

**295 Evelyn Avenue, Toronto**

**Inspection Report**

**September 6, 2016**



**COMPANY INFORMATION**

- Professional Engineer (**P**rofessional **E**ngineers of **O**ntario)
- B.A.Sc. - Civil Engineering (University of Toronto)
- 30 years Inspection Experience  
(14+ years with **Carson, Dunlop & Associates**)
- Over 12,000 Homes Inspected

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## **Inspection Report**

### **Overall Condition:**

This is a solidly built double-brick century home that has had a number of recent mechanical updates as well renovations over the years and is considered to be in above-average overall condition compared to similar homes in the area.

### **Roofing, Flashings and Chimneys:**

The sloped roofs are surfaced with asphalt shingles. The shingles are older and at the end of their life. We will not spend any time detailing the condition of the sloped roof shingles as these roofs are scheduled to be resingled in the very near future (prior to the sale of the house).

The upper flat roof is surfaced with a two-ply modified bitumen membrane. The roof is older, but is still performing satisfactorily at present - it is anticipated to have a number of years of remaining life.

The masonry chimney is in good condition. It isn't currently used by any appliances though.

#### **Inspection Methods and Limitations:**

- Roof inspected with binoculars and by walking on the rear slope and upper flat.

### **Exterior:**

The exterior brickwork is in good condition for its age (the quality of the brick is above average). Only minor localized spalling was noted.

The aluminum eavestroughs and downspouts are in satisfactory to good overall condition.

The rear stoop is in satisfactory repair.

#### **Inspection Methods and Limitations:**

- Exterior inspection from ground level.
- There is no access below the front porch for inspection.
- Sheds, fences and trees are not included in the inspection.
- The small section of southeast exterior wall is not accessible.

### **Structure:**

The brick foundations support solid masonry exterior walls. The common wall is also double brick. The rear extension is a good quality older structure with double brick walls.

Various main floor walls have been removed. Since there is no access, it is impossible to confirm if the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor joists were strengthened by doubling them up, adding a hidden beam or just relying on the original over-specified lumber. Some 2<sup>nd</sup> floor sagging is evident, but this is very typical in older homes - whether main floor walls have been removed or not.

#### **Inspection Methods and Limitations:**

- There is no access to the various roof spaces for inspection. This is typical in houses of this age and design.
- Walls were spotchecked only.
- 90% of the interior foundation wall area and most of the basement ceiling not visible due to interior finishes.

**Electrical:**

The house has a 100-amp electrical service with a circuit breaker panel. The service size is considered to be typical and adequate for a single family home.

The wiring has been upgraded to most of the house in the course of various renovations. The majority of the wiring is grounded copper. We did find some knob-and-tube wiring at the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor hall light switch. It is possible that there are some other sections of active knob-and-tube wiring that are obscured by finishes. In the 1980's and 1990's it was not unusual to have hidden connection boxes between old and new wiring, but this is no longer permitted.

Knob-and-tube wiring is very common in the area (and is still present in many homes across the City that are more than 65 years old). It is even still permitted under the current Electrical Code and is considered to be a safe method of wiring by the Electrical Safety Authority:

[http://www.esasafe.com/pdf/Flash\\_Notices/09-09-FL.pdf](http://www.esasafe.com/pdf/Flash_Notices/09-09-FL.pdf)

Nonetheless, for reasons more political than scientific, many insurance providers won't insure houses with knob and tube wiring - we advise that you check with your provider. We would also suggest contacting Dave Slack at David Slack Insurance Brokers (1-800-971-1363 or 416-992-6695) as they will typically insure homes with knob-and-tube wiring provided that they have been inspected by us and the wiring is found to be in good condition (as is the case here). A few other insurance companies will also insure knob-and-tube wiring.

Realistically though, this type of wiring is not going to become popular again and our best recommendation would be to replace it. An accurate assessment of the location of remaining older wiring needs to be made by an electrician familiar with this type of wiring. This is a specialized procedure that involves mapping all of the circuits and is beyond the scope of the inspection. In very ballpark terms, it is suspected that it would cost \$2,000 to \$5,000 to replace any remaining knob-and-tube wiring but that depends on the actual amount and location of this original wiring.

**Inspection Methods and Limitations:**

- Concealed electrical components cannot be inspected.
- A statistical sampling of electrical outlets and switches was tested.
- For safety reasons, the main disconnect switch was not operated and its cover was not removed.

**Heating:**

The house is heated by an 80,000 BTU/hr high-efficiency forced air gas furnace that was installed very recently. The furnace was not tested as the air conditioning was on and only one of the two systems can be tested at a time.

**Inspection Methods and Limitations:**

- Heat exchangers not visible.
- Safety devices not tested.
- Humidifier not tested.
- Heat gain/heat loss calculations are not done as part of a home inspection.
- 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:**

Air conditioning is provided by a 24,000 BTU/hr central A/C system that was just installed this year. The air conditioning was found to be operable at the time of the inspection.

It is suspected that the partially shared ducting arrangement, smaller duct sizes and lack of upper level air returns could mean that the A/C does not work at optimal efficiency (especially on the upper floor), but this is typical in older homes. It is beneficial to turn down or cover the basement and 1<sup>st</sup> floor registers during the cooling season to force more cool air upstairs. Even still, the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor will be noticeably warmer than the 1<sup>st</sup> floor in very hot weather. Considering our relatively short cooling season, it is unlikely that duct improvements would be cost-effective.

### **Insulation:**

There is no access to the roof spaces to check for insulation. It is suspected that some insulation may have been blown into the front attic area (based on the two roof vents present), but the amount and type of insulation is unknown.

It is unlikely that there is much insulation in the flat roof space. At this point though, adding insulation is difficult (and costly) and there are inherent space limitations that may not permit insulation/ventilation to be brought up to current standards. The cost-effectiveness of adding more insulation would need to be very carefully considered since the energy savings to capital cost ratio would be very low – especially in the short term.

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.

### **Inspection Methods and Limitations:**

- There is no access to the various roof spaces for inspection. This is typical in houses of this age and design.
- Walls were spotchecked only.
- Continuity of air/vapour barrier not verified.
- Checking for asbestos (which may be present in many products and materials) is not included in the inspection or the Standards of Practice.

### **Plumbing:**

The incoming City supply pipe appears to be an older (but typical) ½" copper service. Water pressure is considered to be typical for an older home, but does tend to drop with more than one fixture flowing simultaneously. The main service pipe from the street could be upgraded, but that can cost a few thousand dollars and may not be worth it just to get a bump in pressure.

The visible supply piping *within* the house is copper.

The visible waste plumbing is a combination of ABS plastic, copper and cast iron. Cast iron waste plumbing is currently an issue for some insurance companies. There are still a number of insurance companies without this particular bias.

The hot water heater is a new gas-fired tankless unit with a maximum firing rate of 199,000 BTU/hr.

As is occasionally found in early 1900's homes in the area, the main waste pipe exits the house *above* basement floor level. As a result, there is probably no floor drain. While this is not ideal in some ways, it also means that you can't have a floor drain sewage back-up (the major cause of flooding in homes). It should be noted that in order to install a bathroom in the basement, a sewage ejector pump would be required to pump the waste up to the level of the outgoing drain. As a result of past foundation waterproofing done on the north side of the house, there is now a sump pump located in the furnace room. Although it reportedly does not receive much (if any) discharge from the drainage tiles, it is handy to have in case of any unexpected plumbing leakage in the basement, for example.

**Inspection Methods and Limitations:**

- The main floor shower could not be tested due to storage inside. The owner reports that it has never been used.
- Concealed plumbing not inspected.
- Tub/sink overflows not tested.
- Isolating/relief valves and main shut-off valve not tested.

**Interior:**

- The interior finishes are in typical to good overall condition.
- Most of the windows have been replaced with good quality units.
- The basement stairs should have a railing.
- The main stairs are open-sided without a railing. Provide a guard/railing as appropriate (i.e. if child safety is an issue).
- The basement was found to be dry at the time of the inspection. We did note some typical efflorescence and peeling paint on the exposed foundation areas. A certain amount of moisture migration is to be expected with any older home. The owner had much of the north wall excavated and waterproofed about 10 years ago (this is why there is a sump pump in the furnace room). They report that there have been no basement leakage issues in the past 10 years. As with any home though, 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. It is also a good idea to use a dehumidifier in the basement - particularly in warmer weather.

**Inspection Methods and Limitations:**

- No comment made on cosmetic aspects of interior finishes.
- CO/smoke detectors, alarm systems and appliances are not inspected. One smoke detector and one carbon monoxide detector are recommended for each level of every home.
- Drainage tile (if any) not visible.
- Storage/furniture in the basement restricted the inspection.
- No comment can be offered on the acoustical properties of the common wall.
- 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 assessment beyond the scope of the inspection and the Standards of Practice.

**Notes:**

This is the inspection report for 295 Evelyn Avenue, Toronto – performed on September 6, 2016. For the purposes of this report, the front of the house is considered to be facing west. 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](http://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.