249 Renforth Drive, Toronto

Inspection Report

December 22, 2016

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INSPECTIONS

COMPANY INFORMATION

- ☑ Professional Engineer (**P**rofessional **E**ngineers of **O**ntario)
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- ☑ 30 years Inspection Experience
  (14+ years with ***Carson, Dunlop & Associates***)
- ☑ Over 12,000 Homes Inspected

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Overall Condition:

This is a solidly built mid-1950's bungalow that has had a number of mechanical improvements in the past few years and is felt to be in good overall condition.

Roofing, Flashings and Chimneys:

The roof was completely obscured by snow and could not be inspected. The owner reports that the roof shingles are 13 to 14 years old. Typical total life expectancy for asphalt shingles this vintage is roughly 15 years depending on roof slope and sun exposure. As such, the roof shingles are likely near the end of their life. Consult roofers for further inspection and estimates when the shingles are not snow-covered.

The masonry chimney is in good condition.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

-The roof shingles could not be inspected due to snow cover.

Exterior:

The exterior brickwork is in good overall repair. Patched vertical cracks were noted on several brick wall surfaces. Through measuring brick widths across the cracks we were able to confirm that the patches are wide because the cracks were chipped/V-ed out prior to filling. A good example of this is the patch on the east wall of the garage. From the outside, the patch is an inch wide, but on the inside of the garage (which hasn't been patched) it can be seen that the amount of settlement is only about $1/8^{th}$ of an inch. We also noted that the concrete foundation blocks below these cracks are generally not even cracked at all. We feel that settlement is well within the typical range for a house this age and most of the settlement likely occurred (as is typical) shortly after construction. Subsequent re-cracking after patching is minimal. No remedial action is considered necessary now or in the foreseeable future.

The aluminum eavestroughs and downspouts are in satisfactory overall condition, but would benefit from some renailing – particularly at the front over the garage area as it is sagging and prone to overflow.

The front porch has had a thin angelstone facing added over the brick. Due to freeze/thaw action over many years, it has worked loose. This is almost inevitable with installations like this. It could potentially be stuccoed over or a new material could be (better) installed once the old facing is removed. Consult a contractor for suggestions/cost estimates.

Minor Deficiencies:

-The front porch stairs are supposed to have a handrail. The perimeter porch railing is short by current standards, but typical of the day. It should be noted that the Building Code is not retroactive and this arrangement is grandfathered unless it is altered/changed significantly.
-The rear garage access door required scraping and painting.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

-Exterior inspection from ground level.
-Grading not visible due to snow cover.
-Shrubs/vegetation against the house restricted the inspection.
-The garage inspection was limited by storage.

Structure:

The concrete block foundations support solid masonry (double brick) exterior walls. The roof framing is conventional stick style with pine board (or similar) roof sheathing. The house is in good structural condition.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

-The attic was inspected from the access hatch.
-Walls were spotchecked only.
-85% of the interior foundation wall area was not visible due to finishes.

Electrical:

The house has a 100-amp fused electrical service with associated older fuse panel. This is considered to be a typical and appropriate service size. Due to a limited number of fuses (including having the dryer and A/C on the same circuit) combined with some over-fusing, it would be desirable to upgrade to a new circuit breaker panel for roughly $1,500.

The distribution wiring is a combination of original ungrounded copper (was never knob-and-tube) and more recent grounded copper. All outlets and lights tested were found to be operable.

As mentioned briefly above, the dryer and A/C are on the same circuit with an "either/or" switch located in the laundry room. A separate circuit should be run for each.

A number of 3-prong electrical outlets are not actually grounded as a result of being connected to the original wiring (bedrooms, living room, dining room etc.). It is probably not cost-effective to ground these circuits, but a decent degree of protection would be afforded by providing GFCI safety receptacles on affected 3-prong outlets. Parts cost is less than $25 each. 2-prong outlets need not be modified as only ungrounded equipment can be plugged into them. We recommend providing grounded outlets where computers will be plugged in.

Add more outlets in basement areas like the family room in the course of eventual renovations.

Minor Deficiencies:

-Some electrical outlets in the basement have reversed polarity. It is a simple repair for an electrician to reverse the black and white wires at affected outlets.
-The outlet over the basement laundry tub is not Code-compliant, but at least it has a GFCI safety receptacle.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

-Electrical components concealed behind furniture and wall, ceiling and floor finishes cannot be inspected.
-Fuse blocks not pulled.

Heating:

The house is heated by a 60,000 BTU/hr high-efficiency forced air gas furnace that was manufactured 2 years ago. Typical total life expectancy is 15 to 20 years, statistically speaking. The furnace was found to be operable when tested.

The basement bathroom currently has no heat register and they are limited in the central basement. The main heating trunk line is not far away, so it wouldn't be overly difficult to add more heat registers if necessary.

Minor Deficiencies:

-The condensation/rust stain on the foundation wall below the chimney cleanout appears to be old and from the former furnace arrangement.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:
-Heat exchangers not visible.
-Safety devices not tested.
-Heat loss/heat gain calculations not done.
-Humidifier not tested.
-Although we have no reason to suspect that one is present, it should be noted that checking the premises for buried oil tanks is not included in the inspection or the Standards of Practice.

Air Conditioning:

Cooling is provided by a 24,000 BTU/hr central A/C system that was manufactured just this year. Air conditioners have a typical life expectancy of about 15 years (statistically). The unit has already been covered for winter and was not functionally tested.

Insulation:

The attic is insulated with a good amount of fibreglass and upgraded cellulose insulation – R-40 to R-50 – which is very close to current standards. Upgrading is unlikely to be cost-effective/necessary.

The solid masonry walls were built without insulation and with no space to add more insulation. This is typical for the era. Since adding more insulation is not easily done, it is best to concentrate on reducing air infiltration through caulking/sealing and weatherstripping as much as possible.

Spotchecks of finished basement walls revealed that there is little or no insulation nor any room to add more. If renovations are planned for the basement family room for instance, we recommend installing new interior stud walls with room for R-12 insulation (as well as a moisture barrier and a vapour barrier).

Inspection Methods and Limitations:
-The attic was inspected from access hatch.
-Walls were spotchecked only.
-Although checking for asbestos (which may be present in many products and materials) is not included in the inspection or the Standards of Practice, it should be noted that the use of asbestos was ubiquitous at the time the house was built and for many years afterwards. Virtually all building materials containing asbestos are considered to be of little or no health risk as long as they are not disturbed. More information on asbestos can be found at the Health Canada website – www.hc-sc.gc.ca. Without lab testing, it is not possible to determine if any of the old floor/ceiling tiles contain asbestos. There is no reason for concern if they aren't damaged.

Plumbing:

The incoming City supply pipe is the original copper where visible. The main water shutoff valve is behind a panel in the basement bar area. Water pressure is considered to be within the typical range for the age of the house, but does tend to drop with multiple fixtures flowing simultaneously. It is unlikely that this is cost-effective to improve (i.e. upgrade the water service in from the street). The visible supply piping *within* the house is copper.

The visible waste plumbing is a combination of ABS plastic, copper, lead (below the toilet) and cast iron. Cast iron waste plumbing is currently an issue for some insurance companies (although their prejudice is not considered to be warranted in our opinion). There are still a number of insurance companies without this particular bias. It is likely more practical to switch insurance companies rather than the plumbing if there are any such issues. Eventual updating of the lead toilet bend with ABS plastic would be desirable.

The 175-litre electric water heater is 13 years old. Water heaters have a typical life expectancy of about 15 years. We suggest looking into a replacement (either owned or rental/preferably gas) within the next couple of years as water heater failures can occur unexpectedly in older units. If the water heater is converted to gas, some gas/water pipe rerouting will be required. Consult a specialist for more information.

The main floor bathtub and enclosure have been outfitted with custom acrylic covers (i.e. bathfitters) and are in good repair.

The basement powder room sink waste plumbing is old and corroded (as is the sink). The waste plumbing isn't vented properly. Leakage potential is high. We recommend that this bathroom be renovated.

The basement bar sink has no waste plumbing whatsoever, no hot water and the faucet is seized. This will have to be re-installed from scratch.

Minor Deficiencies:
-Secure the main floor toilet tank better.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:
-Concealed plumbing not inspected.
-Tub/sink overflows not tested.
-Isolating/relief valves and main shut-off valve not tested.

Interior:

-Interior finishes are in good overall condition. The original plaster is holding up well overall.
-Old stains on the basement ceiling below the kitchen sink area were found to be dry with a moisture meter. We suspect past leakage around the kitchen faucet/counter connection – monitor.
-The above-grade windows were generally replaced in the late 1980's. While they are still felt to be serviceable, several have lost their seal (have condensation/mineral deposits between the panes). This includes the living room and dining room. This is an aesthetic rather than functional issue, but can only be corrected by replacing the glass.
-Both the front and side storm doors are missing their automatic closer pistons and these should be replaced.
-The basement stairs are quite steep compared to current standards and we recommend that a handrail be installed.
-The basement was found to be dry at the time of the inspection and overall, it is suspected to be that way in general. There is some efflorescence and staining along the back foundation and in the (traditionally damp) coldroom though. It should be remembered that the house was built long before the invention of modern waterproofing and perimeter drainage systems, so it is very important to prevent surface water accumulations near the house by keeping eavestroughs and downspouts well maintained and by promoting good drainage next to the foundations through good grading.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:
-No comment made on cosmetic aspects of interior finishes.
-CO/smoke detectors and appliances not inspected. We recommend that there be one smoke detector and one carbon monoxide detector on each level of every home.
-Drainage tile and exterior foundation areas below grade level are not visible.
-In all houses, moisture problems may result in visible or concealed mold growth. Environmental Consultants can assist if this is a concern as inspection for mold is a specialized environmental assessment that is beyond the scope of the inspection and the Standards of Practice.

Notes:

This is the inspection report for 249 Renforth Drive, Toronto – performed on December 22, 2016. For the purposes of this report, the front of the house is considered to be facing south. The inspection was performed according to the standards of the Ontario Association of Home Inspectors – see Limitations and Conditions at www.yeatesinspect.com/lim&cond.htm.

Telephone consultation regarding this report is available free of charge – call 416-422-1571. Walkthroughs with the inspector can also be arranged at a typical cost of $150.