



Buyer Beware Checklist

If you are buying an existing home or vacant land, there are some important facts to check before you make an offer to purchase.



Check if the property is within the **100 year floodplain** zone. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Oneida Geographic Land Information Systems Department have maps. If you are in a floodplain, you must get floodplain insurance and it would be advisable to not even build in this zone for safety reasons. Know before you offer to purchase.



Check if the property is within a **wetland**. The Oneida Wetland Program Coordinator can assist you with this determination. Wetlands provide many functions but providing a safe location for home is not one of them. Know before you offer to purchase.



Check if vacant land **“percs”** for a conventional or mound septic system, or holding tank. There is a costly difference between systems. If a home is there already, require a septic system analysis to assure it is functioning at the time of your offer. Know before you offer to purchase.



For an **existing home with a well**, require a water sample be analyzed for safe drinking water. **Vacant lot?**– check with local well driller for average depth for a well in the area. There is a huge cost difference between wells in Brown & Outagamie Counties. Know before you offer to purchase.



Energy Star Home Performance Test will provide valuable information about the efficiency of a home– does it have enough insulation? Is it sealed and ventilated well? What does it cost to heat and cool? There are many things you can’t see that may cost you \$ every month. Know before you buy.



For an existing home, get a professional **“Home Inspection”**. The inspection report will include information about the structure and operating components of the home, such as: foundation, roof, insulation, ventilation, heating/cooling systems, plumbing/electrical systems. Know before you buy.



Proper Drainage– Does the land slope away from the house so water won’t easily get into your basement? Are the downspouts directed away from the foundation? Is there a functioning sump pump? Water damage is costly to correct. Know before you offer to purchase.



Know past uses: For farms–are there any underground storage tanks for fuel? What types of chemicals were used on the land? Is it enrolled in a USDA program that limits the use? Are there uses near by that could affect your property (noise, odor)? Clean up can be costly. Know before you buy.



Passive solar orientation? Windows facing south will collect winter solar energy– helping heat your home which will lower your heat bills. Also, utilizing the daylight will reduce the amount of energy used to light your home. All this saves you money year after year and doesn’t cost anything.



Consider the **landscape**. Are there 2 acres of lawn to mow? Conifer trees on the north and west? Deciduous trees on the south? Easy to change– plant more trees where you need and reduce the amount of “lawn” – may save you money in the long run, adds privacy, & is good for mother nature.

KNOW AS MUCH ABOUT THE PROPERTY AS POSSIBLE BEFORE YOU OFFER TO PURCHASE!

CREATED FOR THE ONEIDA HOME RESOURCE FAIR BY
ONEIDA ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH & SAFETY DIVISION
Call for questions about any of the information above- (920) 496-5330

