



INFORMATION SHEET – WHY WATER INGRESS IS A STRUCTURAL DEFECT

This general information sheet explains why water ingress into a building is a structural defect.

As part of all of our building inspections we check for moisture within walls as well as leaks from the building's roof cover. Each building may be constructed from different building materials with the most common types of roof cover being either Colorbond sheet material, roof tiles (clay or concrete) or older homes may even have asbestos roof sheeting installed. Where we identify water ingress into a building or there is an avenue for water ingress we highlight this within the building report as a structural defect, and for the cause of the water ingress to be remedied prior to handover.

The greater majority of sales annexures relating to pre-purchase building inspections is the REIWA Annexure, which at clause 7.6 commences with '*Structural defects means fault or deviation from the intended structural performance of a building element*'.

The National Construction Code (NCC) Part 2.2 outlines the requirements of weatherproofing and dampness, which includes the following requirement.

'A roof and external wall (including openings around windows and doors) must prevent the penetration of water that could cause -'

- (a) Unhealthy or dangerous conditions, loss of amenity for the occupants: and*
- (b) Undue dampness or deterioration of building elements.*

REIWA clause 7.6 continues with '*is a major defect to the building structure of sufficient magnitude where rectification has to be carried out in order to avoid unsafe conditions, loss of utility or further deterioration*'

- Any water ingress into a building is a structural failure in performance of a building element.
- Water ingress will result in further deterioration other building elements.
- Water ingress is an unsafe condition and often results in mold (the most common place is within ceilings), and if left untreated mold can cause allergies and respiratory problems.

Water ingress into a building, whether this is through walls (including window, door or other flashings), or through the roof cover is structural defect and the cause of water ingress should be remedied prior to handover.

It should be note that there is a difference between 'Structurally Sound' and a 'Structural Defect'.

Structurally Sound relates to the majority of building remaining structurally sound and not in danger of falling down.

Structural Defect is fault or deviation from the intended structural performance of a building element. This is defined in Australia Standard AS4349 (Pre-Purchase Building Inspections – Residential) at clause 1.4.14

For further details contact our inspector directly on 0409 906 688.