

Property Inspections

- *Why?* The reliability of assessed values is dependent on the accuracy of property information.
- *When?* Property inspections are carried out when properties sell or when permits are issued for new construction, demolition or significant building alterations. Inspections of farm land are often necessary when land clearing, improved drainage or other physical changes to land within a municipality have occurred. Inspections are also carried out in municipalities or parts of municipalities to achieve broad updating of property characteristics.
- *What information is of interest to us?* Inspections are intended to assure that all the property information that we have on file is as accurate and up-to-date as possible. Any building that may influence market value is recorded, including construction quality, changes in building condition since the previous inspection, renovations, basement rooms, building additions, garages, sheds, gazebos, swimming pools, hot tubs, decks or equipment such as additional plumbing, air conditioning and central vacuum systems. The assessor also checks recent sales of properties to ensure that sales data is accurate. Where farmland is being inspected, the assessor collects information such as the number of cultivated acres, drainage, salinity or stone problems, etc.
- *How do I identify an assessor at the door?* All assessors are required to carry picture identification cards and drive government vehicles with the Provincial insignia (buffalo) on each side.
- *Do I have to let the assessor in?* The Municipal Assessment Act states that the assessor may enter and inspect property. We understand, however, that some people may be uncomfortable admitting a stranger when home alone. Under such circumstances, the assessor will arrange to return at a better time.
- *What if the assessor is refused entry?* The assessor, using his or her best judgement, will assess the property based on information gathered verbally and through external observation.
- *What if there's no one home, or only children at home?* The assessor will usually conduct an exterior inspection of the property, leave a "Residential Information Request" form or a door card letting you know that he/she was there and why, and try to contact the owner at a later date. The assessor will not enter the house if adults are not at home.
- *How are properties Inspected?* Property details are collected using a variety of techniques and resources to ensure data accuracy, including building permits, sales records, real estate listings, onsite inspections, in person and/or written communication with property owners, and street and aerial imagery.