



# First Thing

A Monthly Update from The American Society of Home Inspectors

August 2016



TELL HOMEOWNERS THAT THEY CAN STOP  
ATTIC MICE PERMANENTLY WITH EXCLUSIVE  
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*Competition is not only the basis of protection to  
the consumer, but is the incentive to progress. -  
Herbert Hoover*

Over the years, consumers have enjoyed the  
benefits of quality home inspections from both  
ASHI and National Association of Home Inspectors  
(NAHI) members. The two associations strived to  
provide their members, as well as the public, with  
the confidence that the home they're buying has  
been diligently and thoroughly inspected.

The competition from NAHI has helped to keep  
ASHI on the path to excellence. For that, we've  
considered NAHI members more as colleagues  
rather than competitors.

So it is a bittersweet moment when we heard the  
news that NAHI had decided to give up its charter  
as a home inspection association. Bitter because  
without NAHI, ASHI will no longer have another



**August &  
September  
Classes Offered**

**120 Hour Courses**  
[Columbus, OH - Aug  
15-26](#)  
[Creve Couer, MO - Aug](#)

[15-26](#)  
[Des Plaines, IL - Aug](#)  
[15-26](#)  
[Cumming, GA - Sept](#)  
[12-23](#)  
[Cypress, CA - Sept 12-](#)  
[23](#)  
[Lakewood, CO - Sept](#)  
[12-23](#)  
[Tampa, FL - Sept 12-](#)  
[23](#)  
[Cincinnati, OH - Sept](#)  
[19-30](#)  
[Leesburg, VA - Sept](#)  
[19-30](#)

**93 Hour Class**  
[Brentwood, TN - Sept](#)  
[19-24](#)


**160 Hour Class**  
[Bellevue, WA - Sept](#)  
[19-30](#)

**Commercial Class**  
[Burbank, CA - Sept 21-](#)  
[23](#)

organization in business that provided its members with comparable standards. But sweet because ASHI has welcomed former NAHI members into ASHI and we're looking forward to their professionalism to help make ours a better association.

Please join us in welcoming the former NAHI members to ASHI with the same spirit we provide to all of our new members.

Sincerely,



Frank Lesh  
Executive Director  
American Society of Home Inspectors



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[2016 August](#)  
[Reporter](#)



## Great New ASHI Chapter Benefit

Your National ASHI Board has  
done it again: **YEAR OF THE CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP  
DRIVE!!**

**From August 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016**, anyone  
who is not already an ASHI member will receive his or her  
first year membership to ASHI National for free when they  
join your chapter.



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*Central Iowa Radon is excited to announce a move to their new location in Des Moines, Iowa. Due to company growth and expansion, this locally owned business, found itself in need of more space.*

*ProTec Inspection Services was Awarded The Title of "Best Home Inspection Company" in Potomac from a peer opinion poll of home inspection services.*

*HouseMaster of Edmonton as 2017 Consumer Choice Award Winner in Home Inspection Category*



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](mailto:davek@ashi.org)

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

[September 7-11, 2016  
SE Home Inspection  
Conference](#)

We ask that each chapter begin recruiting members for your chapter to take advantage of this limited time offer.

Please remember, the chapters are the lifeline of your association and without you, your association will not continue to grow.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Russell K Daniels at [russelld@ashi.org](mailto:russelld@ashi.org).

**IT'S HERE!**



### **ASHI School Introduces New 60- Hour Online Course**

The course will focus on an introduction to starting and operating your own successful home inspection career and business, as well as how-to perform home inspections especially geared towards compliance with the American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI) Standard of Practice and Code of Ethics. [Register Now!](#)

Infinite Energy Center  
Duluth GA

September 11-12, 2016  
[ASHI New England  
Educational Conference](#)  
Hilton Mystic Hotel  
Mystic Seaport, CT

September 16-17, 2016  
[Great Plains Chapter 2nd  
Annual Fall Conference](#)  
Kansas City Expo Center  
Kansas City, MO  
16 ASHI CEs

September 16-17, 2016  
[ASHI Western Washington  
Fall Seminar](#)  
Shoreline Center  
Shoreline, WA  
17 ASHI CEs

September 17, 2016  
[NIC ASHI  
1 Day State CE Event](#)  
Crazy Pour Restaurant  
Villa Park, IL

September 23-24, 2016  
[Great Lakes Chapter Fall  
Conference](#)  
Holiday Inn Express  
Grand Rapids, MI

September 23-24  
[NY Metro ASHI Annual  
Seminar](#)  
DoubleTree  
Tarrytown, NY  
19 ASHI CEs

September 23-24, 2016  
[North Central Ohio  
Chapter  
Fall Seminar](#)  
Holiday Inn of Fairlawn  
Akron, OH  
Sept 23 - 16 CEs (Radon)  
Sept 24 - 8 CEs  
(Electrical/Lead)

September 30, 2016  
Tri-State ASHI Fall  
Conference  
Temple Ambler Campus  
Ambler, PA  
8 ASHI CEs

October 1, 2016  
[Ohio ASHI](#)

The main benefit of The ASHI School's 60-hour online home inspection course is that it is totally at your own pace. Whether you're in school, have a current job, or just have time to complete one-to-two hours a day; then this is perfect for you. [Register Now!](#)

Need to go over what you learned already? You can backtrack over the topics you already saw and watch them as many times as you need to in order to take the test on that section. [Register Now!](#)

This is a wonderful opportunity for home inspection companies to have for their new employees. Whether it is a refresher of a previously attended class; or a new introduction into the home inspection field; or a current home inspector wants to provide an overview of the business to office personnel; this class fulfills whatever you need it to be. [Register Now!](#)

The 60-hour online course provides an all encompassing home inspection education from the foundation to the roof and everything in between, particularly focusing on:

- Roofing
- Exterior
- Structure
- Electrical
- Heating
- Cooling/heating pumps
- Insulation
- Plumbing, and
- Interiors

For more information, contact The ASHI School staff at 888.884.0440 or email us at [info@theashischool.com](mailto:info@theashischool.com). [Register Now!](#)



## ***Radon Measurement 2-Day Live Webinar August 30-31***

- ***Convenient.*** Each course consists of two 8-hour sessions, 2 consecutive days from 8:30am - 5:30pm ET.
- ***Save time.*** No travel required.
- ***Save money.*** The Measurement fee is \$100-150 less than our



[Historical Home Inspections](#)  
Ruth Smucker Home  
Salem, OH  
8 ASHI CEs

October 14-15, 2016  
[Keystone ASHI Seminar](#)  
DoubleTree by Hilton  
Reading, PA  
up to 16 ASHI CEs

**October 20-21, 2016**  
**Leadership Training Conference**  
**Fountain Blue Conference Center**  
**Des Plaines, IL**

October 20-22, 2016  
[CAHPI National Conference](#)  
Sheraton Cavalier  
Calgary Hotel  
Calgary, AB  
[www.cahpinational.org](http://www.cahpinational.org)  
18 CEs

November 4, 2016  
[Mid-Missouri ASHI Educational Seminar](#)  
Columbia Board of Realtors Office  
Columbia, MO  
8 ASHI CEs



**InspectionWo  
rld 2017 Las  
Vegas  
January 22-  
25, 2017**

Is it too early to discuss InspectionWorld? We sure don't think so. We had such a great time in San Diego that we simply can't get InspectionWorld off our minds. You'll soon be seeing a lot more information about InspectionWorld, our speakers and courses, exhibitors, the app,

- usual classroom fee.
- **Real-time participation.** Limited number of students per class for maximum one-on-one interactive class participation.
- Webcam and microphone are a requirement for the class.**
- \* The Measurement webinar is accepted by states that recognize NRPP certification with approval in Illinois pending..It is not currently approved for certification preparation in Florida and New Jersey.

[Register Now](#)



Welcome to the  
**ASHI Online Learning Center**

**Members: Log in and click** "Educational Content" to access **FREE** courses from past & current IWs.

Non-Members: \$29/course

[See State Approved course list.](#) The State approved courses are found under Past Iws sessions.



**Shipping Container Home  
may be the first of many in  
Houston**

Originally posted at [Realtor.com](http://Realtor.com)

By [Claudine Zap](#)

Shipping container homes—modern, utilitarian, industrial chic—may be all over the design blogs and shelter magazines, but in Houston? Not so much.

But if one fledgling developer has his way, there will be a whole community of little shipping container homes in the city’s Fifth Ward neighborhood. His first home made of shipping containers just hit the market.

“It is like a prototype. It’s like a model,” listing agent Trent Draper says. He adds that the developer, Build a Box

events, and much, much more!



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Homes founder Jerry Hartless, “purchased that piece of property there just as a way to see if it’s a great idea. The whole idea is to make the home affordable but yet efficient and, in turn, better for the environment.” This first home is available for \$189,995.

The hope is that the model home will spur interest for more. “If he gets more orders to build them, he’ll build them,” Draper says. “He’s bought entire blocks in the Fifth Ward of Houston.”

Hartless got the idea while working in the Middle East, where he saw shipping container homes being built, the agent notes. When he returned to Texas, the idea hadn’t quite caught on. Draper is hoping that will change with this portable pioneer.

“I’m finding out that it is very rare,” Draper says of the prefab homes. “This is the first one I’ve ever seen in Houston.”

And unlike more modern-looking shipping container homes, this little listing blends in with its more traditional neighbors. If you imagine living inside, say, a FedEx box, think again. At first glance, the home looks like a cozy cottage, with a front porch, peaked roof, and cheery blue hue.

On closer inspection, its industrial roots are evident. Still, “it catches you by surprise,” Draper says.

The contemporary home is just as surprising inside. The two- bedroom, two-bathroom space makes the most of its 1,228-square-foot layout. The open kitchen comes with stainless-steel appliances and granite countertops; it looks out to a light-filled living area. There is laminate flooring throughout. Decorative stacked stones cover the connections between the two containers. And for your barbecues, there’s a covered deck out back. (Hey, it’s Texas.)

Draper delicately notes that the older neighborhood, just minutes to downtown Houston, is “in transition.” That’s one of the reasons that buyers may be hesitant to move there. So it’s also being marketed as an office.

“In order for the other houses to be around, it’s going to take a while. It could serve as a workspace,” Draper says.

Because as we’ve seen, shipping containers are nothing if not versatile.





**MEMBER get a MEMBER**

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.**





Oceanview staterooms & above	Suites
PICK 2	PICK 5

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Stand out and get noticed in your community. *Hey! LOOK AT ME!*

**LEARNING**  
Get a competitive edge over non-members with exclusive training opportunities on a variety of hot topics.

**CREDIBILITY**  
Raise your reputation through membership.

**DISCOUNTS**  
Increase your purchasing power through members-only discounts and perks.

**HAVE A VOICE**  
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land resort vacation!



a plastic laminate kitchen  
countertop can become  
discolored and worn. Small  
scratches dull the finish.  
It's impossible to fully restore  
the color and eliminate  
scratches from plastic laminate  
(better known by common  
brand names like Formica).

The same properties that make plastic laminate such a  
tough and durable material for countertops also make it  
impossible to fully patch or repair.

However, you can clean and polish laminate with a product  
like Gel-Gloss, a milky white cleaner/polish much like  
automotive wax. With a little rubbing, Gel-Gloss will remove  
most stains and discoloration with its mild abrasive and  
solvent cleaner.

Spread a thin coat on the countertop. After it dries to a light  
powdery residue, buff with a clean cloth. This leaves a nice  
gloss that tends to mask scratches, so the plastic laminate  
looks refinished. It also creates a smooth, sealed surface  
that resists water spotting and stains. In the future, when  
the counter gets dull again, just apply more.

Never use bleach or strong abrasive cleaners on plastic  
laminates. They can damage the surface and remove the  
color. Also, don't flood the surface with water – water may  
get into the edge joints and swell the underlying particle  
board.

By Tom Feiza, Mr. Fix-It

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home



**How Can You Pay**  
**Less Tax This Year?**

Dear business owner:

It's true. The IRS loves you! Why do I say that?  
Well, you are self-employed (or operate as a one-  
owner corporation).



***Don't forget to  
mention that  
you're an  
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And the current IRS tax code has literally dozens of juicy deductions built into it that only self-employed and one-owner taxpayers can take.

These deductions can add up to savings of many thousands of dollars in tax payments -- savings so large it's almost unfair to people who are NOT self-employed or don't have their own businesses!

*However, there's a problem....*

The IRS doesn't automatically take those deductions for you -- or apply them to your tax return if you forget to claim them.

You have to know what deductions are available to self-employed taxpayers and one-owner businesses ... the latest updates and changes to the tax codes ... and how to apply them to your particular situation.

*It's a real catch-22.*

Failing to take all the deductions you are entitled to could cost you thousands of dollars in tax payments to the IRS that you aren't really required to make.

Taking deductions you're not entitled to -- or can't back up with the required documentation -- can cost you thousands of dollars in interest and penalties.

That's why I created my manual Business Tax Deductions for one-owner and spouse-owned businesses (proprietorships, S corporation, C corporations, limited liability companies, 1099, and statutory employees).

My name is Murray Bradford, CPA. In 1979, I began developing tax strategies for the self-employed and one-owner businesses. Today I have more than half a million business owners and self-employed business professionals who have benefited from the tax-saving advice in my programs.

In Business Tax Deductions, you learn about deductions that can save you lots of money on your tax bill. Including:

[GOLD AFFILIATES](#)

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[Business Risk Partners](#)

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- How to deduct up to \$734 per day for your business travel transportation - page 15.
- 5 things you must prove to the IRS to deduct entertainment without raising an eyebrow - page 49.
- Is having a home office a red flag for IRS audits? Page 61.
- How to deduct 100% of the cost of a home repair even when your home office takes only 10% of the house - page 66.
- How to sell your home for a profit of up to half a million dollars without owing a nickel to the IRS - page 85.
- How to hire your spouse without paying payroll taxes - page 89.
- How to deduct up to \$125,000 (or more, with inflation adjustments) for the cost of your vehicle - page 125.
- 36 items in your building that can be depreciated like equipment - page 142.
- How to get a business travel deduction by watching a DVD - page 19.
- Are Shriners, Masons, Kiwanis, Elks, or Rotary Club dues deductible? Page 41.

**Want to learn more? Purchase the book [here](#).**

**This has been taught at InspectionWorld, if you missed it, then [purchase the materials](#) so you can save money on taxes, too!.**





- [Home Inspection Report](#)
- [HomeTeam](#)
- [Imfunu](#)
- [Inspection Certification Associates](#)
- [Inspector Services Group](#)
- [Inspection Support Network](#)
- [KritterCaps](#)
- [LiftMaster](#)
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*Contact any of the above Affiliates and Endorsed providers and mention that you are an ASHI member for a special discount.*



We have been working hard to



Whether you are running a small, local operation, or heading a national-level effort, the statistics (shown in July's Another Thing) make it clear: Your customers are online. They are interacting in social channels with their friends, colleagues, and other brands in

search of information, recommendations, and entertainment. If your company is not around to answer, a competitor will be. In doing so, your competitor will quite likely take away the customer at hand, along with anyone else listening.

There are tones of opportunities to add value - even to delight - and making that connection can help build a person's relationship with a company, brand, or representative. Those relationships create the foundation for what can eventually become of your greatest marketing assets: customer advocacy (testimonials).

Testimonials are the low-hanging fruit of social media, and it is through advocacy that your efforts start to truly scale and grow. It shows that your brand is doing such an amazing job that your customers shout about your brand from rooftops, sharing their opinions and experiences with their networks. That sharing is the best marketing a brand can ask for.

Identifying potential advocates is a good first step. You can use social tools (many of which will get to later), site data, customer data, and even your own observations to help you pick out which customers are likely to go to bat for your brand. You'll want to figure out what is most important to those potential advocates. What are they looking for? Are they excited by receiving exclusive access to your news/content? Figure out what type of advocates your brand attracts and find ways to recognize them for their advocacy. It is important to note that most of your greatest community relationships will be built organically. While your research and brand knowledge encourages people and helps you put the fight foot forward, relationships take time.

The transition from a passive web to an interactive web has

bring some excellent ASHI Members Exclusive Benefits. Check out the list below and visit the ASHI website's member's only section and click on Member Benefits. Here's a sampling of the awesome member exclusive benefits ASHI members enjoy:

Travel:

- Orlando Vacation Packages
- Cruise Discounts
- Rental Car Discounts at 5 different rental car companies
- Hotel Discounts (10%-55% savings)

Auto:

- Savings on new and used cars (save thousands off MSRP)
- Jiffy Lube Discounts

Retail:

- Apple products
- Dell products
- Groupon
- A website chock full of discounts at your favorite retailers

Health:

- Supplemental Health
- Dental Insurance
- TeleMedicine Programs
- Prescription Drug Cards

...more coming soon!

brought with it many changes affecting how individuals connect with one another and also how businesses operate. At this stage, it's fair to say that a web presence is critical to the success of a business. You can't get ahead if you're ignoring your customer's online conversations or opting to look the other way. Us this opportunity to get closer to your audience that ever before - reach more people in a genuine and authentic manner, drive more qualified traffic to your site, increase the authority of your brand, engage the people who influence your customers' behavior, and gain the data necessary for insights-based business decisions.

A better question is: why wouldn't your company use social media?



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***What is Health Excellence Select and Health Sharing?***

***(Besides another great benefit from ASHI)?***

**The best way to take control of your healthcare expenses is to become a Self-Pay Patient. At first blush, that seems scary with your potential financial exposure due to the rising cost of healthcare today. But, what if you could form a group of like-minded, health focused, Patriotic, God fearing Americans, people just like you, that would agree to share any costs you incurred above an amount that you could comfortably handle. Maybe, then it’s not so scary.**

Health Excellence Select - What is Health Sharing?



- Designed for Health Focused People!
- Costs +/-50% of Health Insurance!
- Accepted by Your Doctor and Hospital!
- Legal - Exempt from Tax Penalty!







Robly