

# Shopping for a house? Inspect your home inspector

**Regulation, more training required in home inspection business, experts say**

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When it comes to buying a house, getting the right home inspector can be more important than having a good real estate agent — and could make the difference between saving, or spending, homeowners thousands of dollars down the road.

But according to a growing number of professionals, home inspectors need more training and should be regulated by the province.

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"Anybody can print a business card and call themselves a home inspector," says author and home inspector Bruce McClure.

"There's no rules or regulations as to what a home inspector does."

Prospective buyers are encouraged to check out home inspectors as thoroughly as they check out their new, would-be homes. Ask about:

- References.
- The inspector's past experience, and whether they have worked in a trade or construction.
- Why they got into the business.

The problem, McClure says, is education. Plumbers, electricians and gas fitters get extensive training that includes thousands of hours as an apprentice

"But the home inspector is supposed to come in and do everything and has no training in any of that," he said.

Contractor Mike Holmes says buyers should have a good home inspector lined up before looking for a house. (CBC)

Celebrity contractor Mike Holmes has been working with the province to come up with stiffer requirements for the industry, but progress has been slow.

"I don't really think the politicians or government or licensing bureau knows what to do with the home inspection industry," Holmes said.

He says buyers should have a qualified inspector lined up before they go house hunting.

"The very first thing you need to do is really simple," he told CBC News. "Find the home inspector, and the best home inspector you can find before you look for a house."

"Never do it the other way around because, odds are, it can hurt."