



A TO Z INSPECTIONS, LLC NEWSLETTER

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Bathroom Exhaust Fans/Bathroom Vent Fans (When there is a tub and/or shower in the bathroom.) Do they have to exhaust to the exterior? YES. When A to Z performs the inspection we will write up a bathroom exhaust fan over 3/4 or full bath as a "Seller's Repair" if it does not exhaust to the exterior of the house.

- It is the best practice for health and safety.
- It is coming "down the pike". The "code" is out there, even if it has not been adopted in all local jurisdictions yet.
- The Illustrated Home by Dearborn Home Inspection states that bathroom exhaust fans should vent warm, moist air to the exterior. Pp.225 & 235.
- Essentials of Home Inspections, Home Reference Book states on page 48 of the plumbing section, 3.11 Bathroom Fans: ---The fan should discharge directly to the building exterior. In many cases, the fan terminates inside the house, leading to condensation and Rot problems.
- A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture and Your Home by the U.S.Environmental Protection Agency, pp. 10 & 11: "Moisture Control is the Key to Mold Control. ---Keep indoor humidity low---water vapor---will increase humidity unless vented to the outside"---
- Insulation and Ventilation, Home Inspection Training Institute pp 17-20, 1.5-1.6- ---"
1.5 Some materials are hygrosopes-they have fairly large surface pores and are able to absorb considerable amounts of water-(organic insulation and wood framing materials and sheathing are examples)
---Rot, reduced thermal resistance of insulation materials expanding and shrinking, staining, mold, odors, etc can be caused by excessive moisture.
1.6 Solving the moisture problem----". Exhaust warm, moist air directly outside. Kitchen and Bathroom Exhaust"---

Oklahoma Weatherization Field Guide, the Oklahoma Department of Commerce Community Development Division, Copyright 2007 pp. 144-148--- "Moisture Problems. Moisture causes billions of dollars worth of property damage and high-energy bills each year in American homes. Water damages building materials by dissolving glues and mortar, corroding metal, and nurturing pests like mildew, mold and dust mites. These pests, in turn, cause many cases of respiratory distress,---"
At minimum, all kitchens and bathrooms

- should be equipped with exhaust fans, --Duct Kitchen and bath fans to the outdoors with rigid metal or PVC ducting. Do not use flexible ductwork, and do not run them into crawl spaces or attics."

We frequently hear statements that indicate something is "grandfathered", or "I've been doing this for "25" years and I've never heard of this, or "that's not code". You cannot "grandfather" safety or health issues. We have much greater knowledge today than we did just a few years ago.

It is code? It depends on the jurisdiction. That is a favored question when an owner or an agent does not agree with our assessment, even though it is not required now. There is not a "code requirement" that a current owner or seller raise an existing hot water tank 18" off the floor in the garage, nor is a rain cap required, by code, on a chimney. A to Z will write up each of these items as a "Needed" Repair," for what we consider to be reasons of health and safety. Remember, we are NOT code inspectors, we inspect for health, safety, and function.

Yes, International Residential Code 2006, # 303.3-# 1501.3 stipulates that bathroom exhaust fans (3/4 & full baths) must exhaust to the exterior and my reading indicates that venting this to a soffit vent would NOT be acceptable.

Permit me to clarify; all kinds of rules and regulations may have been passed/adopted by IBC-International Building Code, IRC-International Residential Code, Plumbing, ETC. It is still NOT code until it has been adopted within local jurisdictions. It is referred to as AHJ-Authority Having Jurisdiction. Each City/Town makes their own decisions and may adapt all or any part of these codes. You will generally find Bethany's code Enforcement slightly different from Edmond's, which is slightly different from OKC's, which is slightly different than Moore's, etc.

Venting bathroom exhaust fans, over ¾ or full baths, is the best practice for health and safety.

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