

BUILDING TERMS RELEVANT TO A PEST INSPECTION - ANON

Acoustic tile – Tile designed and constructed to absorb sound.

Alcove – A large recess connected with or opening off a room.

Apron – The flat member of the inside trim of a window placed against the wall immediately beneath the stool.

Batten – A thin, narrow piece of board used to cover vertical joists of plywood siding.

Batter – The slope, or inclination from the vertical, of a wall or other structure or portion thereof.

Batter board – A temporary framework used to assist in locating corners when laying out a foundation.

Bay – One of the intervals or spaces into which a building plan is divided by columns, piers, or division walls.

Beam – A structural member transversely supporting a load.

Blocking – Wood pieces used as filler or bracing between structural members.

Bottom plate – The lowest horizontal member of a wall or partition which rests on the subflooring. Wall studs are nailed to the bottom plate.

Bridging – Small wood or metal members that are inserted in a diagonal position between the floor joists acting both as tension and compression members for the purpose of bracing the joists and spreading the action of the effect of loads.

Bulkhead – A structure above the roof of any part of a building, enclosing a stairway, tank, elevator machinery, or ventilating apparatus, or such part of a shaft as extends above the roof.

Buttress – A structure built against a wall to strengthen it.

Chalk line – A long spool-wound cord encased in a container filled with chalk. Chalk-covered string is pulled from the case, pulled taut across a surface, lifted and snapped directly downward so that it leaves a long straight chalk mark.

Chase – A groove in a masonry wall usually provided for accommodation of pipes, ducts, or conduits.

Collar beam – A horizontal tie beam in a gable roof, connecting two opposite rafters at a point considerably above the wall plate.

Concrete, plain – Concrete containing not more than two-tenths of one percent of reinforcement.

Coping – A capping at the top of a wall, serving to shed water.

Cornice – A decorative element made up of molded members usually placed at or near the top of an exterior or interior wall.

Course – A continuous level range of row of masonry, as a layer of foundation block. Also a row of plywood panels, as in subflooring or roof sheathing.

Cricket – A small roof structure of single or double slope placed at the junction of larger surfaces that meet at an angle for the purpose of diverting drainage.

Cripple – Any part of a frame which is cut less than full length, as in cripple studs under a window opening.

d – The abbreviation for “penny” in designating nail size; for example 8d nails are 8-penny nails, 2-1/2” long.

DFPA – Division for Product Approval, the inspection and testing arm of the American Plywood Association. DFPA initials appear in APA grade-trademarks.

Dimension lumber – Lumber 2 to 5 inches thick and up to 12 inches wide. Includes, joists, rafters, studs, planks, girders, and posts.

Dormer – An internal recess the framing of which projects from a sloping roof.

Doubling – To use two like framing members nailed together, such as studs or joist, to add strength to a building where stiffness is especially required.

Dry well – A covered pit with open-joisted linings through which drainage from roof, basement floors, or areaways may seep or leach into the surrounding porous soil.

Edging – A border, either structural or vegetative, used to define different areas.

Encumbrance – An interest or right in property which diminishes the value of the fee, but does not prevent conveyance of the fee by the owner thereof.

Façade – The face of a building

Fascia – Horizontal board that is used as a facing across the ends of roof rafters.

Fascia rafter – End rafters at the end of the rake.

Flashing – Sheet metal or other material used in roof and wall construction to protect a building from seepage of water.

Flue – The space or passage in a chimney through which smoke, gas, or fumes ascend. Each passage is called a flue, which together and including the surrounding masonry make up the chimney.

Footing – (1) The spreading course or courses at the base or bottom of a foundation wall, pier or column. (2) The concrete (usually) base for foundation walls, posts, chimneys, etc. The footing is wider than the member it supports, and distributes the weight to the ground over a larger area to prevent settling.

Foundation – The supporting portion of a structure below the first-floor construction, or grade, including the footing.

Furring – Strips of wood or metal applied to a wall or other surface to even it, to form an air space, or to give an appearance of greater thickness.

Gable – (1) That portion of a wall contained between the slopes of a double-sloped roof or that portion contained between the slope of a single-sloped roof and a line projected horizontally through the lowest elevation of the roof construction. (2) The triangular portion of the end wall of a house with a pitched roof.

Girder – A large or principal beam used to support concentrated loads at isolated points along its length.

Gusset – A small piece of wood, plywood, or metal attached to corners or intersections of a frame to add stiffness and strength.

Header – (1) In carpentry: a beam placed perpendicular to joist and into which joists are framed in framing for a chimney, stairway, or other opening. (2) One or more pieces of framing lumber used around openings to support free ends of floor joists, studs or rafters.

Header joist – The horizontal lumber member that is butted against ends of floor joist around the outside of the house to add support to and tie joists together.

In-line joist – A connection made by butting two pieces of lumber, such as floor joists, end-to-end and fastening them together using an additional splice piece nailed on both sides of the joint.

Insulation, electrical – Non-conduction covering applied to wire or equipment to prevent the flow of current to contiguous materials.

Joist – One of a series of parallel beams used to support floor and ceiling loads, and supported in turn by larger beams, girders, or bearing wall.

Kiln dried – Wood seasoned in a humidity and temperature controlled oven to minimize shrinkage and warping.

Lap joint – A connection made by placing two pieces of material side by side and fastening them by nailing, gluing, etc.

Lintel – A horizontal structural member which supports the load over an opening such as a door or window.

Load, dead – The weight of all permanent stationary construction included in the building.

Load, live – The total of all moving and variable loads that may be placed upon a building.

Louver or Louvre – A slatted opening for ventilation in which the slats are so placed as to exclude rain, light, or vision.

Lumber – The product of the saw and planing mill not further manufactured than by sawing, re-sawing, and passing lengthwise through a standard planing machine, cross-cutting to length and working.

Masonry – Stone, brick, hollow tile, concrete block or tile, and sometimes poured concrete and gypsum block, or other similar materials, or a combination of same, bonded together with mortar to form a wall, pier, buttress, etc.

Masonry, Ashlar – Masonry of sawed, dressed, tooled or quarry-faced stone with proper bond.

O.C. – On Center. A method of indicating the spacing of framing members by stating the measurement from the center of one member to the center of the next.

Outlet – A point on an electric circuit designed for the direct connection of lighting fixtures, appliances, and equipment.

Parapet – A wall serving as a guard at the edge of a roof, terrace, bridge, balcony, or the like.

Parapet wall – That part of an exterior, party or fire wall extending above the roof line.

Partition – A wall that subdivides spaces within any story of a building.

Partition, bearing – A partition which supports any vertical load in addition to its own weight.

Partition, fire – A partition designed to restrict the spread of fire, to provide an area of refuge.

Partition, non-bearing – A partition extending from floor to ceiling which supports no load other than its own weight.

Pier – A column of masonry, usually rectangular in horizontal cross section, used to support other structural members.

Pilaster – A part of wall that projects not more than one-half of its own width beyond the outside or inside face of a wall, acting as an engaged pier.

Pile – A heavy timber, or pillar of metal or concrete, forced into the earth or cast in place to form a foundation member.

Plate – (1) A horizontal structural member placed on a wall or supported on posts, studs, or corbels to carry the trusses of a roof or to carry the rafters directly. (2) A shoe or base member, as of a partition or other frame. (3) A small relatively flat member usually of metal placed on or in a wall to support girders, rafters, etc.

Platform – (1) The level part of a staircase between two landings. (2) A permanent floor built above the adjoining ground, as a loading platform, or above an adjoining floor, as the platform of a rostrum, or a dais. (3) A moveable floor, as the platform of an elevator or dumbwaiter. (4) A temporary floor, as of a scaffold, or a floor of a temporary building.

Plumb bob – A weight attached to a line for testing perpendicular surfaces for trueness.

Plumbing stack – A general term for the vertical main of a system of soil, waste, or vent piping.

Pointing – (1) The treatment of joists in masonry for appearance or protection by filling with mortar under tool pressure and usually to a definite form. (2) The filling placed in joints of roofing of slate, tile, etc., as a closure.

Portico – An open space having a roof supported by columns, located outside an entrance to or exit from a building.

Purlin – A horizontal member usually laid at right angles to main rafters or trusses of a roof to support elements of the roof framing.

Rafter – One of a series of structural members of a roof designed to support roof loads. The rafters of a flat roof are sometimes called roof joists.

Rafter, hip – A rafter which forms the intersection of an external roof angles.

Rafter, jack – A rafter which spans the distance from a wall plate to a hip, or from a valley to a ridge.

Rafter, valley – A rafter which forms the intersection of an internal roof angle.

Rake – The overhanging part of a roof at a gable end.

Ridge board – Central framing member at the peak, or ridge, of a roof. The roof rafters frame into it from each side.

Ripcap – Stones or other materials placed on a slope to prevent erosion by water action.

Roof – The entire construction used to close in the top of a building.

Roof, curbed – A roof in which the slope is broken on two or more sides; so called because a horizontal curb is built at the plane where the slope changes.

Roof, flat – A roof which is flat or one which is pitched only enough to provide for drainage.

Roof, gabled – A ridge roof which terminates in a gable.

Roof, gambrel – A gable roof each slope of which is broken into two planes.

Roof hip – (1) In general, a roof which has one or more hips. (2) A roof which has four sloping sides that meet at four hips, or at four hips and a ridge.

Roof, lean to – (1) A roof which has a single sloping surface that is supported at the tip by a wall that is higher than the roof. (2) A roof which has a single sloping surface.

Roof, mansard – A type of curb roof in which the pitch of the upper portion of a sloping side is slight and that of the lower portion steep. The lower portion is usually interrupted by dormer windows.

Roof, monitor – A type of gable roof commonly used on industrial buildings, which has raised portion along the ridge with openings for light and/or air.

Roof, pent – A roof, other than a lean to roof, which has a single sloping surface.

Roof pitched – A roof which has one or more sloping surfaces pitched at angles greater than necessary for drawings.

Roof pyramid – A hip roof which has four sloping surfaces, usually of equal pitch, that meet at a peak.

Roof, ridge – A roof which has one or more ridges.

Roof, valley – The sloping line at the junction of two roof surfaces where an external angle less than 180 degrees is formed.

Roughing in – The work of installing all pipes in the drainage system and all water pipes to the point where connections are made with the plumbing fixtures.

Rubble, coursed – Masonry composed of roughly shaped stones fitting approximately on level beds and well bonded.

Setback – Placing of a building a specified distance from street or property lines to comply with building codes and restrictions.

Sheathing – The structural covering, usually of boards or wallboards, placed over exterior studding or rafters of a structure.

Sill – (1) The lowest member of the frame of a structure, usually horizontal, resting on the foundation and supporting the uprights of the frame. (2) That member forming the lower side of an opening, as door sill, window sill, etc.

Skylight – Any cover or enclosure placed above a roof opening to provide for the admission of natural light.

Soil pipe – Any pipe which conveys the discharge of water-closets, or fixtures having similar functions, with or without the discharges from other fixtures.

Soffit – Underside of a roof overhang.

Span – The distance between structural supports such as walls, columns, piers, beams, girders, and trusses.

Specification – A written document stipulating the kind, quality, and sometimes the quantity of materials and workmanship required for any construction or work.

Square – A unit of measure (100 square feet) usually applied to roofing materials

Stool – The flat, narrow shelf, forming the top member of the interior trim at the bottom of a window.

Story – That part of a building comprised between any floor and the floor or roof next above.

Stud – One of a series of slender wood or metal structural members used as supporting elements in walls and partitions.

Sub flooring – Bottom layer of plywood in a two-layer floor.

Termite shield - A shield, usually of sheet metal, placed in or on a foundation wall or other mass of masonry or around pipes to prevent the passage of termites.

Tile field – (1) The system of open-joint drain tiles laid to distribute septic tank effluent over its absorption area. (2) A tile system laid to provide subsoil drainage for wet areas.

Top plate – The uppermost horizontal member nailed to the wall or partition studs. Top plate is usually doubled with end joists offset.

Trap – A fitting or device so designed and constructed as to provide a liquid trap seal which will prevent the passage of air through it.

Trim – The finish materials in a building, such as moldings applied around openings (window trim, door trim) or at the floor and ceiling of rooms (baseboard, cornice, picture molding).

Trimmer – In carpentry: A beam or joist into which a header is framed in framing for a chimney, stairway, or other opening.

Underlayment – Top layer of plywood in a two-layer floor. Provides a smooth base for carpet, tile, or sheet flooring.

Vent – A pipe installed to provide a flow of air to or from a drainage system or to provide a circulation of air within such system to protect trap seals from siphonage and back pressure.

Wainscot – The facing material applied to the lower part of an interior wall contrasting with the upper part. This material is usually of wood but may be of marble, tile or other material.

Wall, bearing – A wall which supports any vertical load in addition to its own weight.

Wall, common – A wall owned by one party but jointly used by two parties, one or both of whom is entitled to such use under the provisions of a lease.

Wall, curtain – A non-bearing wall between columns or piers which is not supported by girders or beams.

Wall, exterior – Any outside wall or vertical enclosure of a building other than a party or common wall.

Wall, faced – A masonry wall faced on one or both sides with material different from the body of the wall, in which the facing and the body are bonded so that they will act as a unit under loads.

Wall, fire – A wall which subdivides a building to restrict the spread of fire, but is not necessarily continuous through all stories and is not extended through the roof.

Wall, foundation – Any bearing wall or pier below the first floor construction.

Wall, non-bearing – A wall which supports no vertical load other than its own weight.

Wall, panel – A non-bearing wall in skeleton construction built between columns or piers and wholly supported at each story.

Wall, retaining – (1) Any wall subjected to lateral pressure other than wind pressure. (2) A wall built to support a bank or earth.

Wall, veneered – A wall with a masonry facing, which is attached to but not bonded so as to form an integral part of the wall for purposes of load bearing and stability.

Wallboard – Wood pulp, gypsum, or similar materials made into large rigid sheets that may be fastened to the frame of a building to provide a surface finish.

Water closet – (1) A plumbing fixture consisting of a bowl for the reception of fecal discharges and equipment for flushing the bowl with water. (2) A minor enclosed space in a building equipped with such a plumbing fixture.

Water table – (1) The level below which the ground is saturated. (2) A ledge of offset on or above a foundation wall formed to shed water.

Weephole – A small hole, as in a retaining wall, to drain water to the outside. Found in brick veneer construction.

Windows, bay – A rectangular, curved or polygonal, window or group of windows, supported on a foundation extending beyond the main wall of a building.

Window, dormer – A vertical window, in a relatively small internal recess, projecting from a sloping roof.

Window, fire – A window that, with its frame, sash and glazing, is designed to restrict the spread of fire.

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