



## Home Inspector Licensure

Numerous states throughout the country require the licensure of Home Inspectors, to ensure that a minimum standard of practice and level of care are observed during the course of a home inspection. While West Virginia requires the licensing of most trade contractors, the state has yet to require a licensing process for home inspectors. Without the protection of state licensing, how can you ensure that you will receive a competent home inspection?

Two years ago the West Virginia State Legislature passed a bill (HB379) that gave the Fire Commission authority to enact licensing requirements for home inspectors. This legislation is still in committee, and the final language and requirements are not yet available. Mr. Woodie Moss, representing the West Virginia Association of Home Inspectors, states that his organization has “submitted proposed legislation to the fire commission, and we are working with them.” Mr. Moss further states that his organization, “feels that standards of practice, minimum education, minimum continuing education, and passage of the National Home Inspectors Exam, should be part of that legislation.”

Until such time as the state legislates these requirements, it is perfectly reasonable for those hiring a home inspector to ask for verification of these items from a potential inspector. The recommendations before the Fire Commission are very similar to the membership requirements of the two largest non-profit, home inspections associations, and membership in one or both of these organizations indicates adherence to a minimum standard.

The National Association of Home Inspectors (NAHI) and the American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI) both maintain on-line membership directories that can be used to find home inspectors that meet the membership requirements of the organization, and offer services in your area. Membership in these non-profit professional associations tells you that the inspector has met some basic standards and adheres to a code of ethics supported by the association. The standards of practice and code of ethics for both organizations are available on their respective web sites. Many home inspectors now have their own websites as well, and basic information about their background, qualifications, and association memberships can be found on these sites.

Caveat Emptor, let the buyer beware, has long been the motto of the savvy consumer, and this phrase holds true for the home buying public. Before you contract with an inspector, to evaluate what may be the largest single purchase of

**your life, take a few minutes to ensure that they meet the requirements of the pending state legislation.**

**R. Scott Devers is President of On The Level, Professional Home Inspections of Bakerton. He will answer questions on this or other related topics via email at [levelinspections@juno.com](mailto:levelinspections@juno.com)**