

Inside & Insight



Rule change affects wood rot reporting

The Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food & Forestry (ODAFF) regulates the termite inspections industry. The Wood Infestation Report form is called ODAFF-1.

As of November 1, the termite inspectors will no longer be required to report on wood rot and wood destroying organisms. In Senate Bill 710 the definition of Wood Infestation Report was amended as follows:

“Wood Infestation Report” means a document issued with a property transaction which shall, at a minimum, contain statements or certifications as to the presence or absence of termites and any other wood destroying ~~organisms~~ insects and the presence or absence of damage. The wood infestation report does not include a bid or proposal for treatment.

The single word change in the definition has a significant effect; wood rot will no longer be identified on the ODAFF-1 reports.

There has been much discussion and confusion in the real estate community regarding who is responsible for reporting wood rot concerns.

The home inspector should be reporting wood rot

The Oklahoma Department of Health governs the home inspection industry under OAC 310:276. The rules governing the home inspection industry require that a home inspector “report on

sional opinion of the inspector, are not in normal working order.”

“Normal working order” means the system or component functions without defect for the primary purpose and manner for which it was installed.

“Defect” means a condition, malfunction or problem, which is not decorative that would have a materially adverse effect on the



value of a system or component, or would impair the health or safety of the occupants or client.

As defined in the home inspection rules a home inspection includes the following: structural system, exterior, roof system, plumbing system, electrical system, heating system, air conditioning system, interior, insulation and ventilation.

Based on these requirements and definitions in the home inspection rules, all home inspectors must report visible defects when performing a home inspection, which would include

destroying organisms.

However, not all inspections are home inspections. Occasionally a customer chooses to forgo a home inspection and obtain a partial inspection from the home inspector. This may include only specific components of the property.

Customers can request individual areas of the home be inspected in lieu of a home inspection. The request can be a single item, such as the roof, or frequently the request is for an EMP Inspection (this is a partial inspection limited to the electrical, mechanical and plumbing components).

These partial inspections are not considered a home inspection and in these instances wood rot in other areas would not be reported by the home inspector. If a partial inspection is performed, the inspector must have the client's written permission to not inspect the remaining components of the home.

This information has been provided by Dan LaBrake of House-Master Inspections. Mr. LaBrake sits on the seven member Committee of Home Inspector Examiners at the Department of Health.

