index.html>
  - <http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3140&q=387550>

## INSULATION/VENTILATION RECOMMENDATIONS / ENERGY SAVING SUGGESTIONS

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- The crawlspace insulation had its insulation vapor barrier installed backwards. This can trap moisture allowing for related moisture damage and possibly decreasing the efficiency of the insulation. Typically accepted installation practices and manufacturer's recommendations call for the vapor barrier to face the heated side of the insulated area. Any loose insulation should be re-secured. We recommend repairs as deemed necessary by a licensed qualified insulation contractor.
- The attic access hatch should be better insulated and weather stripped to help prevent heat loss.
- The attic gable ventilation vents were covered with plywood covers. We recommend removing them to improve attic ventilation. In addition during next re-roofing improving the amount of attic of ventilation may be beneficial. Proper ventilation may help to keep the house cooler during warm weather and extend the life of roofing materials. In cold climates, it may help reduce the potential for ice dams on the roof and condensation within the attic. Contact a licensed, qualified roofing contractor to discuss options.

## INTERIOR RECOMMENDATIONS / OBSERVATIONS

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- A significant number of windows looked as though they had lost their seals because what appeared to be fogging was noted between the panes of glass. Fogging occurs when a seal between the two panes of glass in a double glazed window fails and allows moisture and condensation to form between the panes of glass. Fogging of the glass is a cosmetic concern and may decrease the insulating qualities of the window. Typical repair is replacement of the affected units.
- What looked like 9" floor tiles were noted in closets. Tiles of this size have been known to be asbestos containing. This can only be verified by independent laboratory analysis by a licensed qualified environmental testing laboratory. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA.) reports that asbestos represents a health hazard if "friable" (damaged, crumbling, or in any state that allows the release of fibers). Further guidance is available from the E.P.A. Due to the age of construction, there may be other materials within the home that may contain asbestos (e.g. ceiling tiles) but are not identified by this inspection report. To learn more about asbestos please visit the following website:  
[http://www.dph.state.ct.us/BRS/Asbestos/asbestos\\_program.htm](http://www.dph.state.ct.us/BRS/Asbestos/asbestos_program.htm)
- Some stains that looked consistent in appearance with mold or organic growth were noted in the bathroom. We recommend further evaluation and repairs and/or remediation as deemed necessary by a licensed qualified indoor air quality lab or industrial hygienist. To learn more about mold we suggest you visit the EPA and CT Department of health websites. Their web addresses are:  
<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/moldguide.html>  
[http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3140&q=387466&dphNav\\_GID=1828&dphPNavCtr=#Mold](http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3140&q=387466&dphNav_GID=1828&dphPNavCtr=#Mold)
- Homes built prior to 1978 can contain lead paint. This can only be verified by laboratory analysis by a licensed qualified environmental testing laboratory or indoor air quality professional. An evaluation of lead in paint is beyond the scope of this inspection. For more information, consult the Environmental Protection Agency (E.P.A.) or CT Department of Health for further guidance and a list of testing labs in your area. Visit the EPA website listed below for more information.  
<http://www.epa.gov/lead/index.html>  
<http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3140&q=387550>

## KITCHEN RECOMMENDATIONS / OBSERVATIONS

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- The range appeared to be missing an anti-tip device. This important safety device prevents the range from tipping over when unbalanced (i.e. heavy loads placed upon the oven door) and causing burns or physical injury. We recommend that one be installed per range manufacturer's recommendations.

## BATHROOM RECOMMENDATIONS / OBSERVATIONS

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- The tiles in the bathtub enclosure tested damp with a moisture meter when compared to an assumed dry area of the same material indicating possible moisture intrusion. We recommend further evaluation and repairs as or if deemed necessary by a licensed qualified tile contractor.
- We recommend repairs as deemed necessary by a licensed qualified general carpenter/contractor.
  - Deterioration was noted to subflooring at the bathtub.
  - The door knob was loose. This may allow small children or the infirm to become trapped in the bathroom.
- The fan fixture was in need of cleaning to improve performance.
- Please see additional comments in the Plumbing section's Recommendations/Observations section.



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February 24, 2010

## Inspection Report Addendum

Inspection Report Number: 10021684B\_GNBA

This addendum should be considered an intrinsic part of your previously issued inspection report for the inspection report number 10021684B dated February 17, 2010. Our contract and all documents presented and signed on the day of inspection should be considered in full force for this addendum and are also considered to be in force to allow us to follow up on our original inspection. Items inspected in this addendum are limited to the specific items discussed.

### Home and Garage Roofing

Asphalt composition shingle roofs have a typical life expectancy of 18 to 22 years depending upon several factors including, but not limited to the quality of the shingle installed.\* There seemed to be moderate to significant widening of the shingle tab spaces. There seemed to be moderate loss of particulate. Moderate organic growth was noted in areas. Organic growth can trap moisture against the roof surface and remove particulate upon release. This may hasten roof aging in areas affected. Cracks were noted throughout the shingles. The shingles looked like they were curling at their edges in places. Significant deterioration was noted in valleys making them prone to leakage. The roof lines and planes appeared to be straight and even with no significant apparent dips or depressions noted. These characteristics help substantiate that the roofs appeared to be at the end of their statistical life expectancies. We recommend that you budget for replacement.

### Chimney

The chimney had one flue. The flue serviced the furnace. The flue not provided with a rain cap and vermin screen. The chimney looked to be plumb. The bricks looked to be in need of pointing maintenance. The chimney slay (protective concrete cap) appeared to be in need of repairs.

If the chimney and flue have not been cleaned within the past year, we recommend further evaluation of them by a licensed, qualified chimney contractor to determine whether cleaning and/or repairs may be needed at this time. We recommend annual inspection and cleaning by a licensed qualified chimney contractor.