



REAL ESTATE TODAY

For the GREATER ALBUQUERQUE AREA

PEST PROTECTION!

by Barbara Madaras

Any house that's constructed of wood—either outside or inside—could potentially be infested with termites or other wood-destroying insects. Following a few key steps regarding inspections and disclosures can help ensure you are protected.

Get It Checked Out.....

A wood-destroying insect inspection report, which is prepared by a licensed pest control company, addresses the presence of any termite damage or evidence of treatment for termites. The report notes exactly which areas were inspected and any areas not visible to the inspector.

A wood-destroying insect inspection report isn't a guarantee that termites aren't present. Termite companies are required to report only what they encounter visually.

To help ensure that an inspection is thorough, be present while the inspection is taking place. A typical inspection will take between 45 minutes and two hours, depending on the size of the home.

If there's a suspicion after the cursory investigation that damage may be present, you can request that a contractor or structural engineer conduct a follow-up inspection. Sagging and bowing of exterior walls might indicate deterioration inside the walls—a clear sign of termite damage. In a wood-frame home, other possible indicators of a problem are beams or posts that appear to be sinking.

Check on the inspecting company's license. Most termite inspectors are regulated by state departments of agriculture, but this can vary by state. Finally, it's a good idea to ask for a certificate of insurance from the termite inspection company. This certificate will provide you with a claim option in the event of fraud or negligence.

Telltale Termite Signs.....

- **Mud tubes.** About the size of a pencil, these tubes connect to infested wood. They may be visible on concrete foundations or hidden under floor boards or behind siding.
- **Swarms.** Winged termites are attracted to lights and may be found around windows or exterior light fixtures.
- **Wood damage.** Tap wood every few inches and listen for a telltale hollow sound or see if a tool easily penetrates the wood you're tapping. Dark areas or blisters in wood flooring may also be a sign of infestation.

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Look for the next
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REAL ESTATE TODAY
coming to you in
February 2007

TO BE MARRIED MEANS TO BE OUTNUMBERED!

Married couples, whose numbers have been declining for decades as a proportion of American households, have finally slipped into a minority, according to an analysis of new census figures by The New York Times.

The American Community Survey, released this month by the Census Bureau, found that 49.7 percent, or 55.2 million, of the nation's 111.1 million households in 2005 were made up of married couples — with and without children — just shy of a majority and down from more than 52 percent five years earlier.

The numbers by no means suggests marriage is dead or necessarily that a tipping point has been reached. The total number of married couples is higher than ever, and most Americans eventually marry. But marriage has been facing more competition. A growing number of adults are spending more of their lives single or living unmarried with partners, and the potential social and economic implications are profound.

"It just changes the social weight of marriage in the economy, in the work force, in sales of homes and rentals, and who manufacturers advertise to," said Stephanie Coontz, director of public education for the Council on Contemporary Families, a non-profit research group. "It certainly challenges the way we set up our work policies."

While the number of single young adults and elderly widows are both growing, Professor Coontz said, "we have an anachronistic view as to what extent you can use marriage to organize the distribution and redistribution of benefits."

Couples decide to live together for many reasons,

but real estate can be as compelling as romance. "Owning three toothbrushes and finding that they are always at the wrong house when you are getting ready to go to bed wears on you," said Amanda Hawn, a 28-year-old writer who set up housekeeping near San Francisco with her boyfriend, Nate Larsen, a real estate analyst, after shuttling between his apartment and one she shared with a friend. "Moving in together has simplified life," Ms. Hawn said.

David Blankenhorn, president of the marriage advocacy group the Institute for American Values, said married couples had become a minority largely because of the growing number of households made up of people who planned to marry or who used to be married.

Steve Watters, the director of young adults for Focus on the Family, a conservative Christian group, said that the trend of fewer married couples was more a reflection of delaying marriage than rejection of it.

"It does show that a lot of people are experimenting with alternatives before they get there," Mr. Watters said. "The biggest concern is that those who still aspire to marriage are going to find fewer models. They're also finding they've gotten so good at being single it's hard to be at one with another person."

Article excerpted from "To Be Married Means to Be Outnumbered" by Sam Roberts, The New York Times

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Relative to the market that is!

A realtor can provide you with accurate, informative and up-to-date statistics which will impact your ability to effectively sell or buy a property.

For a Seller, statistics such as Average Sale Price in your area, Average Sale Price per Square Foot and Number of Sales by Month will assist you in listing your property at a price and at a time that will enable a quick and profitable sale transaction.

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"A realtor can..... impact your ability to effectively sell or buy a property."

Price per Square Foot and Number of Sales by Month will assist you in more accurately determining your purchasing power when that purchasing power will have the most strength.

Each edition of "Real Estate Today" will have the most up-to-date statistics for your area. Two editions are published — one for the Greater Albuquer-

que Area and one for the Lynnewood Park & Brentwood Hills areas.

And we are always available to work with clients to research other areas.

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