

Hello friends! Welcome to the second edition of our webletter!



RSH Engineering News

Helping You Be A Wise Home Buyer/Owner

April 2005

Welcome to the second installment of RSH Engineering's webletter! Thanks for all of your wonderful feedback and suggestions following our premier letter. As you'll see, we've continued to grow and expand. We've added new services and we have new partners to tell you about.

RSH Engineering has reached a milestone: we've been in business for **10 years!** Let me offer each of you a warm, heartfelt "*thank you*" for making RSH Engineering, Inc. the recognized leader in North Texas for high quality engineering inspections and services. We are rooted in integrity and totally dedicated to helping you build and maintain lasting homes. We've performed over 5,500 inspections of new and existing homes. It's been a wonderful experience serving all of you and we express our deep gratitude for your many referrals.

Our goal is to keep our webletters packed with information and value. We won't sell or give your e-mail address to other companies or individuals so you don't have to worry about getting spam e-mails when you reply or send us a request for information via e-mail. Let's go.....

2nd Edition Special Focus

"Mold and New"

Mold can be a problem with existing homes and even with new homes, but there are ways to help prevent it. There are thousands of kinds of mold from "A" to "Z" but they all need some basic conditions to thrive: (1) water, and (2) stable temperatures between +40 and +100 degrees Fahrenheit. Mold can begin to grow under the right environment in just 48 hours! To learn more about mold, go here: <http://www.moldupdate.com/moldtypes.htm>

Here are some steps you can take to reduce the opportunity for mold to grow:

- Ensure good seals and caulking for windows, doors, tubs, and sinks
- Weather-stripping for doors and windows should be tacked properly
- Clean the dust behind your refrigerator and clean out food particles under your sink
- Check your property for standing water; there should be no pools within 24 hrs after rain has stopped
- Clean gutters and ensure proper drainage by getting the proper slope
- Inspect toilets, baths, showers, and sinks for leaks -- ensure tub and shower fixtures are caulked
- Maintain tile grout to keep moisture from reaching inside wall/floor
- Use the exhaust fans in your kitchen, bathroom, laundry room to "pull" moisture from those areas

Even the government wants to help. Here's a link to an informative guide from the EPA:
<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/images/moldguide.pdf>

When you're building a new home, there are measures that the builder and their subcontractors must undertake during construction to help keep mold at bay. Each sub-contractor must be accountable for proper installation of equipment and the proper application of materials.

Unfortunately for everyone, the mold problem has become severe enough that people feel it is necessary to engage legal assistance. On the bright side, here's an article by a law firm in NY. It's a good article and was co-authored by a PE.

"Reduce Mold Risks by Prodding Subs to Prevent Water Intrusion"
www.osbornlaw.com/Publications/Reduce_Mold_Risks_by_Prodding_Subs.html

***** ANNOUNCING ****

New Services from RSH Engineering!

Many of you have asked us for services that we were unable to provide previously. We have listened to you, oh wise customers!

Check out our many new services:

- **Structural and Civil Engineering Services**
- **Home Design and Building by *RSH Custom Homes* -- coming soon--call for details!**
- **Foundation / slab inspections with Engineer Recommendations**
- **RSH 1 Year End-of-Builder's Warranty Inspection**
- **RSH 2 Year End-of-Builder's Warranty Inspection**
- **RSH 10 Year Homeowner's Warranty Inspection**
- **RSH Insurance Claim Report**
- **Pool/spa inspections**
- **Plumbing water leak detection -- check it before you buy it!**
- **Termites and wood destroying insect reports**
- **Mold testing and remediation**

**** Two of these new services deserve special attention. First, by building relations with a trusted civil engineering firm, we are now able to provide new services such as foundation design and repair, topological surveys, and soil analysis. Second, we are pleased to announce our new business called *RSH Custom Homes*. By leveraging our extensive experience in finding building code and quality workmanship issues on new homes, we are confident that we have the skills and wisdom to build the finest homes in North Texas. Please contact me to get started on your new home project. We can handle the entire project from design to build to landscaping, and everything in between (like inspections!). Alternatively, we can perform the design and inspection services if you are building your own home but want a trusted resource to keep your sub-contractors honest and to help them build your castle the right way....your way!**

Big city, bright lights

Did you know that Frisco is one of the few cities in the metroplex that requires builders to get an independent engineering review of the slab (foundation) and framing workmanship. This is a required inspection that is separate from the municipal code inspectors. And guess who trained the Frisco city inspectors....yep, RSH Engineering. Don't forget that the builder doesn't need a license to build a house! That means they could be relying on city inspectors to be their quality control. Unless you're building in Frisco, and even if you are, find out from your builder how they ensure high standards from their subcontractors. Let them know you expect the best and that means having a licensed engineer review all stages of the home building process.

Joe Public gets SMART

Not only did we help train code enforcement officials in Frisco, we put on a public training in the city of Allen. The three hour course was entitled "SMART Home Building." It was a successful pilot and we've had requests for more public training. Look for more of these sessions in the future. Contact me to inquire about the next class!

Keynote in Portland, OR



Yes, that's me! In 2004, RSH Engineering was invited to speak at the national conference of the American Institute of Inspectors. My keynote topic was "Engineer Framing Inspections: IRC2003 Building Code." (You didn't think I'd miss the opportunity to advance the cause of how to properly build a home, did you?!) Portland may seem like a far away place, but several inspectors asked me about coming to the great state of Texas to get trained! The news is spreading. Be sure your builder or remodeler adheres to IRC2003 and NAHB (National Association of Home Builders) quality and craftsmanship standards. <http://www.nahb.org/>

Honorable Mention for Realtors

Following are the top real estate firms who have provided us with referrals for their home buyers. These realtors know that getting an inspection from an engineering firm gives the buyer tremendous negotiating power. The word is starting to spread. Thank you! Contact them to get your real estate needs met. (Listed in random order.....)

- Alan Wynn, Coldwell Banker: 214.729.5582
- Steve Laesch, Foster Loria: 214.533.4230
- Burl Blue, 3% Real Estate: 972.418.0333
- Wayne Hinton, Century 21: 214.693.9892
- Julie Colston, Keller Williams: 972.380.7879
- Katie Blair, Keller Williams, 214.502.5341
- Joseph Joseph, Lone Star Realty, 214.738.5879 or 972.203.3053

Helpful web links

Here are a couple of helpful web links for all of you who are starting the building process or remodeling. (You may need to "copy and paste" the URL into the address line of your favorite web browser address line.) Send us your favorite web sites to share with our readers!

TRCC Proposed New Home Warranty & Performance Standards

If you're building a new home, you should be aware of the new state law formed under House Bill 730. The bill was "sold" as a consumer protection system, but in reality it provides cover for the builder and makes it harder for consumers to get repairs.



The Texas Residential Construction Commission was established under this law and was supposed to provide guidelines and procedures to help home buyers and home builders resolve complaints. The previous law was called the Residential Construction Liability Act (1989), and had established some basic guidelines for dispute resolution. At least one RSH customer has gone to the extent of hiring an attorney to fight a builder on major quality issues; the law firm used RCLA in their arguments. It was a difficult and expensive process, but the customer won.

The TRCC is headed by a major contributor (aka professional lobby) who happens to be a lawyer for a builder. Do you really think this is an unbiased commission serving the public's interests? Be ware. See the HOBB web site (below) for some advice on how to structure your contract with a builder.

In the end, you should get SMART and learn about the building process. Have a real estate attorney review the contract provided by your builder and be sure to get help from a real estate agent. Better yet, hire a licensed PE to be your guide and consultant as you build your new home.....we know just who to call!

Are you planning a new addition to your home or getting some remodeling work done? Here are fourteen good questions to ask a contractor for your home repair/remodeling:

<http://www.constructionaffairs.com/tip103.php>

HomeOwners for Better Building -- this group offers support for anyone experiencing difficulty with their builder or their new home.

www.hobb.org

Ask Mathew!

Got questions about new home construction, home maintenance, or any of our professional services? Send an e-mail to

RSH-Sales@earthlink.net. We'll answer as many questions as we can via e-mail. The most frequently asked questions will be answered in the next edition of *RSH Engineering News*. Get a free "2005 RSH Engineering" calendar with pictures of beautiful dream homes for sending in your questions.

Thanks for reading and have a Great Year in 2005!

We look forward to serving you soon!

Mathew Joseph, P.E.

President, RSH Engineering, Inc.

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