

## **Pets and the Home Inspection**

For home inspectors, dealing with the seller's pets during the inspection can be very frustrating. Frequently, I am faced with a loose dog in the yard or a note on the door asking not to let the cat out. The critters left behind during the inspection might be just "dumb animals", but I truly believe the animals of the house, especially the cat or dog, know full well something's up. They don't know what, but if I were 'in their paws' I'd be scared to death, especially when a strange bunch of people show up for an inspection.

The times I have been bitten by a dog while inspecting, I was told beforehand the dog was friendly and wouldn't hurt anybody. Once I watched a client nearly get bit in the face as she stooped to pet the seller's dog after being told the dog, "wouldn't hurt a fly". On one occasion I tripped over a cat and fell on my face. Nobody wants to think or believe their cherished pet would hurt anybody, but then suddenly, they do. Whether through accident or not, those pages cannot be rewritten.

The critical part of my job is identifying what is truly important and helping clients understand that. Attempting to do so while they and their realtor are preoccupied with the barking dog or the escaping cat means I cannot do my job properly. Trying to avoid stepping on or tripping over the family pet means I must direct my focus away from the job. As a pet owner I understand the difficulties, but please take the time to ensure the realtor, inspector, or potential buyer don't have to assume the responsibility for your pet during the inspection of your home.

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