

When getting a home inspection, go with the expertise of STF Residential Services

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Special to Advertiser

During his 30 plus years in the construction and home building business, Paul Goins of Prince Frederick estimated that he has inspected more than 1,000 homes. In 2003, when Goins entered "semi-retirement," he decided to use his experience and go to work for himself.

"Doing home inspections falls right into what I did for a living for more than 30 years," said Goins who furthered his credentials by completing the American Home Inspectors Training Institute's Master Course in preparation for opening STF Residential Services two years ago.

Now Goins, a former county building inspector, provides inspection services for homebuyers, sellers and builders, as well as for banks and insurance companies.

With the number of home inspection companies rising in the area due to a strong home selling market, Goins said it is beneficial to hire an inspector who has previous experience in the business since the state of Maryland does not, as of yet, require licensure for home inspectors.

"Background is important when you are looking for a qualified inspector," said Goins who recommended not only asking for a home inspector's previous experience, but also checking on affiliations with national home inspection organizations.

"They set standards of practice and standards of ethics, and require ongoing training" Goins said of national home inspection associations such as National Association of Home Inspectors (NAHI) with which his company is affiliated.

"Our inspection is a thorough, in-depth examination of the structure and operating components of the home," emphasized Goins who requires two to three hours to complete a home inspection.

"Anybody who does a home inspection in one hour is not doing their job," said Goins who considers each home inspection as important to him as inspecting a home for his own family.

"I'm into being safe. I want to feel com-



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Paul Goins, a former county building inspector, provides inspection services for homebuyers, sellers and builders, as well as for banks and insurance companies.

fortable knowing I've found everything I could possibly find, and if my family moved into the house, they would be safe," he said.

For best results, STF recommended that clients accompany the home inspector in order to become better educated on the home's structural and operational facets. At the conclusion of the home inspection, clients are provided with their choice of three different reports.

"We can perform the inspection using our 34-page check list form and give you the report after the inspection is completed," Goins said, addressing the needs of those who are facing time constraints. In addition, clients may choose to receive the 34-page inspection report plus photographs, after processing at the home office, via e-mail or they may choose a narrative

report with photos, which also can be delivered after home office processing.

Although e-mailed reports and narrative reports are not completed at the time of the inspection, Goins assures clients that any items of concern are explained at the property during the inspection.

"People want to know if the house has lead pipes or aluminum wiring," Goins said for example, remarking that structural and operational issues that need attention are often not visible or apparent to a homebuyer, who is making a very important investment.

"The public knows more today than they did 30 years ago," Goins said of today's homebuyers who are making their biggest investment. "They want to know what they are getting for their money, and I want to give them that."