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Section 4 — Areas of Concern

This is a site-specific document. Items that were not present were not inspected, or items that did not exhibit any problems at the time of the inspection might not be listed in this report. If areas of concern are plentiful, such as with properties that exhibit significant deferred maintenance, the report might reflect the general condition of all components and not necessarily all explicit conditions. **If you have any questions about something that appears to be “missing,” please [contact us](#).**

Items in this section are numbered and color-coded to assist you and your real estate agent and/or attorney in evaluating them. **Bold red text** indicates an area of concern; regular black text is general information or typical causes related to the area of concern; and **bold green text** indicates typical recommendations for resolving areas of concern.

Some of the items in this section are not actual areas of concern that need to be repaired or replaced but simply convey general safety or maintenance information. Lack of such information can impact the safety of people on the property or can affect regular homeowner monitoring and maintenance.

“Too many” numbered items doesn’t necessarily mean that there are “too many” problems; it only means that there is site-specific information that needs to be conveyed to you to protect your interests—from safety, maintenance, and financial standpoints. Often, what looks like a serious defect can be corrected at minimal expense. On the other hand, sometimes a trivial-sounding item can be very expensive to repair, or not repairing it could result in significant property deterioration, injury, or death, usually because of additional problems related to the so-called trivial item. If you have any questions or concerns, though, please always feel free to [contact us](#).

TYPE OF INSPECTION..... [Full Home Inspection, Radon Gas Testing, Termite Certificate](#)

[Click here](#) for helpful information regarding Radon-Gas Testing.

[Click here](#) for helpful information regarding Termite Certificates.

INSPECTION INFORMATION [Sample Report](#)
19 Berkshire Drive, Hamilton, NJ 08690
01/01/2007–9:00am

ROOM DESCRIPTIONS

When outside the structure, the terms “front,” “left,” “rear,” and “right” are used to describe the structure as viewed from the main entrance. **If you have any questions about room descriptions or locations, please [contact us](#); it’s important that you be able to identify the rooms that we discuss in your report.**

- | | | |
|---|--------------|--|
| A | Bottom floor | Concrete floor with block walls, Half bathroom, Bedroom, Downstairs Den, Utility room |
| B | Second floor | Hall, Foyer, Kitchen, Dining room, Living room, Bathroom, Stairway, Three bedrooms |
| C | Third floor | Attic |

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FREE-STANDING APPLIANCES and NON-STANDARD SYSTEMS

Inspecting or testing free-standing appliances and non-standard systems is not within the scope of the home inspection. [Click here](#) for helpful information about free-standing appliances and non-standard systems.

Refrigerator, Washer, Dryer (2), Wall air conditioner**GENERAL AREAS OF CONCERN**

- A. General**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about structures that were vacant at the time of the inspection.
- B. General**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about structures built more than 10 years ago.
- C. General**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about structures that have been renovated recently.
- D. General**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about condominiums and other common area properties.
- E. General**—**Recommend checking permit history on this structure to ensure that there are no open permits for any past work that has been done.** This is our standard recommendation to help protect your financial interests in this property. [Click here](#) for helpful information about permits and permit history.
- F. General**—Wildlife are part of the natural habitat, but they often invade homes. Some wildlife, such as rodents and snakes, can squeeze through small holes, allowing them to get inside the walls where they can breed and become a health-hazard. If you are specifically concerned about wildlife invasion, including ants, have a licensed pest control professional evaluate the residence to ensure that it is wildlife-proof, and then practice regular homeowner monitoring and maintenance to prevent wildlife intrusion. Refer to our signed Wood-destroying insects form NPMA-33. [Click here](#) for helpful information regarding Termite Certificates.

PROPERTY/DISCLOSURE INFORMATION

- G. Bathrooms**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about bathrooms. [Click here](#) for helpful information about recaulking and regrouting.
- H. Carbon monoxide alarms**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about carbon monoxide.
- I. Chimney and fireplace**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about fireplaces and chimneys.
- J. Common area property**—[Click here](#) for helpful information if you are buying a condominium or other common area property.
- K. Cracks**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about interior and exterior cracks.
- L. Floors**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about carpet, vinyl, and wood flooring in areas subject to high moisture, such as bathrooms, laundry rooms, building entrances, etc.
- M. Foundation**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about foundations.
- N. Garage**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about garages.
- O. Heating and cooling**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about heating and cooling.
- P. Laundry**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about laundry areas.
- Q. Outlets**—[Click here](#) and [here](#) for helpful information about electric outlets.
- R. Roof**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about roofs in New Jersey. [Click here](#) for helpful information if you are buying a condominium or other common area property.
- S. Smoke alarms**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about smoke alarms.
- T. Structure exterior**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about the structure exterior.
- U. Utilities**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about utilities.
- V. Water heater**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about water heaters.
- W. Windows**—[Click here](#) for helpful information about windows.

SPECIFIC AREAS OF CONCERN**ATTIC**

- 1. Attic**—**Furnace flue running through the attic was in contact with insulation and there was no fire-stop between floors.** Flues can become hot during use. **Recommend using caution in attic. Recommend ensuring that any storage in attic is not within close proximity to flue. Recommend regular homeowner monitoring and maintenance. Recommend adding a fire-stop between floors.**
- 2. Attic**—**Insulation may be inadequate.** Condition can cause hot spots that affect both interior temperatures and life expectancy of the roof covering in the area of the hot spot. **Recommend having additional attic insulation installed.**

3. **Attic—Moisture stains in attic around plumbing vent stacks.** Condition typically is caused by roof leaks. Roof drainage problems cannot be adequately determined during dry weather. **Recommend determining and eliminating source of moisture stains, and repair or replacement.**
4. **Attic—Not all of the attic and attic floor was visible and/or accessible due to normal attic conditions** (framing, ductwork, insulation, storage, inaccessible areas, etc.). There is the possibility that defects or other problems are present but not visible due to conditions. Note that attic insulation is never moved or otherwise disturbed, so anything under the insulation was not inspected or otherwise examined. [Click here](#) for helpful information about attics. [Click here](#) for helpful information about roofs in New Jersey.

BATHROOM

5. **Bathroom—Toilet and sink in downstairs half bathroom did not appear to be vented properly.** Condition can result in siphoning of traps, poor drainage, and sewer gases entering house. [Click here](#) for helpful information about plumbing drain noises. **Recommend further evaluation by a licensed plumber.**

BATHTUBS AND SHOWERS

6. **Bathtubs and showers—Functional drainage might be low in bathtub in second floor hall bathroom.** Condition sometimes is caused by clogged drains; other causes or multiple causes are possible. Individuals have their own perceptions of adequate sink drainage. **Recommend Client judging adequacy of drainage and further evaluation by qualified plumbing professional if Client deems drainage unsatisfactory.** [Click here](#) for helpful information about functional drainage.

CABINETS

7. **Cabinets—Kitchen cabinet door handles not present.** **Recommend repair or replacement.**

CLOSETS

8. **Closets—Closet doors difficult to open or close in downstairs bedroom right closet.** Condition typically is caused by excessive storage, loose or damaged hardware, poor framing or structure settling, new carpet installation, or loose tracks or guides; other causes or multiple causes are possible. **Recommend further evaluation to determine cause, and appropriate repair as necessary.**
9. **Closets—Closet doors missing in left closet in downstairs bedroom.**

COOLING CONDENSER

10. **Cooling condenser—Condenser was located on a plastic platform,** which typically will not last as long as a concrete platform when subjected to the constant vibrations from the condenser. **Recommend regular homeowner monitoring and maintenance.**
11. **Cooling condenser—Cooling condenser was not operated due to low temperature. Temperature at time of inspection was 40°F.** Operating the cooling condenser when the temperature is 65°F or below is not recommended by manufacturers. If the refrigerant is viscous and does not circulate freely, the condenser could seize and cause significant damage. **Recommend consulting with seller concerning most recent use and/or most recent maintenance or service call and/or further evaluation by licensed heating and air conditioning professional.**
12. **Cooling condenser—Insulation on low pressure line (larger line) was starting to unwrap.** Maintenance concern. Improperly insulated low pressure line can result in excessive wear on the cooling system, lower cooling capacity, and a decreased life expectancy for the system. **Recommend having insulation repaired or replaced as necessary.**

DOORS

13. **Doors—Door dead-bolt did not lock in front door in downstairs den.** Condition typically is caused by improper door framing, damaged/loose/missing hardware, or structure settling in the affected area; other causes or multiple causes are possible. **Recommend further evaluation to determine cause, and repair or replacement, as necessary.**
14. **Doors—Door hard to close in second floor bathroom.** Condition typically is caused by improper door framing, damaged/loose/missing hardware, or structure settling in the affected area; other causes or multiple causes are possible. **Recommend further evaluation to determine cause, and repair or replacement, as**

necessary.

15. **Doors—Sliding glass door assemblies were not verified as tempered safety glass; safety seal was not present or was not visible.** In some older doors, the safety seal is covered by the door frame, but inspectors have no way of knowing if the door is tempered unless the safety seal is visible. [Click here](#) for helpful information about tempered safety glass. **Recommend verifying as tempered safety glass or having tempered safety glass installed.**

DRIVEWAY

16. **Driveway—Driveways and sidewalks showed signs of cracking and rising and settling.** Condition can create trip hazards, a major cause of accident and injury around the home. Trip hazards include, but are not limited to, major cracks; surface raising and settling; non-standard, gravel, and unpaved walkways; single steps and toe stubbers; and tree roots in walkways. **Recommend having trip hazards removed, marked with reflective paint/tape, or having lights installed nearby, and using caution in areas where trip hazards exist.**
17. **Driveway—Evidence of poor drainage in driveway.** Poor drainage typically will promote advanced deterioration of many materials such as concrete and asphalt and the wood trim around the basement den door. **Recommend having drainage improved and regular homeowner monitoring and maintenance.**

ELECTRIC OUTLETS

18. **Electric outlets—GFCI outlets or protected outlets not present at some countertop locations in kitchen, in bathrooms, and at exterior where typically desired.** **Recommend having safety outlets installed by a licensed electrician.** [Click here](#) for helpful information about GFCI safety outlets.
19. **Electric outlets —Improperly wired three-prong outlets on kitchen countertop to the left of the sink (Hot/Neutral reversed).** Safety hazard. **Recommend further evaluation by a licensed electrician.**
20. **Electric outlets —Painted outlets in downstairs den.** Fire hazard. Most paints are flammable, and any prolonged arcing or overheating problems at outlets could result in fires. Painted outlets also can prevent plugs from being easily inserted and removed, possibly causing damage to the outlet or the appliance plug. **Recommend having painted outlets replaced.**

ELECTRICAL PANEL

21. **Electric panel—A Federal Pacific Electric (FPE) “Stab-Lok” service panel was present.** FPE circuit breakers may fail to trip in response to an overcurrent or a short circuit. A circuit breaker that may not trip does not afford the protection that is intended and required, creating a **FIRE AND SAFETY HAZARD**. Electric panels and circuit breakers are designed to prevent personal injury and property damage in the event of a short (or other problem) by shutting down the electric current to the faulty appliances or electrical components. The fact that there “have not been any problems” simply means that the electric wiring, switches, and outlets; and the appliances using the wiring, switches, and outlets, have not had any problems. Simply replacing the circuit breakers might not be a reliable repair. A common “defense” of the electric panel is that “it’s always been there and hasn’t caused any problems.” Electric panels in and of themselves typically do not “cause any problems.” It is the electric components or appliances that typically cause problems, e.g., a short in an appliance, an electric outlet, or a light switch. There appears to be no official recall on these panels, mainly because the companies that made these panels are out of business. For additional helpful information about Federal Pacific electric panels, [click here](#), [click here](#), [click here](#), and [click here](#). There is the possibility that this electric panel has been upgraded, but only a licensed electrician can make that determination since electric service might have to be shut off and circuit breakers removed; note that home inspectors are not licensed electricians. **Recommend further evaluation by a licensed electrician before close of escrow.**
22. **Electric panel—A main circuit breaker was not present or was not visible.** There were more than six circuits present. During an emergency it is desirable that electric service be easily and quickly disconnected, generally recognized as six or fewer motions (the fewer the better). **Recommend having a licensed electrician install a service disconnect. Recommend devising an emergency plan for quickly and easily disconnecting all electricity in the event of an emergency.**
23. **Electric panel—Panel located in closet.** Although locating electric panels in closets at one time was common, there are inherent dangers in such locations due to typical storage of combustible materials (clothes, etc.) in

- closets. **Recommend maintaining clearance around panel or having panel re-located.**
24. **Electric panel—Screw missing from cover.** Safety hazard and maintenance concern. Missing screws can result in loose covers making contact with live wires, causing shorts or fires. Loose covers also allow greater moisture penetration into the panel. **Recommend having screws replaced; screws should be flat end (not pointed) to prevent piercing wires.**
25. **Electric panel—Some or all circuits were not labeled, labeling was faded and/or not readable, and/or labeling was confusing.** Safety hazard. **Recommend having a licensed electrician label circuits.**

ELECTRIC SERVICE

26. **Electric service—Frayed service entrance cable.** Safety and maintenance hazard. **Recommend having a licensed electrician repair or replace cable.**
27. **Electric service—Service capacity was undetermined.** By today's standards, service capacity should be at least 100 amps. Some insurance companies decline to provide homeowner's insurance if service capacity is unknown or is less than 100 amps. Additionally, if Client has an excessive number of televisions, stereo systems, computers, printers, fax machines, etc., individual circuits might not be adequate depending on what appliances are being used on the circuit. **Recommend contacting homeowners' association concerning service capacity. Recommend contacting preferred insurance company to ensure that insurance can be acquired if service capacity is unknown or less than 100 amps. Recommend consulting with a licensed electrician concerning adequacy of service capacity and circuits for Client's specific needs.**

EXTERIOR GROUNDS

28. **Exterior grounds—Flat or nearly flat areas near foundation.** Water might pond in flat or nearly flat areas. Exterior grading drainage cannot be adequately determined during dry weather. Standing water too close to the foundation can undermine the foundation and cause damage, including settling cracks in the walls and ceilings, as well as possible intrusion into the wall framing, possibly causing moisture damage in the walls. Standing water can also provide breeding grounds for unwanted insects. **Recommend ensuring that grading slopes away from structure, monitoring grading during rainfall, and further evaluation by a qualified landscape professional if water ponding or other problems detected.**

FURNACE

29. **Furnace—A trap was not present or was not visible on the main drain line for the evaporator coil unit.** Safety hazard and maintenance hazard. Lack of a trapping mechanism can result in materials and dangerous gases being drawn into the unit and distributed throughout the structure interior. The trap should be as close to the furnace as possible. **Recommend having trap installation verified or having a licensed heating and cooling professional install a trap.**
30. **Furnace—Air filter needed cleaning or replacement.** Fire hazard and maintenance concern. Clogged filters can restrict air flow and increase internal temperatures, possibly resulting in fires. A clean air filter will help increase the efficiency and prolong the life expectancy of the heating and cooling system. **Due to the expense of repairing or replacing heating and air conditioning systems and the damage that can be caused by dirty or clogged coils, recommend replacing filter and a complete system evaluation by licensed heating and cooling professional.**
31. **Furnace—Condensate pump present to discharge condensate from evaporator coil unit.** Condensate pumps have a limited life span which results in an overflow of the condensate pump. **Recommend regular homeowner monitoring and maintenance.**
32. **Furnace—Rusted flue.** Condition can cause inadequate drafting and lead to water intrusion. **Recommend repair or replacement.**
33. **Furnace—Secondary drain line not present.** Maintenance concern. An independent secondary drain line is desirable to help prevent water damage in case the main drain line becomes clogged. Without the secondary drain line, if the primary drain line becomes clogged, condensate will back up into the coil box and rust it out. **Recommend having a licensed heating and cooling professional install a secondary drain line.**

LAUNDRY

34. **Laundry—Dryer exhaust vent was clogged with lint and vinyl dryer exhaust vent present.** Fire hazard.

- Recommend cleaning or replacing by a qualified professional and regular homeowner monitoring and maintenance. Recommend replacing the vinyl dryer exhaust vent with a solid metal exhaust vent.**
35. **Laundry—Some or all utilities and hookups were not visible due to installation of washer and dryer.** There is a possibility that defects were not visible; concealed defects are not within the scope of the home inspection. **Recommend consulting with current owner concerning moving washer and dryer and inspecting utility components and laundry area.**

LIGHTS AND SWITCHES

36. **Lights and switches—Light switches did not work in sporadically throughout the house.** Condition typically results from burned out light bulbs, lights that are on sensors or timers, defective light switches or light sockets, or a switched outlet that is not being used; other causes or multiple causes are possible. **Recommend further evaluation to determine function of light switch. Recommend ensuring that all light bulbs, light fixtures, and/or light switches are working at close of escrow.**

OVEN

37. **Oven—Oven was not tested; dishes, packing materials, or other materials were being stored in oven. Recommend further evaluation once dishes and/or storage items have been removed.**

ROOF

38. **Roof—A gap where birds may be able to enter the attic was visible at rear of house above gutter and between roof eaves and roof.** Health hazard and maintenance concern. **Recommend closing this gap to prevent birds and other wildlife access to the attic.**
39. **Roof—Downspouts terminated next to foundation.** Water directed at or near the foundation can cause undermining and settling damage. **Recommend having termination points extended away from foundation.**
40. **Roof—Not all of the roof was visible and/or accessible.** There is the possibility that problems were not visible; concealed defects are not within the scope of the home inspection. **Recommend regular homeowner monitoring and maintenance.**
41. **Roof—Roof covering appeared to be at the end of its useful life. Overall deterioration of roof covering. Shingles appeared to be curled, cracked, damaged, or torn. Granules appeared to be missing and the asphalt base was visible. Flashings around plumbing vent stacks were raised and deteriorated. Recommend having roof inspected and written estimate for replacement obtained from a qualified, professional roofing contractor before close of escrow.**
42. **Roof—Two layers or more of roofing material appeared to be on roof.** Condition typically will increase cost of installing new roof covering when necessary.

SEWER SERVICE

43. **Sewer service—Cast iron drain pipes present.** Maintenance concern. Cast iron drain pipes typically indicate an older sewer system. Cast iron also is subject to excessive deterioration from the inside out. These types of sewer pipes can fail or clog at any time. Rook Home Inspections LLC is aware of some sellers who use commercial drain cleaners to solve clogging problems prior to home inspections, only to have the clogging problems return a short time into the future. **Best recommendation is to have the cast iron drain pipes replaced or having the pipe interior cleaned by a licensed plumbing professional.**

SINKS

44. **Sinks—Functional drainage low in downstairs half bathroom sink.** Condition sometimes is caused by clogged drains; other causes or multiple causes are possible. Individuals have their own perceptions of adequate sink drainage. **Recommend Client judging adequacy of drainage and further evaluation by licensed plumbing professional if Client deems drainage unsatisfactory. [Click here](#)** for helpful information about functional drainage.
45. **Sinks—Stopper not working in downstairs half bathroom sink. Main drain and overflow drains not adequately evaluated.** Missing stoppers can allow small items (toys, rings, hair pins, etc.) to clog the drain. Missing stoppers sometimes indicate problems with drainage in the area. Plumbing leaks are most easily discovered by closing the stopper, filling a sink with water, and then opening the stopper to let the water drain

as fast as possible. **Recommend repair or replacement and further evaluation of drainage before close of escrow.**

STAIRS, EXTERIOR

46. **Stairs, exterior—Cracks in side of front stairs. Recommend regular homeowner monitoring and maintenance.** [Click here](#) for helpful information about cracks.

STRUCTURE EXTERIOR

47. **Structure exterior—Detached structure on property.** [Click here](#) for helpful information about detached structures.
48. **Structure exterior—Earth to wood separation was inadequate near driveway connection to house.** The wood trim was delaminated and deteriorated. Four to six inches of clearance between the bottom of the wall and the ground should be maintained to help prevent the wall from absorbing moisture from the ground and to help prevent infestation by wood-destroying pests and organisms. **Recommend repair or replacement of the wood trim and regular homeowner monitoring and maintenance.**
49. **Structure exterior—Exterior electric outlet on rear of house was not weatherproofed.** Safety hazard and a maintenance concern. Condition can allow moisture to penetrate into the electrical system. **Recommend ensuring that all exterior outlets are appropriately weatherproofed.**
50. **Structure exterior—Loose wires on siding.** Safety hazard, particularly where children might be present. **Recommend having all loose wires secured properly to structure.**
51. **Structure exterior—Rear water faucet did not turn on.** Condition can indicate that the water has been turned off from the inside, but other causes are possible. **Recommend determining if the water has been turned off from the inside or if further evaluation is warranted..**

STRUCTURE INTERIOR

52. **Structure, interior—Trip hazard (raised step) in doorway leading to downstairs bedroom from the hall and from the half bathroom.** These conditions create trip hazards, which are a major cause of accident and injury around the home. Landings should be of a sufficient size to allow one to open and close a door without backing up or down the steps. **Recommend having landings modified to eliminate hazards. Recommend using caution until modifications can be made.**

VEGETATION

53. **Vegetation—Trees in front yard.** Condition can lead to foundation cracks and movement, driveway and walkway cracks and movement, and clogged and broken water and waste lines which may be expensive to repair. **Recommend removing trees from front yard and having main waste lines video-inspected.**

WALKWAYS

54. **Walkways—Walkways showed signs of rising and settling.** Condition can create trip hazards, a major cause of accident and injury around the home. Trip hazards include, but are not limited to, major cracks; surface raising and settling; non-standard, gravel, and unpaved walkways; single steps and toe stubbers; and tree roots in walkways. **Recommend having trip hazards removed, marked with reflective paint/tape, or having lights installed nearby, and using caution in areas where trip hazards exist.**

WATER HEATER

55. **Water heater—Burners and burner chamber were rusty and unit was beyond its expected life span.** Condition can lead to gas leaks, incomplete combustion, and excessive production of carbon monoxide. [Click here](#) for helpful information about carbon monoxide. **Recommend budgeting for replacement in the near to immediate future.**
56. **Water heater—Gas leak around water heater thermostat present.** Safety hazard. **Recommend repair by a licensed plumber.**

WINDOWS

57. **Windows—Window lock was broken in second floor hall bathroom. Recommend repair or replacement.**
58. **Windows—Window painted shut in downstairs den.** Condition typically is caused by heavy or multiple

coats of paint; other causes or multiple causes are possible. **Recommend having cause determined and repair or replacement, as necessary.**

CLIENT COMMENTS

Have you read the complete report? The report provides safety and maintenance information as well as common problems and methods for addressing such problems. It also tells you what we did and didn't do, what we could and couldn't do, and what we would and wouldn't do if personal safety or property damage was involved. If you don't understand something, or if we did not make ourselves clear, please [contact us](#). Also feel free to visit our web site at www.rookininspections.com at any time.

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