

A LITTLE HUMOR WITH “ONE-LINERS”

By

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As a professional home inspector, we encounter nervous first time buyers, brokers and homeowners on a daily basis. Each party is justifiably concerned that there are no major problems with the home and that the sale will proceed. How you conduct yourself during a home inspection may either ignite a fuse of anxiety or calm the rushing waters of overwhelming decisions. Your “bedside manner” is as important as your inspection skills for being a professional means knowing when to speak with authority and when to break the ice with a little levity.

Did you every experience an audience watching your performance in complete silence or feel as though you were walking on eggshells? Perhaps in this scenario it is time to lighten up a little and say something that makes people laugh!

I’m willing to bet that during your “song & dance” of performing a home inspection, you frequently say something funny just to calm the waters. You probably use the same “one-liners” over and over without consciously thinking about them. After a number of years, inspectors develop a “stick” or a repertoire of short jokes that are spoken when certain systems are inspected or problems are discovered. Here are some that I am guilty of using:

“Well, you hired an antique to inspect this antique house. What more could you want?”

“Roofing shingles of this type have an average 20-year service life, but don’t worry because after 20 years you just turn them over and let them wear on the other side.” Pause....

“The main electrical disconnect is located outside under the meter and adjacent to every other meter for the complex. If you want to play a joke on your neighbors, just come out here on Halloween night and turn off everyone else’s main breaker – trick or treat!.”

“Did you know there are bags of one hundred dollar bills in the attic as insulation?”

“The deck is supposed to spring like this. It is one of those new do-it-yourself trampolines.”

“I always stick my head up into the fireplace to see if Santa left anything behind.”

“Those downspouts discharge into underground drains which lead all the way into the neighbor’s basement.”

“Reversed drainage is the equivalent of having a seasonal moat full of water around the castle, only in this case the moat surrounds a basement.”

“I’m going to enter the crawl space. If I am not out in 20 minutes, please have my mail forwarded to this location.”

“I always knock on the attic hatch first in case there are any ghosts up there.”

“There are two kinds of homes, those that have bugs and those that are going to get them.”

“Lets just stop a moment and watch which way those carpenter ants are tracking because in my experience they are either going shopping or going home.”

“Come on over here Mrs. Brown and I will show you where the main shut-off valve is located. Did you know that it is written in the Bible that the pipe shall break when thy husband is not home?”

“Lets see, the home has three bedrooms and you said that you only have one child. You two had better get busy!”

“So you are 1st time buyers hey? Well, we will call this inspection kindergarten 101 for homeowners.”

“Now that looks like clever do-it-yourself work. Nothing like a little Yankee ingenuity.”

You asked if my home is perfect. Well, let me tell you the truth. My wife has threatened to place a sign on the lawn saying “Home Inspector Live Here, Everything Needs Fixing”.

Inspector examining kitchen cabinets: “Look at this, the home comes fully stocked with food.”

Inspector shouting down from any roof: “Did you know that you have a water view from up here?”

“Radon is a naturally occurring gas. I take medication daily and still I am full of it!”