



First Thing

A Monthly Update from The American Society of Home Inspectors

April 2016



April & May Classes Offered

120 Hour Courses
[Cumming, GA - Apr 18-29](#)

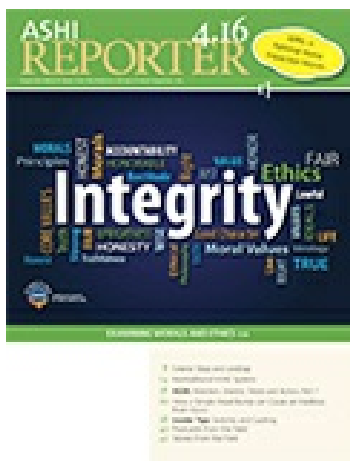
[Tampa, FL - Apr 18-29](#)
[Cincinnati, OH - Apr 25 - May 6](#)

[Cypress, CA - May 2-13](#)

16 Hour Residential Radon Measurement Course

[Live Webinar - May 23-24](#)

93 Hour Courses
[Brentwood, TN - May 16-21](#)



State code embraces

photoelectric smoke alarms

By [Jim Weiker](#)

[The Columbus Dispatch](#)

Ohio has become the fifth state to require photoelectric smoke alarms in new homes.

In the state's first official acknowledgement that traditional ionization alarms are insufficient, new building codes require both ionization and photoelectric alarms on all floors of homes.

The rule applies to new homes. It does not affect existing homes unless a renovation or addition involves the two areas where detectors are specifically required: bedrooms and hallways outside bedrooms.

For years, experts have called for photoelectric detectors instead of — or in addition to — ionization detectors. Studies have shown that photoelectric devices are better at detecting smoldering fires, the most common home fire.

Ionization detectors are considered better at detecting flames, although they are also more likely to be triggered by harmless kitchen smoke or steam.



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What's going on with your chapter? Got an event coming up? Something interesting happen at your last meeting? What did you learn about? We want to know and we'll post it here. Email your news to Dave at davek@ashi.org

Here's what's going on in a chapter near you...

April 8-9, 2016
Great Lakes Chapter
Spring Conference
Holiday Inn
Southgate, MI
up to 17 ASHI CEs

April 21, 2016
Los Angeles/Ventura
County ASHI Chapter
Knights of Columbus Hall
#3601
Canoga Park, CA
7 ASHI CEs

April 21, 2016
Northern New England

"After doing the research, it was determined that both technologies are better than one," said Debbie Ohler, staff engineer with the Ohio Board of Building Standards.

"Each type of technology is best for a certain type of fire. Since we can't predict what type of fire may occur, we felt it was best to have both technologies represented."

Skip Walker, a California home inspector who has helped lead calls for photoelectric alarms, said he doesn't believe ionization alarms are necessary, but nonetheless welcomed Ohio's code change.

"The most important part is that they are getting photoelectric alarms in the houses," he said. "They will save lives."

Walker hopes other states follow Ohio's lead. "If we could wave our magic wand and change them all, our fire death rate would drop 40 percent overnight," he said. "There's an enormous amount of data that show photoelectric is superior."

The change comes with a cost to builders and consumers. A basic hardwired photoelectric detector at Lowe's costs \$16, about three times the price of a comparable ionization detector. Detectors featuring both technologies cost \$50.

The change took effect Jan. 1 but has not been widely reported. At a recent meeting of municipal code officials, a few representatives said their municipalities had started enforcing the new rule but several said they were not familiar with the change.

Ohler said the change was also prompted by the need to reconcile discrepancies between the state building code and some Ohio municipal codes — including Cincinnati's — requiring photoelectric detectors.

jweiker@dispatch.com

ASHI
The Alpine Club
Manchester, NH
7 ASHI CEs

April 30, 2016
PRO ASHI Educational
Event
Murrysville Community
Center
Murrysville, PA

May 6-7, 2016
ASHI Suncoast Suntech
Conference
Hampton Inn Oldsmar
Oldsmar, FL
16 ASHI CEs

May 14, 2016
MAC ASHI Chapter
Education Event
Johns Hopkins University
Rockville, MD
8 ASHI CEs

May 14, 2016
South Carolina ASHI
Holiday Inn
Columbia, SC
2 ASHI CEs



Originally seen in The Columbus Dispatch on March 27, 2016.



It's Time to Revolutionize
Your Inspection Reporting.



Our chapter, **Tri-State ASHI**, is working to continue our fundraising efforts for Blaine's family. As a Chapter, we have made a significant contribution, but feel we

can do more. We are planning a social outing in April to seek additional donations directly from Chapter members and friends to Blaine's [GoFundMe](#) Site.

Also, we are producing a slick (**orange!**) polo shirt (with the generous help of Dee Goldstein) for members and friends to purchase and proceeds would go to the family. The family has requested all attendees at Blaine's Memorial service wear orange as it was Blaine's color of choice. We hope many Board Members across the nation will purchase, maybe wear to an upcoming meeting, take a photo which we can send to the family showing our support and raising some money. Hopefully some Chapter leaders will do the same.

To help out Blaine's family, visit their GoFundMe page at: www.gofundme.com/szkeb83w



Instagram to extend video limit to 60 seconds

Already the go-to social network for photo sharing, Instagram is beefing up its offerings to continue its rapid growth by focusing on what's become an all-encompassing trend on social: video. The company announced on Tuesday that it's rolling out an update that will allow users to post videos lasting up to 60

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This is one of the easiest programs you could ever become involved with and you get a \$50 Visa gift card for your efforts.

All you need to do is get a home inspector to join ASHI. Here's how the program works:

Step 1: Tell friend / colleague that they should join ASHI (talk about why we're awesome!)

Step 2: Friend / colleague fills out an ASHI application and states that you told them to sign up with ASHI.

Step 3: Friend / colleague becomes an ASHI member and we send you a \$50 gift card.

Spread the word. Sign them up. Collect your reward. Repeat.



seconds. Even though the longer video format is available to some, it will still be a few months before the feature is widely available, the company said in a blog post.

The expansion of its video offering comes as a response to a significant uptick in video viewing on the platform.

According to the company's blog post, views have gone up by more than 40% in the last six months...[READ MORE](#)



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5 rookie mistakes by first-time homebuyers - and how to avoid them

By Jonathan McFadden

This is it: The big one.

You’ve scoped out the neighborhood, saved for your down payment and found your custom kitchen and perfect bathroom tile.

You’re trading the world of rental apartments, condos and townhomes for one of the biggest financial commitments of your life: Your first home.

But you’re new to this and quickly find yourself overwhelmed and confused. As the process unfolds, you realize you didn’t account for all your closing costs; buying a new car last week spooked your credit report; and that home inspection you passed on — that was a really bad idea.

Soon enough, your idyllic dream for a first home turns into a burdensome nightmare...[READ MORE](#)



Quick Tip #49: Foundation Problems? Check Your Gutters.

In homes with basements and crawl spaces, we always need to be concerned with water flow from the roof. An overflowing gutter will dump water next to the foundation

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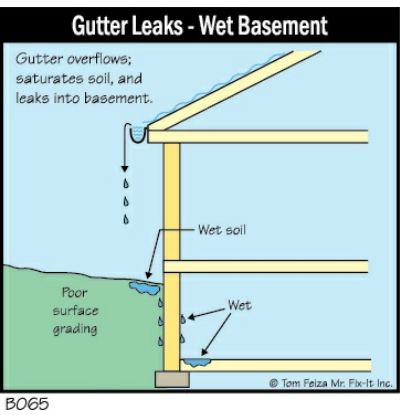
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and create a water leak into the crawl space or basement. In homes with concrete slabs, water next to the foundation can cause movement and cracking, which are bad things for a slab.

So, don't let the gutters overflow. Trees can drop needles, seeds and leaves that can make a real mess in the gutters. Establish a routine for cleaning the gutters that addresses the needs in your yard.

Also make sure downspout extensions dump water away from the foundation. They should extend at least 3 feet and preferably 6 feet to an area where the water will naturally drain away from your home.

One of the best inspection techniques is to observe your home during a hard rain. Gutters should not overflow, and all surface water should be directed away from your home. Water pooled next to a foundation is almost always the cause of a water leak into a basement and can result in structural damage to walls and slabs. Maintenance is easy and simple – make it a priority.

By Tom Feiza, Mr. Fix-It
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Do you know of anyone that wants a successful franchise to inspect where it's nice and warm with NO SNOW, most houses are between 10 and 35 years old with a lot of newer communities (15 years or less old), quite a few condominium inspections (interior only) and a lot of them are ocean front, with an awesome reputation since 1992? We need to be with my Dad fairly quickly and are offering a really "sweet deal/bargain" for someone to purchase so we can be with him. If you know of anyone, please call Edwin Pena at **754-368-5192**.

Home Inspection Facts and Tips

Angie's List collects ratings & reviews on local service companies nationwide, including home inspectors.

For most of us, our home is the biggest investment we'll ever make. And before you buy, a thorough home inspection from a qualified inspector is key. Home inspections are typically required before purchase, but remember – an inspection is no guarantee, nor is it a warranty. Follow our tips to get the most out of your inspection, and check Angie's List to find the most highly-rated inspectors in your area.

Quick Facts About Home Inspection

1 Home inspections typically cost between \$200 and \$400 depending on the square footage of your house. **\$200 ↔ \$400**

2 An inspection usually lasts between three and four hours.

3 Some inspectors offer mold and termite testing at additional costs.

The most common problems with homes are the following:

- Electrical
- Plumbing
- DIY Workmanship
- Foundation issues

5 Read the report: It should include narrative accounts of the inspector's findings that are specific to your house, along with pictures and diagrams.

"Even if you don't plan to move any time soon, a home inspection can come in handy by pointing out problem spots and helping you stay on top of regular home maintenance, which will save you money in the long run," says Angie Hicks, founder of Angie's List.

Inspect before you sell?

Getting a home inspected before putting it up for sale puts the cost on the seller or listing agent, but can provide a written report as to the pre-sale condition of the property. It could uncover any concerns that might compromise a sale. A prospective buyer should still have their own inspection done and not rely on the one provided by the seller.

Inspection for Homes

An inspector can examine the condition of several aspects of the home to gauge its sustainability even if a resident has yet to move in. Here are the most important features in a home that need inspection:

Be there

Attend the home inspection so you can see issues first-hand and learn more about the home's structure.

Warranty

A good home inspector will identify problems before a builder's warranty expires.

3 days

Inspector should deliver a clearly worded, detailed report within a few days of finishing inspection. Report should list the condition of the home from top to bottom, inside and out and include recommendations from inspector.

1 Foundation & Structure

3 Roof & Attic

2 Interior & Exterior

4 Plumbing

5 Insulation

6 Major electrical components

Sources

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<http://www.angieslist.com/videos/home-inspections-maintenance-tool-any-homeowner.htm>
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<http://www.angieslist.com/articles/home-inspection-angieslist.htm>

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Why Your Business Should Be Using Infographics

What is an infographic and why are they so popular?

An infographic is a way to present information, data, and knowledge in a visual manner. They have been popular for several years and have become extremely popular in the past several months as a “safe” search engine optimization method.

Aside from the SEO benefits of infographics, they also do a great job at building brand awareness and getting a specific message across. Consumers do not want to read a lot of information and it is a fact that the majority of people absorb information better if it is presented in a visual manner.

Businesses are using infographics as a way to engage their target market and drive traffic to their website. After all, isn't the point of SEO and online marketing to drive laser targeted traffic to a website that results in conversions? When an infographic is done correctly with the right content, design, and layout it can provide the serious return on investment (ROI) that every business owner desires. And, call us crazy, but real estate agents use infographics on Pinterest all the time. And two of the many infographics they post about are home inspections and home inspection checklists.

A successful infographic needs to be...

UNIQUE: There are many infographics that look the same and consumers will not engage with an infographic if it has the same look as the other 2,346 that they have seen. Remember, the goal of the infographic is to get consumer interaction as well as other websites to share it.

SIMPLE: The trick to creating a good infographic is to make it visually appealing while keeping it simple at the same time. If there is too much going on many people will lose focus and they will not get the

“message” you are trying to get across. This is visual marketing at its finest and a great opportunity to attract a whole different customer base. Many people try to be impressive with ridiculous statistics and data, but that can sometimes backfire.

CREATIVE PACKING A PUNCH: This is where the design comes into play and it needs to punch the reader in the face when they look at it. Kind of like getting a big bucket of ice cold water to the face. “Hey YOU! Check this out!” This has everything to do with the content and message as much as it does with the actual design. The combination of these elements results in the success or failure of the creativity.

MINIMAL TEXT & HIGH IMPACT: The point of an infographic is to use a visual medium to capture an audience and create a buzz and gain some traction. So, do not kill it with too much text. You want the reader to take a glance and immediately be interested in learning more. If there is too much text to digest it will push a lot of potential views and readers away before they even have a chance to find out what your message is about. Use hard hitting factual data and high impact graphics to deliver the one-two punch!

EASILY SHAREABLE: Infographics are great because they are often shared across social media and other websites. Once it is posted on the website the business should share it across their social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, etc) and then make sure that the post has a social sharing widget installed allowing the readers to quickly share it across their social profiles with a click of their mouse. Another good idea is to provide the html code so other websites can display the infographic with a link back to the blog post. This is great link bait because websites benefit from content that is engaging, and you benefit by gaining natural links.

By the way, the infographic above was found on Angie's List.



Robly