

Regal Home Inspections, LLC

Finds of the Week 9/20/2019

Some roof structure is stick built with ceiling joists and roof rafters. Others are built with trusses. Trusses are usually manufactured off site and then trucked to the site and roof trusses are then lifted by cranes into position. Multiple trusses are what makes up the roof structure. Trusses are engineered (designed) for strength and each member of a truss helps support the others. The combination of smaller pieces of wood, assembled into a truss is stronger than the individual pieces would be otherwise.

Consequently, trusses must never be cut or modified. To, potentially, make matters worse, often times, the bylaws of condominium and townhouse developments often restrict the occupant from using attic spaces (never mind modifying the roof structure).

In this find, trusses were cut in a townhouse to allow for the installation of attic steps for someone to gain access to an area that the occupant often can't access.



As seen in these photos, the trusses were cut and therefore, the structure of the roof was improperly modified. In the report this was brought to the attention of the client. They were advised to have the modifications evaluated by an engineer and that they will likely

have to be put back to their original condition. Additionally, in the report I tried to emphasize to the buyer that if this isn't properly addressed now, before they own the unit, then years down the line when they try to sell the home they may then be responsible for the modifications and have to pay for any repairs.

Below is a diagram of a roof truss. Cutting or modifying any truss member, Top chord, a brace or bottom chord, weakens the entire truss and therefore the roof structure. In this find, the three braces were modified to make room for the pull down attic steps.

