

PROPERTY INSPECTION CASE SUMMARIES 2020

CASE #19-13

STATEMENT OF COMPLAINT:

That the Respondent, a Certified Technician (CTech), a Certified House Inspector (CHI) and a Registered Reserve Fund Analyst (RRFA) conducted a pre-purchase inspection of the Complainant's house that inaccurately described the condition of many features of the house. The inaccurate report resulted in the potential purchaser reducing their conditional offer to purchase and subsequent cancellation of the sale.

INVESTIGATION:

An investigation was initiated, which included a review of the Respondent's documentation for the inspection. The document review determined that the Respondent's report was extremely detailed with written and photographic evidence of the condition of the house at the time of the inspection. Their comments on the complaint provided logical explanations refuting the allegations and supporting proper conduct during the house inspection and factual reporting of the condition of various systems in the house. The review also found that the Respondent was extremely thorough noting conditions that were non-compliant to current codes or standards and consequently posed potential risks to the safety of occupants.

PRACTICE REVIEW BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS:

The PRB reviewed the complaint and found insufficient evidence to substantiate a violation of the ASTTBC Code of Ethics, and/or the House inspection standards of inspection,

Notwithstanding their decision, the PRB suggested that the Respondent consider carefully the impact that overzealous verbal and written statements may have on the client and the property owners. For example, providing the client and the house owners an explanation that codes applicable at the time of construction prevail. Code changes such as use of aluminum wiring and installation of solid fuel burning fireplaces and stoves are critically important to occupant safety and upgrading to current codes is recommended. However, stating that the subject appliances must not be used and dismissing the house owner's statements that required changes to the aluminum wiring had been completed were not appropriate.

OUTCOME:

The Respondent was accordingly advised regarding the PRB decision and recommendation. No further action was required and the file was closed.

CASE #19-14

STATEMENT OF COMPLAINT:

That the Respondent, a Certified House Inspector (CHI), caused irreparable damage to the Complainant's computer server during a pre-purchase home inspection of the Complainant's apartment which they conducted on behalf of a prospective buyer. The complaint further alleged that the Respondent failed to act with integrity, despite being given multiple opportunities to resolve the situation promptly, outside of civil proceedings.

INVESTIGATION:

The investigation found the Respondent conducted the home inspection in compliance with ASTTBC Practice Guidelines, including the inspection of the arc fault current interrupter (AFCI). The investigation found no conclusive causal relationship between the Respondent's action of testing the AFCI breaker and the Complainant's assertion that the server was "turned off" and thereby severely damaged. Power failures can occur at any time for any number of reasons, and knowing that electrical power to the server must not be interrupted the Complainant should have taken adequate precautions such as an uninterrupted power supply against such an event.

PRACTICE REVIEW BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS:

The PRB reviewed the complaint and found that the Respondent's conduct and competence conducting the home inspection was within the ASTTBC Code of Ethics and home inspection practice guidelines.

OUTCOME:

No further action was required and the file was closed.

CASE #19-15

STATEMENT OF COMPLAINT:

That the Respondent, a Certified House Inspector (CHI), conducted an inspection of the Complainant's mobile home but failed to inspect and report on the extent of moisture in the two-room addition to the mobile.

INVESTIGATION:

The investigation found that the Respondent had observed and noted in the inspection report given to the Complainant water damage on the ceilings, walls and floors of the addition. Photographs showing the extent of water damage, along with recommendations for immediate repairs were included in the written report. Further, the Respondent's inspection services contract contained an explanation of the scope as well as the limitations of the inspection.

PRACTICE REVIEW BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS:

The PRB reviewed the complaint and found no evidence to substantiate a violation of the ASTTBC Code of Ethics or the ASTTBC-PI Standard of Inspection by the Respondent.

OUTCOME:

No further action was required and the file was closed.

CASE #19-16

STATEMENT OF COMPLAINT:

The Complainant alleged that the Respondent, a Certified House Inspector (CHI), was incompetent while conducting a house inspection. Specifically, the Respondent conducted a pre-purchase house inspection on behalf of a prospective buyer but the inspection report contained several errors and omissions, which negatively impacted the sale of the Complainant's house.

INVESTIGATION:

The investigation which included a site visit to the house found that the inspection and report prepared by the Respondent accurately described the conditions of the house. The Respondent's actions were found to be compliant to the ASTTBC standards of inspection and the ASTTBC Code of Ethics and Practice Guidelines.

PRACTICE REVIEW BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS:

The PRB reviewed the complaint and found no evidence to substantiate the allegation of incompetence nor any violation of the ASTTBC Code of Ethics or the ASTTBC-PI Standard of Inspection by the Respondent.

OUTCOME:

No further action was required and the file was closed.