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First Thing

A Monthly Update from The American Society of Home Inspectors

December 2016

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AMERICAN SOCIETY OF HOME INSPECTORS Educational Conference & Expo

January 22-25, 2017 • Bally's Resort • Las Vegas

"Success doesn't come to you,
you go to it" ~ Marva Collins, Chicago Educator



**InspectionWorld
Early Bird
Registration Ends
December 16th!**

**Save \$50 off of IW
registration if you sign up before
December 16th!**

How to Register:

- Click on image above, or
- You may register by fax/mail, or
- [Downloadable Reg Form IW 2017.pdf](#)
*Simply complete the form and send it to us
with your check or credit card information.*

For assistance with registration, please call
(847) 954-3188.

InspectionWorld is open to registered



**December &
January
Classes Offered**

**60-Hr Online Course
Register Now**

93 Hour Class
Austintown, OH - Dec
12-17

Brentwood, TN - Jan 9-
14, 2017

16 Hour Residential
Radon
Measurement
Webinar

Live Webinar - Jan 5-6,
2017

Commercial Class
Las Vegas, NV - Jan 26-
28, 2017

immediately following
InspectionWorld



2016 December
Reporter



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attendees only. An official badge is required for admittance to all sessions, exhibits and social activities.

Registration / Information Desk hours
(Attendee and Exhibitor) located in Bally's
Conference Center.

Sunday, January 22, 2017 — 7:00 am - 9:00
pm

Monday, January 23, 2017 — 7:00 am - 7:00
pm

Tuesday, January 24, 2017 — 7:00 am - 6:00
pm

Wednesday, January 25, 2017 — 7:00 am -
4:00 pm

Please take time to greet New Members and
First Time Attendees when you meet them.
Share with them your experience with ASHI.



Dues Reminder

Dear former NAHI members who are now
ASHI members, we hope you have enjoyed
your membership with ASHI. This is just a
friendly reminder that your dues of \$424.00
are due by December 31, 2016.

You can log onto the ASHI website at
www.ashi.org with your member number
and password, scroll down to the bottom of
the page, click on the dues box that says
"pay dues here" and renew your
membership. You can also call ASHI at 847-

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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...

January 19, 2017
Northern New England
ASHI Chapter Winter

759-2820 and pay your dues over the phone. Don't risk losing your membership, renew now!

If you have any questions, please contact the membership department at membership@ashi.org.



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It's Audit Time

Each year in the months of February and March, ASHI staff is charged with conducting an annual audit of Continuing Education (CE) hours. A list of 300-400 Inspectors is randomly generated from the ASHI database, including at least one member from each chapter. Members on the list are notified to turn in documentation supporting the CE hours they claimed. (*Certificates of completion, invoices and certificates of attendance are accepted.*)

If the documentation does not verify the required number of hours, the inspector is placed on administrative suspension until he or she submits the proper documentation. If you have questions, please contact [Janet George](#) or [Russell K Daniels](#).

Seminar
The Yard Seafood & Steak
Restaurant
Manchester, NH
Contact: [Timothy Rooney](#)
7 ASHI CEs

January 27-28, 2017
North Carolina ASHI
Winter Education Event
Tarheels Basements
Conference Room
Winston-Salem, NC
Contact: [Larry Conway](#)
16 ASHI CEs

February 5-7, 2017
Heartland ASHI Winter
Seminar
Sportman's Lodge
Baudette, MN
Contact: [Bill Oelrich](#)
8 ASHI CEs



[Joe Ferry, LLC](#)
[Target Professional Programs](#)
[Guardian Financial](#)
[Home Owners Network](#)
[Quill.com](#)
[LegalShield](#)
[Porch.com](#)
[MoverThankYou.com](#)
[HomeAdvisor](#)
[OneSource Solutions](#)
[Liberty Mutual Insurance](#)
[InspectionContracts.com](#)
[GEM Marketing](#)
([ASHIstore.com](#))
[BuildFax](#)
[ASHI@Home](#)



Common Deck Stair Defects

by Bruce Barker

As an ASHI home inspector, I inspect decks every day. Most

have multiple defects, which is to be expected on older decks. But I also find serious problems with recently built decks, which is less understandable. In particular, I like to focus on stairs, because of the role they play in deck safety.

Indoors or out, stairs are one of the most dangerous systems anywhere in a building. Falls involving stairs can result in serious personal injury; that's where the big money is for attorneys. On a deck, stairs are third (behind ledger detachment and guard failures) in terms of number of injuries suffered.

Stairs Built Right

Interior and exterior stairs share almost all of the same requirements. If anything, deck builders should be more careful about applying current safety and structural standards to exterior stairs because they are subject to environmental conditions that may exacerbate safety and structural problems.

But which standards apply? It's best to think of building codes as minimum standards, not as the standards for contractors who build quality decks. Keep in mind that even when a deck complies with a local building code, the code official who inspects it is not responsible for ensuring that the deck is safe.

To improve safety and to reduce liability risk, deck builders should follow current best practices as presented in the latest edition of DCA 6, the American Wood Council's Prescriptive Residential Wood Deck



[Millionaire Inspector](#)
[Community](#)



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[Business Risk Partners](#)

[Citadel Insurance](#)

[Home Inspector Pro](#)

[HomeGauge](#)

[How To Operate Your Home](#)

[Inspection Certification](#)

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[Kaplan Home](#)

[Inspection Education](#)

[LiftMaster](#)

[McKissock](#)

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[BNK Insurance](#)

Construction Guide. Accordingly, I define “defect” as a failure to comply with these best practices. In fact, since a deck that passes local code inspection may still be unsafe, I believe that DCA 6 should be the standard to which all decks are built regardless of what might be allowed by local building codes.

Stringers

Before getting into deck stair defects, let’s look at how DCA 6 recommends that stairs should be built, starting with the stringers, risers, treads, landings, and the components that support them (Figure 1). When I’m evaluating a deck stair, this is where I start...[READ MORE](#)



Pre- & Post IW Conference Info

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE SPECIAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES!

ARRIVE EARLY to obtain additional training:

All Pre-Conference courses provide ASHI CEs.

*Registration to a Pre-Conference course **does not** include access to the 3-day IW Education Program: January 23-25, 2017. Each course has its own individual tuition.*

2 day Infrared - Certified Residential Thermographer Class (16

hours). Instructor: Bill Fabian, Vice President, Monroe Infrared Technology, Inc.

Friday and Saturday, January 20th & 21st, 8am- 5pm

(16 ASHI CEs)

Tuition: \$595

DISCOUNTED PRICE: Class tuition is \$495 with Inspection Las Vegas Registration (Full Conference or Conference Education

[Boston Environmental](#)
[Brickkicker](#)
[Buyers Protection](#)
[Group](#)
[Complete Appliance](#)
[Protection](#)
[EBPHI](#)
[Elite MGA](#)
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[PRISM Analytical](#)
[RAdata, Inc.](#)
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[Vanguard Emergency](#)
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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
bring some excellent ASHI

registration packages only). See IW online
registration.

**One Day of Secrets Revealed (8
hours).** Presented by Mike Crow and Matt
Smith of the Millionaire Inspector
Community
Saturday, January 21, 8am-5pm
Tuition: No Fee
(8 ASHI CEs)

**2-day NHIE Prep Class with Exam
Option (8 hours).**
Instructors: Bruce Barker, ACI, the author of
the NHIE Home Inspection Manual, and Jim
Funkhouser, ACI, a past EBPHI President,
and person in-charge of the NHIE question
writing sessions for four years.
(8 ASHI CEs)
Approved by ICC.
Sunday, Jan. 22, 8am-12pm Class
Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2pm-6pm Class
Wednesday, Jan. 25, afternoon Exam,
transportation to PSI Testing Center - Las
Vegas
**Tuition: \$100 ASHI Members, \$150 Non-
members**
[NHIE Review Course Outline.pdf](#) (View
course outline)

**NADRA Deck Inspection Certification
Class (4 hours).**
Instructor: Jim Mailey, Training Manager,
Simpson Strong-Tie
Includes a certification exam (administered
in class) and a one-year membership in
North American Deck and Railing
Association (\$100 value).
<http://nadra.org>
Included in your NADRA membership you
will receive: A direct link from NADRA's "Find
an Inspector" pages - lead generating site.
Sunday, January 22nd, 8am-12pm
(4 ASHI CEs)

Tuition: \$149

**203k Day of Discovery: FHA Consultant
Certification Jump-Start Course.**

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
- Lenovo
- Groupon
- A website chock full of discounts at your favorite retailers

Health:

- Healthcare
- Supplemental Health
- Dental/Vision Insurance
- TeleMedicine Programs
- Prescription Drug Cards

Business Related:

- Shipping
- Office Supplies
- Legal help
- Credit Card Processing

...more coming soon!



If you're looking for health insurance, ASHI has a great resource for you. Go to:
www.ashimarketplace.co

Presented by Catherine Hall, the creator of the highly successful and extremely popular FHA Consultant Training System- 203k In a Box and Executive Director of the National Association of FHA Consultants.
Sunday, January 22nd, 8am-12pm
(4 ASHI CEs)

Tuition: No fee

Commercial Building Inspection Course (3-day Class). Instructor: Richard Weldon, P.Eng., LEED AP
Thursday, Friday and Saturday, January 26, 27, and 28, 2017
(24 ASHI CEs)
8am-5pm each day at Bally's Resort
Tuition: \$1,395.00 (ASHI Member price). Non-Member price \$1,795.00
Register for this class through [the ASHI School website](http://theASHISchoolwebsite)

ASHI Print-On-Demand



www.ASHIPrintOnDemand.com



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF HOME INSPECTORS

Quickly and easily order books and ASHI brochures or create marketing materials for your business!

Create one look for all your marketing pieces! And best of all, ASHI did all the work. We created the designs and added our logo.

Now add your logo, images and contact information with ease, or use our photos. Save your designs, edit later or re-order to refresh your supplies. Purchase informative brochures imprinted with your logo and contact information to hand out to clients and agents alike. We make it easy and on your schedule. How? With 24/7

[m](#) and find the right health insurance that fits your and your family's needs. Looking for more than health insurance? Vision? Dental? Supplemental? Prescription medicines? Same website. Get covered now.

access and ordering, with tech support during business hours (CDT). Check out this video for more information:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xH5g_YUC2a0&feature=youtu.be

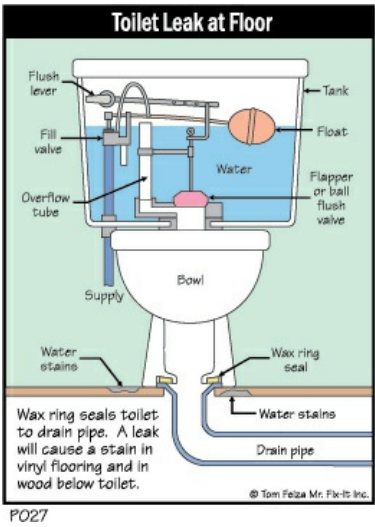
Visit ASHI's Print-on-Demand site today and start creating your own marketing collateral now. Click [here](#).



Calling All Chapters!!!

Do you host a chapter event, seminar, or conference and trade show? Do you attend them as an exhibitor? If you answered 'yes' to either question, then you need ASHI's new "Step Up With ASHI" banner.

This banner has all the talking points you need to promote ASHI membership and help non-members and non-ACIs alike with the steps to move up to the ACI



Quick Tip #28: Stains Around Your Toilet

Always be on the lookout for water leaks in your home, including little clues that could indicate bigger problems.

For instance, if interior paint is bubbling or loose, you’re likely to find a water leak behind the paint.

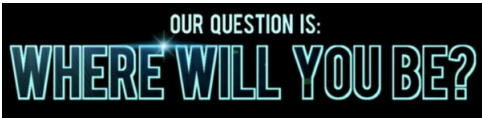
Around your toilet, check the vinyl flooring. Any gray stain in the vinyl that can’t be washed away may indicate a leak where the toilet connects to the drainage pipe – or a leak at the wax ring sealing the toilet to the drain pipe flange. The gray stain in the vinyl is caused by a small amount of water seeping under the vinyl. Water discolors the subfloor and vinyl; the stain can’t be removed.

Gently rock the toilet from side to side. It should not wobble or slide on the floor. Any movement means there may be a problem that should be checked by a plumber. If your home has a basement or crawl space, you can also look for signs of drips or wood

level.

Order yours today!

Contact Dee Goldstein
at deegem@optonline.net
to get pricing and more!



**ASHI HQ Conference
Schedule**

Where will you be?

**[InspectionWorld](#)
[Las Vegas](#)
January 22-25, 2017
Las Vegas, NV**

**[3 Days of Secrets](#)
[Revealed](#)**

February 20-23, 2017
Dallas, TX

**[2017 OAH/CAHPI-ON](#)
[Education Conference](#)
March 3-5, 2017
Burlington, ON**

**[East Coast Builders](#)
[Conference](#)
May 4-5, 2017
Atlanta, GA**

**[NEHA 2017 Annual](#)
[Education Conference &](#)
[Expo](#)
July 10-13, 2017
Grand Rapids, MI**

stains below the toilet. This type of leak is particularly bad because it can cause unseen rot that may require replacement of the subfloor – an expensive repair.

By Tom Feiza, Mr. Fix-It

(c) Copyright 2009 by Tom Feiza, Mr. Fix-It, Inc. | [misterfix-it.com](#) | [htoyh.com](#) Helping you operate and maintain your home



6 Tips to Get Your Business Started on Social Media

Do you want to create a business presence on social media?

Looking for tips to get started?

Setting up a good foundation on social media can help you build visibility and connections for your business.

In this article you'll discover six tips to get your business started on social media.

#1: Create Profiles on Multiple Social Platforms

Social media-friendly businesses don't simply create a [Facebook page](#) or [Twitter account](#) and leave it at that. They target multiple platforms, including [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [Pinterest](#) and perhaps even [Tumblr](#), too.

From the outside, it may seem unnecessary to have an account on each of these channels, but from an SEO perspective, it absolutely is. When potential clients do a Google search for your business name, you want them to see a full list of your social media profiles in addition to your website. Chances are they'll click through to read your reviews, see how many followers you have and maybe (hopefully) even ask a question.

[KnowEm](#) is a quick, easy way to find out if your business name is available on specific social networks. Enter your business name in the search box, and the tool will search for your name across different platforms. There's also a special category for business networks.

#2: Fill Out Your Profiles Completely

It's important to fill out your social profiles completely.

Incomplete or inactive social media business profiles give visitors little reason to like or follow your business. And inactivity is likely to have the same effect. You'd be surprised how many social profiles are incomplete or inactive for months on end.

When filling out your social profiles, keep these questions in mind:

What will people gain by following you? Remember that people are busy, so you need to give them a reason to follow you.

Do your profile summaries and descriptions include the who, what, where and why of your business? Also, make sure that your contact information is clearly visible.

#3: Allow Blog Comments

[Commenting systems](#) such as Facebook Comments, Livefyre and Disqus make it easy for people to interact with your content through social media. Each system has its advantages.

[Livefyre](#) is ideal if you want to encourage discussion. It's used by popular websites like Hootsuite, CNET and New York Magazine.

[Disqus](#) gives you strong moderation features, requiring users to create an account prior to posting comments. It's a great choice for [business bloggers](#).

[Facebook Comments](#) is the best choice if you get most of your engagement through Facebook, and it allows for direct Facebook shares.

#4: Add Share Buttons to Your Blog

The easier you make it for visitors to [share](#) your content, the more likely it that they'll share your content. That's why it's important for blogs to have [social media sharing buttons](#) installed.

Include share buttons on your blog posts, home page, [landing pages](#) and anywhere else that provides value to visitors.

For articles or other high-value content, try placing share buttons at the top, bottom and side of the page.

#5: Connect With Your Followers

Don't forget that social media is all about being social. If you only post about your products and services in an attempt to generate sales, you'll likely hear crickets in return.

Your message won't be heard on social media unless you're actively speaking with people. It's not necessary to reply to every comment of course, but at least try to stimulate engagement by responding to questions or providing further value when and where you can. This is called proactive engagement, and it should be an important part of your business's social media plan.

Follow these key guidelines when interacting with customers through social media:

- Show some personality. Be lighthearted and humorous, but also serious when it really matters. People buy from people, so the more you show your brand's human side, the more likely people will engage with you.
- Respond to questions. Whether they're positive or negative, answering your customers' questions is important. Like Henry Ford said, it's not the employer who pays your wages; it's the customer. [Plum Deluxe](#) does this well on their Facebook page.

Does your business come across as human, as opposed to just another company? It's vital to [humanize](#) your brand to build meaningful relationships with your customers and prospects.

#6: Ask for Customer Reviews

When was the last time you dined out or made a large purchase without considering what other people had to say about it first? This is known as social proof. It's the online world's version of word of mouth.

Research shows that people take online [customer reviews](#) and opinions into account when faced with a purchase decision.

If you're not getting many online reviews for your business, ask people to post a review on Google, Facebook or another channel you want to target. That's a great way to find out what customers think about your products or services.

Over to You

It doesn't matter how large your business is, the social media landscape is a level playing field. The main difference between success and failure is often how social media-friendly you are.

Social media offers easy ways to build community, humanize your brand and generate interest around your products and services.

 Share on Facebook



Robly