



**California Real Estate Inspection Association (CREIA) Press / Media Information**  
**Retain Home Inspectors When You Buy and Contractors When You Build**

*Courtesy of the California Real Estate Inspection Association (CREIA)*

October 2005 (*Palm Springs, Calif*) —The California Real Estate Inspection Association wants homebuyers to be aware of the essential differences between home construction and home inspection as distinct professional practices.

General building contractors deal primarily with constructing things that are new and applying standards that pertain to what is new. Their daily experience is with construction that is in accordance with accepted codes and established building practices and conducted under the authority and regulation of required building permits. In short, their experiences are with things that are standard, rather than substandard; out-of-the-box, rather than worn and weathered; built and assembled by professionals, rather than by amateurs.

Home inspectors, on the other hand, deal routinely with properties that are new, old, very old, and with those that are combinations of all three. They deal with homes that are well maintained, poorly maintained, or totally deteriorated; with buildings that are original or have been altered; with homes that are altered with permits or without them; homes with defects that are readily apparent or cleverly concealed; homes with problems that are commonly recognizable or that require esoteric knowledge. They inspect quality craftsmanship, mediocre workmanship, and substandard handiwork. They inspect homes with major and minor defects; with minor problems that appear major and with major problems that seem minor. In short, home inspectors must recognize and identify defects in every imaginable situation within the realm of modern and not-so-modern housing.

Aside from differing bodies of professional knowledge, contracting and inspecting are totally dissimilar practices, utilizing wholly divergent skills. General contracting involves the acquisition and assembly of a multitude of building components, the planning and coordination of time, materials, subcontractors, employees, and the unexpected eventualities of the daily workplace. It is a complex process of orchestrating and directing the innumerable procedures of transforming a vacant site into a usable, functional property.

Home inspection, on the other hand, is the process of investigative discovery. It involves the observation, recognition, and conclusive evaluation of countless related and seemingly unrelated conditions. It requires numerous judgments and decisions as to degrees of severity, proposed means of correction, advisements for further evaluation when necessary, warnings of inherent risks to life and property, and the likelihood of future problems. The skills of forensic evaluation are essentially unrelated to other professional practices, as can be attested by any police detective, fire investigator, or research scientist. The ability to investigate cannot be learned by building houses, any more than by riding a bicycle or practicing the piano.

Each of these professions is specialized and has its place. When building a house, a general contractor is the appropriate choice. When buying one, it is best to engage the services of a qualified, experienced home inspector.

*To locate a qualified CREIA inspector near you visit [www.CREIA.org](http://www.CREIA.org) or call CREIA at (800) 388-8443. Since 1976, CREIA, a non-profit voluntary membership organization has been providing education, training, and support services to the real estate inspection industry and to the public. Inspectors must adhere to CREIA's Code of Ethics and follow the Standards of Practice developed by the association. These Standards of Practice have been recognized by the State of California, and are considered the source for home inspector Standard of Care by the real estate and legal communities.*

*CREIA requires its members to successfully pass a comprehensive written examination of property systems, have performed at least 50 fee-based inspections and complete a minimum of 30 hours of continuing education each year. Members can accumulate credits through various sources of education including monthly chapter meetings, conferences, and other approved activities. CREIA keeps records to ensure that members are complying with the requirements. Educational topics cover a variety of technical subjects including updates and advances affecting the profession of real estate inspection. CREIA is dedicated to consumer protection and education.*

**Martin Grant, owner and operator of Noteworthy Property Inspections, is a Certified CREIA Inspector member of the California Real Estate Inspection Association (CREIA). He can be reached at 562-243-0164, [martin@noteworthypi.com](mailto:martin@noteworthypi.com), or through his web site [www.noteworthypi.com](http://www.noteworthypi.com).**