

# N.L. urges buyers to get home inspection, but province won't commit to regulating industry

Department stresses importance of research before purchase



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Service NL is encouraging home owners to get an inspection before making a purchase. (Alex Lupul/CBC)

The Newfoundland and Labrador government is encouraging consumers to get a home inspection before purchasing, but won't commit to oversight of the unregulated industry.

There are no formal requirements to become a home inspector in most of Canada — with the exception of B.C. and Alberta. Critics say that leaves very little protection

for home buyers who often rely on the results of an inspection before buying a house.

[A CBC News investigation](#) found homeowners had little recourse, aside from the courts, when they receive a poor home inspection in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Service NL Minister Sarah Stoodley declined an interview.

"Should there be a decision in the future to consider licensing, there are a number of areas that would need to be researched, such as standards, costs and training," a department spokesperson said by email.

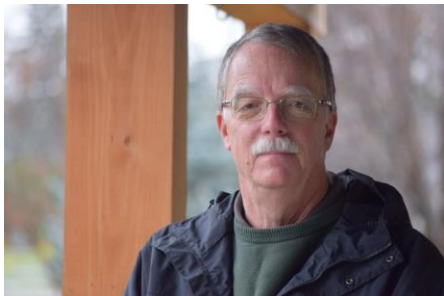
"Purchasing a home is one of the biggest investments people make, and we encourage investing in a home inspection before final sale."

- [\*\*N.L. home inspector leaves unhappy customers, as advocates call for industry regulation\*\*](#)

The department said home buyers should ensure the inspector "is qualified, experienced and dependable, and they should always ask for references."

Three of the home buyers [who spoke with CBC News](#) said their inspector came recommended by real estate agents, and that his Google Review was 4.9 out of five. Despite that, they say they still ran into trouble which left them — in some cases — with tens of thousands of dollars in debt.

Service NL said businesses are required to comply with the Consumer Protection and Business Practices Act, and complaints can be lodged with the Consumer and Financial Services Division.



Peter Weeks, president of the Canadian Association of Home and Property Inspectors, says consumer protection starts with provincial governments. (Robyn Miller/CBC)

Peter Weeks, president of the Canadian Association of Home and Property Inspectors, said more must be done to protect buyers — and that begins with the province.

"Anybody can start a home inspection business tomorrow, go out and start home inspecting," Weeks said in a recent interview.

Weeks said home buyers should ask their inspectors if they've done mentored inspections, or if they have education in things like defect recognition.

"This is big bucks. This is a long commitment of money for them. They want to go in and have some assurance that something is going to be OK."

Weeks said Quebec is planning on introducing mandatory inspections and regulation of the industry by 2024. Ontario passed the Home Inspectors Act in 2017 but it has not yet been implemented.