

# White Paper: The Home Inspection Business in Kansas

Home inspecting work is largely the same from state to state, but licensing requirements differ. Many states require a home inspector license, but a good portion of them don't. While that means there can be some fairly significant differences in the way that inspectors perform the job, most states seem to agree that's not the reality. Licensed or unlicensed, inspectors tend to perform equally well from state to state.

Why are some states strict while other states appear to adhere to the philosophy that inspectors don't require regulation?

There's more than one answer.

## **Training Makes a Difference**

In states where licensing doesn't exist, you might think that there's an awfully wide range of inspectors from the barely informed to the full-fledged professional. That's essentially true, but there are great and not-so-great inspectors in every state. And there is a consistency among the majority of Home Inspectors. There's more to becoming a pro than obtaining a license.

This consistency is due in part to widespread home inspector training, provided and required by National Home Inspection Associations, such as ASHI (American Society of Home Inspectors) and InterNACHI (Int'l Association of Certified Home Inspectors). Competition means that the best will rise to the top. So while it's possible for someone with no training in a state with a license requirement to call himself a home inspector, he won't get much repeat business or many referrals if the work isn't on par with other inspectors. For someone who wants to earn a living, it's just good business sense to get the education and belong to professional associations in order to remain competitive.

A license alone doesn't make a better inspector.

## **Licensing Doesn't Necessarily Mean Higher Standards**

If you live in a state without licensing requirements, you might wonder if education alone is enough to offer a valuable service to customers. The state of Ohio wondered the same thing, and researched it in a 2004 study. But while the study concluded that licensing could be important, the individual findings in the study revealed almost no difference between inspections reports by licensed inspectors and those who were unlicensed.

Kansas has legislative history that substitutes for a study

## **History of Licensed Home Inspectors in KANSAS:**

A Home Inspection Licensure Bill was passed in 2009, it included a Sunset Provision

The 2009 Home Inspector License bill was rescinded by governor Brownback in 2013

**“Upon review of the materials provided by the proponents of this legislation, both in 2008 and 2013, I see little evidence of large numbers of Kansas citizens being economically harmed by home inspectors,” Brownback said in a news release announcing his veto. “In fact, even the proponents believe the vast majority of Kansans who provide this service are honest people. Therefore it appears the legislation passed in 2008 may simply add unnecessary fees and regulations to law abiding citizens.”**

The **reality**, was, no discernible difference between inspection reports, from licensed or unlicensed inspectors. As no significant economic harm to consumers was noted while Home Inspection Licensure was in place for 4 years.

### **Unregulated Doesn't Necessary Mean Free From Consequence**

Just because Kansas has no regulations doesn't mean nobody is watching. Home inspectors are part of the real estate community. When real estate agents' client get burned by an inspector, they'll tell their peers. If the client hired the inspector based on the agent's referral, that referral might be the last from any agent in the area.

To a certain degree, home inspecting also polices itself. Just as agents learn about bad inspectors in their midst, word gets around the inspector community. Above-board professionals talk and they educate their customer base.

Sooner or later, the only options for ne'er-do-wells are to clean up their act or move on to a different market or another industry altogether.

And additionally, homebuyers have monetary recourse in the court room, and this has proven effective. In 2013, supporting the removal of the, Licensing of Kansas Home Inspectors, Kansas Sen. Ty Masterson, R.-Andover, stated that he thought any financial remedy sought by a Kansas homeowner against an inspector could be “remedied in court.”

From 2009 to 2013 no demonstrated need, by consumer complaints, was shown in Kansas for Home Inspector Licensing

## **The Statistics do not show massive complaints against Home Inspectors**

According to members of the Home Inspection Board during the period that Kansas Licensed fewer than 8 complaints were presented to the Board.

Associations have high standards, thus, reducing consumer dissatisfaction.

## **Professional Associations Have Strict Guidelines**

Associations do at least as much to regulate inspectors as a licensing board because of their Standards of Practice. The Standards may vary slightly from one association to another, but they all set forth what's expected of an inspector and an inspection. Association membership requires adhering to the Standards, which is how these organizations create consistency throughout the industry with or without a state license.

Regardless of where you live and work, you can, and should, join a home inspection professional association. There are national associations, such as ASHI and InterNACHI, state chapters of the national associations, and state-level associations such as the California Real Estate Inspection Association (CREIA). All valid associations also require continuing education, which keeps inspectors on the cutting edge of the industry.

## **Where the Majority of Home Inspectors Stand**

State Licensing, aimed at regulating the education and performance of home inspectors, with the ultimate goal of protecting consumers, has shown no clear results. It is our opinion that the current state of the Home Inspections Industry is functioning well for Consumers and Home Inspectors alike. And any regulation will only increase the cost of buying a home.

**The proposed Bill sb 168 will put a undue burden on the American Dream of Home Ownership.**

*Stacey Van Houtan*

*Home Inspector For 26 Years*

*CV attached*