

Inspecting a Pre-Owned Log Home

Log Options, LLC

"Your connection to quality solutions"

The purpose of this document is to provide the purchaser of a pre-owned log home a guide for inspection. It is not intended to be all-inclusive. When the choices are narrowed to one or two homes, it is strongly recommended the logs be inspected by a log professional, or a qualified home inspector familiar with logs.

Exterior Inspection



A *Certified Log Inspector* will first look at the home while pulling in the driveway to get an overall view of the home from a distance. The number one enemy of logs is water. Start your inspection from the roof peak and visualize a drop of water as it seeks a way to reach the log surface. Begin with the roof line and look for humps or dips which could indicate improper settling. Check the condition of the roof and ask when it was last replaced. Are the gutters in good condition or are there any gutters at all? Does the roof have adequate overhang of 18" or more? If not, the drop of water can find its way to the log surface below.

Even if there is sufficient roof overhang the water that drains off the roof will hit the ground causing backsplash. Because of this, check for adequate ground clearance of 12" or more. Any surface near the home can cause backsplash problems. Look for basement access doors, propane tanks, furniture, landscaping, decks, or any other objects close to the house.

You now have a good idea where water may accumulate on the log surface and can begin inspecting exterior logs more closely. Since it is not possible to test every log for integrity, concentrate on the areas determined to be most likely to accumulate water. These areas are indicated by:

- Mold, mildew, fungi
- Checks (cracks in the logs)
- Insect holes
- Large gaps between logs
- Caulking or chinking gaps, or tears (material between log courses)
- Peeling or fading finish
- Green or blackened logs.

If you suspect an area may have decay ask the homeowner or agent for permission to lightly tap the logs with a hammer. Compare that sound with a log you know is in good condition. The good log will sound solid and hard and a rotted log will sound hollow and soft. Log rot is difficult to find as the log can look perfectly normal on the outside but hollow and in advanced stages of rot on the inside.

Make sure any porches or decks are in good shape too. Many times the posts are in contact with the ground and may be supporting the porch roof. A sagging porch roof may indicate post rot.

Inspecting a Pre-Owned Log Home

Log Options, LLC

"Your connection to quality solutions"

Interior Inspection



When inspecting the interior of the home make sure the windows and doors operate properly. If they do not, it may be due to improper allowance for settling during construction. Look for gaps, or light between log courses, in corners and where the roof sits on top of the log wall. The roof rafters, purlins, and ridge beams where they intersect the log walls are also common areas of air infiltration that will affect energy efficiency.

Look for water stains on the log surface, which would indicate a broken seal or caulk problems. Check for small round holes, or powder like talc, which could indicate previous or current, insect problems.

In the basement check for accumulations of water on the floor, mold on the walls or a musty smell which would indicate poor drainage.

Inspecting a Pre-Owned Log Home

Log Options, LLC

"Your connection to quality solutions"

Log Home Inspection Checklist



Below is a checklist that may be helpful when looking at a pre-owned log home. Ask the agent or homeowner if you can take pictures. If you have a specific concern, you can email the pictures to a log professional and ask for their opinion. Once you have decided on a home to buy, it is strongly recommended, the home is inspected by a qualified log home professional.

Information about the home:

- Year Built
- Manufacturer
- Log Species
- Disclosures – look for disclosures of log rot, insects, drainage...

Exterior Log Inspection:

- Roof Line – look for sags or humps
- Roof Condition and Age
- Gutter Condition
- Proper Overhang (18" or more)
- Landscaping (12" or more from logs)
- Ground Clearance (12" or more)
- Deck and Deck Post Condition
- Weathered or Darkened Logs
- Peeling or Faded Finish
- Green Algae, Fungi, Mold or Mildew
- Insect Holes
- Gaps Between Logs
- Chinking/Caulking Condition

Interior Log Inspection:

- Operation of Doors and Windows
- Light or Air Infiltration Between Log Courses
- Gaps Where Roof Sits on Log Wall
- Gaps Around Rafters, Purlins and Ridge Beam
- Chinking/Caulking Condition
- Signs of Insects
- Check Basement for Water and Mold

By following these steps you will be better prepared and more confident when making your log home buying decision. This checklist was provided by Log Options, LLC www.logoptions.com