

STUDY:

Store Your Inspection Reports in the Cloud ... Forever

Just The Facts

A home inspector recently asked me, “Joe, how long should home inspectors keep their inspection reports?”

The question’s phrasing made me feel like the questioning inspector expected there to be a finite finish line.

Most home inspection reports are 30 to 40 pages long plus another 100 to 150 photos. That would equal a lot of paper, the destruction of several forests, and an archaic filing system piled higher than the nearest high rise.

Before the real estate market crash, most of my clients were doing 250 to 350 inspections annually. When factoring in the average page limit and corresponding photographs, home inspectors needed another solution.

And that is one reason why the file-storage industry continues to flourish.

Example from the Field

It’s much easier to store home inspection reports electronically. For example, say a home inspector inspects 300 houses this year and writes a 30-page report with 100 corresponding photos for each inspection. A quick calculation equals 9,000 pages worth of written reports and another 15,000 pages of photographs on the assumption of two photographs per page.

Wow. Staples would love you if you printed out a copy of each report for both your clients and your records. Instead, home inspectors should thank their lucky stars that their files are very amenable to electronic storage.

While some electronic files with extensive media attachments can be quite large and eat up valuable computer space, there are an abundance of cheap electronic storage options outside your hard drive, including compact discs, external hard drives, flash drives and cloud storage. Some inspection software companies, such as HomeGauge, even provide an online storage and retrieval service as part of their license.

With that said, I see no reason not to keep the records forever.

THE TAKEAWAY

You should keep your inspection reports forever. Store them electronically on external hard drives, flash drives, and/or cloud storage.

Your Professional Advocate

Remember, there is nothing that will neutralize a home inspection claim faster than a well-written, detailed account of an issue in a home inspection report, together with a supporting photograph and suggested client call to action.

Having historic records to fall back on gives you an extra layer of protection against meritless claims and provides me with documented assistance in my stringent defense on your behalf.

Visit my website, www.JoeFerry.com to learn more about my proven strategic response to unmeritorious claims and let me have your back and put an end to UNDERBUSSING.