

4. Inspect the accessible parts of walls and ceilings for signs of insects tunneling under wallpaper or drywall. In perimeter walls near downspouts, check for moisture signs. Look for drop tubes from termites on the ceiling or walls. Look for wood boring beetle exit holes in beams on the ceiling.

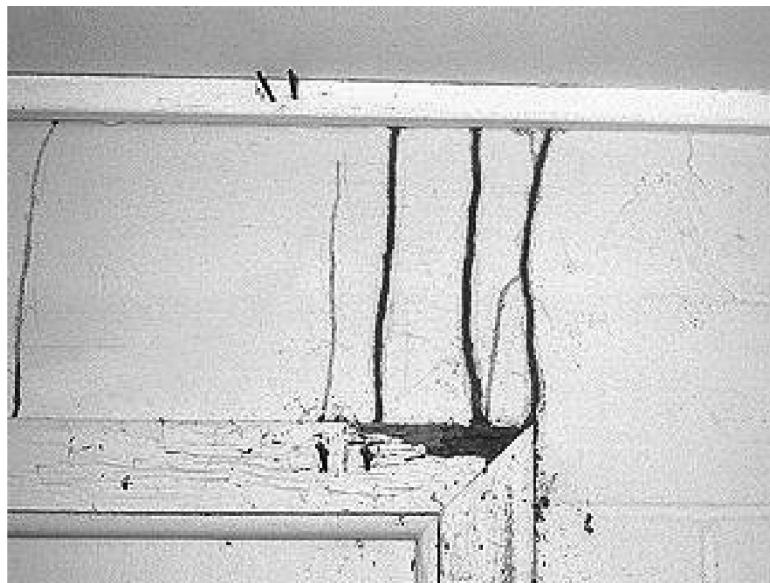


Figure 10 - 18

5. Inspect accessible areas of built in wooden cabinets and book cases located along walls for signs of activity. Open the doors of cabinets and check for mud tubes, exit holes, etc.



Figure 10 - 19

6. Inspect accessible areas in all rooms in the living area of the structure in this fashion.

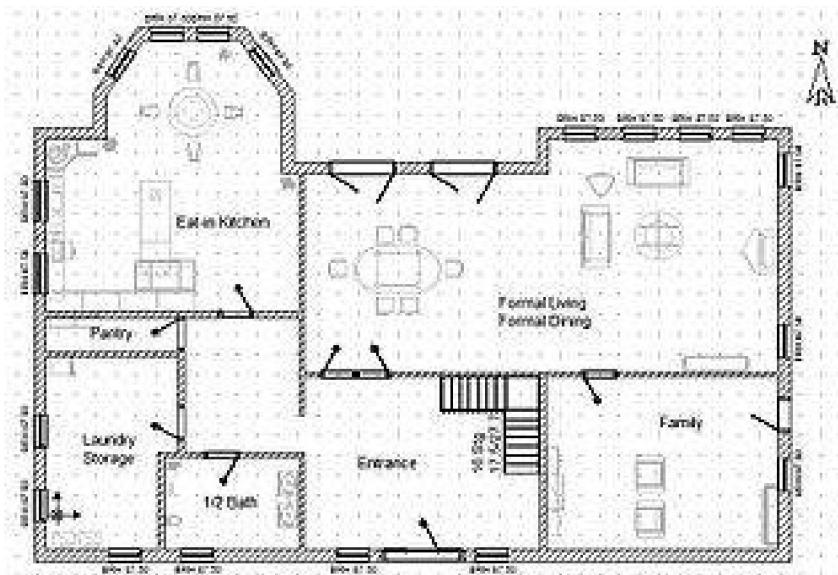


Figure 10 - 20

7. The bath trap and other readily accessible pipe penetrations of slab homes should be inspected. An inspection mirror can be used to see the back side of the pipes. Should this not be possible, mention should be made of this on the inspector's report.

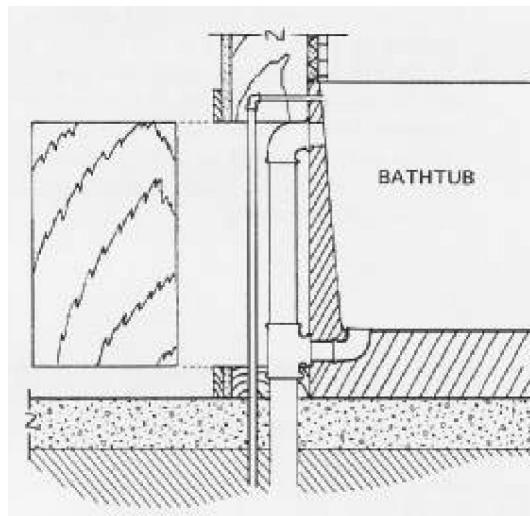


Figure 10 - 21

## ATTIC

The inspector should attempt to minimize the area in the attic in which he crawls or walks to reduce the chance of accidentally falling through an inadequate attic floor. This does not, however, preclude the inspector from inspecting the attic. If the attic is too short or filled with insulation, such that entering would be difficult or risky, the attic should be labeled obstructed and the reasons why should be described on the inspector's report. For example, lack of proper flooring or catwalk should be written in the report as the obstruction.

1. Upon entering the attic, the inspector should move as far toward the ends and eaves as possible. If a catwalk or flooring is not in place, the attic should be considered inaccessible. If most of the attic cannot be carefully inspected, it should be described as inaccessible.



Figure 10 - 22

2. The inspector will check the accessible rafters and sub- roof for signs of water leaks, mud tubes, beetle exit holes, etc.



Figure 10 - 23

3. The accessible ceiling joists and ceiling top shall be inspected for Carpenter ant frass, Carpenter ant “windows”, beetle exit holes, etc.



Figure 10 - 24

4. The floor of the attic should be inspected for Carpenter ant frass, exit holes, etc. See figure 10 – 22.

5. Probe and sound any accessible wood that appears suspect to check for insect damage.



Figure 10 - 25

6. Inspect accessible attic areas above bathrooms, around chimneys and roof valleys for evidence of insect activity that may not be evident from below. See figure 10 – 22.

### **Types Of Foundations**

House foundations are of three basic types: crawl space, basement, & slab.

Slabs can be one of three types: floating , monolithic, and supported. Inspection technique can be enhanced if the slab type can be determined. This is often difficult. Homes can have several heating systems. Slab homes with heating pipes, cable, or ducts in the floor present specific problems. Some houses may combine different types of heating systems and different types of slabs.

Floating slabs are resting only on the fill beneath. A supported slab will be resting on the foundation walls. In both cases, the foundation and slab were formed by two separate pours and there will be an expansion joint between the foundation wall and the slab. One single, continuous concrete pour of foundation and slab forms a monolithic slab.

A construction technique, which can pose a problem for the inspector, is the use of cellulose fiberboard filler between slabs and/or slabs and foundation walls. This technique is often found in commercial construction. Some split-level and slab homes are built this way, too. The fiberboard is often covered by the sills of finished walls and so inaccessible to the inspector. Termites find the fiberboard very attractive. They're able to travel between the soil and the framing of the exterior walls in concealed comfort.

When inspecting a structure from the outside, if you see that the foundation wall is constructed of hollow block, the slab is either floating or suspended. When you can see the edge of the slab is resting on the top of the foundation, that is a supported slab. When you can see a seam around the interior perimeter of the slab, it's a floating or suspended. The wider this seam, the higher the probability the slab is floating. When you insert a thin blade into that seam and it strikes cement, the slab is supported. When the blade finds fill, the slab is floating. When inspecting hollow block foundations, consider that termites may build their shelter tubes inside the hollow block voids. Consider also that the mason building the wall may have saved money by using block damaged on one side or may simply have not placed block into parts of the structure hidden by finished walls.

## CRAWL SPACE

Members of ASHI (American Society of Home Inspectors) were asked to compile a list of the most common problems found in the homes they inspected. Five hundred members made reports. Of the houses having problems, far and away, the number one problem was water in the basements and crawl spaces. They reported this to be a problem in one third of the problem houses they inspected. Wet basements and crawl spaces are conducive conditions we might also report.

Before entering a crawl space the inspector should consider the need for protective clothing. If there is standing water throughout the crawl space, it should be recorded as inaccessible. The report should include the suggestion that the water be removed and another inspection ordered which would be followed by an amended report.

1. Upon entering the crawl space, check the crawl space door and frame. Inspect the accessible areas on top of the foundation wall for dead insects and wings. Check spider webs for insect parts. Inspect and probe the sill plate, box header, floor joists, and sub flooring for moisture, damage, mud, exit holes, etc.

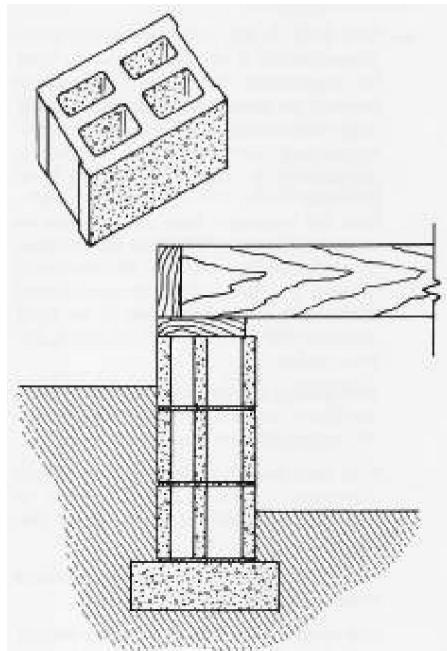


Figure 10 - 26

Because wood destroying beetles often fly into crawl spaces through unscreened vents or other openings, unfinished, exposed wood near these should receive special attention. Even a supposedly screened vent can have an appropriately sized tear.



Figure 10 - 27

2. Inspect all accessible wood members for fungi. The presence of active fungi indicates that there is a moisture problem. This area should be reported.

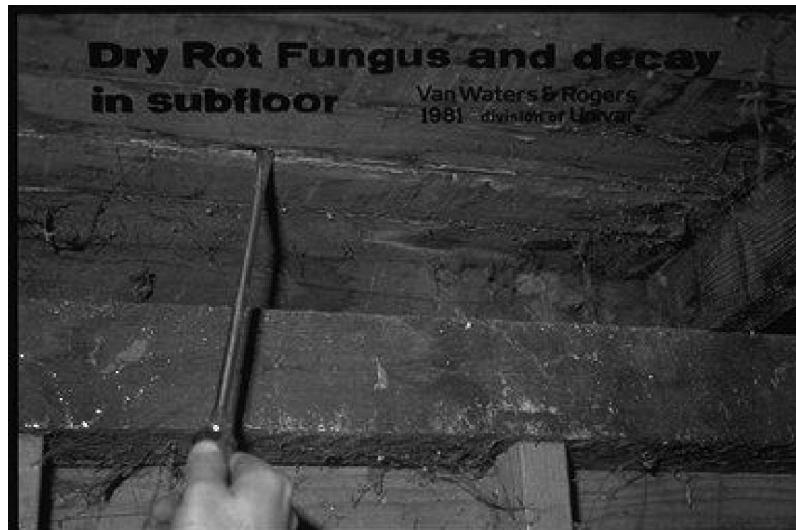


Figure 10 - 28

3. Inspect pieces of wood debris, cardboard and paper located on the floor of the crawl space for termites. Recommend that this be removed, as it is a food source for wood destroying insects



Figure 10 - 29