The Southeastern Home Inspectors Conference is celebrating its 10th year and they want to share in the celebration with you!

Register Now!

Register now for the Southeastern United States' largest home inspection conference. Drawing in home inspector attendees from Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, Mississippi and more!

Register Now!

There are a ton of classes for whatever your needs may be. Plus a few pre-conference certification courses on the 7th and 8th of September and two bonus courses!

Register Now!

Don't be left out because you didn't register in time. Soak up the knowledge imparted by top-notch educators, learn ways to beat your competition, and get certified too! Stop reading this article and...
Roof Maintenance 101: When and How to Inspect Your Roof

BY Katina Hazimihalis

Regular roof maintenance is key to avoiding dangerous and costly damage to your home. Likewise, regular roof inspections are the key to a good roofing maintenance routine. Use this quick guide to learn how to inspect your roof for early signs of damage, when to replace or repair your roof and how to secure any necessary permits.

When to Worry About Roof Maintenance

When it comes to the maintenance of your roof, more is more. Frank Lesh, of the American Society of Home Inspectors, urges homeowners to conduct roof inspections frequently. If you spot damage right away, you can repair it before it grows into a bigger—and more expensive—problem. As a rule of thumb, evaluate the state of your roof after any heavy storm or high wind.

What to Look For

The best way for a homeowner to evaluate their roof after severe weather is to use binoculars. If you have a sturdy ladder, you can climb up for a closer look, but unless you have experience, you shouldn’t get onto the roof yourself. Rick Damato, of Roofing Contractor, explains that moving...
around on a roof is dangerous even for professionals, especially when the roof may be damaged.

Whether you’re using binoculars or a ladder, look for these warning signs of roof damage:

- Tree limbs or other large debris on the roof
- Shingles that are curling at the edges
- Missing shingles
- Shingles on the ground
- Peeling flashing
- Penetrations in the roof
- Sagging gutters
- Wet spots in your attic or ceiling

How to Hire a Roofing Inspector

A DIY roof inspection can only take you so far. If you spot any of the above warning signs, it’s time to call in a professional inspector to determine the full extent of any damage and the best way to repair it. Start your search for a roofing inspector using either The American Society of Home Inspectors or the International Association of Certified Home Inspectors. Both organizations require their members to pass rigorous exams, plus take regular classes in order to maintain their certification. Members are also prohibited from performing repairs on the homes they inspect, meaning they have no incentive not to be honest.

When to Replace Your Roof

If the inspection reveals problems, handy homeowners can handle simple roof maintenance, like nailing down loose shingles or removing debris, themselves. But according to Lesh, “If there are numerous missing shingles or a lot of cupping or curling of the shingles, then it would be best to have the roof replaced or repaired by a professional.”

When looking for a contractor to replace your roof, start by simply Googling your chosen candidates. “All of our reputations are out there online,” says Damato. “So that’s always the first box to check.” Once you’ve chosen a contractor, the most important thing is to be sure you fully understand the contract before signing it.

Securing a Permit for Roof Maintenance

Always check with your city’s building department for permit requirements before beginning any type of roofing maintenance. If you begin work without a permit when one
is required, a city inspector can issue a stop-work order until the permitting process is complete. This could leave your roof exposed to the elements—and at risk of greater damage—for an extended period. Working without a permit is also a building code violation that could make your home difficult to sell in the future.

The Permitting Process
To obtain a permit, you'll need to fill out forms from your city’s building department explaining what type of project you’re planning and how you plan to complete it. The city may approve your permit immediately, or they may require their own inspection first. Following an inspection, the city may require changes or additions to your plans.

Costs and Timing
Permitting fees vary widely by location, but on average, roofing permits cost between $400-$900. Generally, it takes a maximum of 30 days for the city to approve a permit. Timing will vary by location and the type of work you’re planning.

Keep in mind that if a contractor is handling your roof repairs, they should be handling the permitting process as well. In fact, this is a requirement in many jurisdictions.

With a little knowledge, some online resources and a pair of binoculars, you’re ready to carry out inspections whenever necessary to keep your roof in good repair for years to come. Need to know more about roof maintenance? Check out our exceedingly comprehensive Guide to DIY Home Improvement for how-tos on all the most common roofing projects, plus much more.
you don't accept credit cards they will not choose you to do their inspection.

The biggest objection we hear from inspectors is that taking credit cards is expensive. Yes, it costs more than taking a check, but it is a lot cheaper than not getting paid at all. There are different ways you can take credit cards, so even on a tight budget it is possible to get in the credit card game and give a boost to your business.

How can accepting credit cards help my business?

- Some buyers are relying on credit and this is the way they're going to pay. If you aren't accepting credit card payments, they're going somewhere else.
- Advertising that you take credit card payments on your website can help close the sale.
- With HomeGauge Services you can receive payments online. You can even block viewing of your report until payment is made.
- You can put away your bill collector hat.

How do I get started?

The ideal way to accept cards with the most flexibility is to get a merchant account and a payment gateway account. With a payment gateway, you can accept online payments and it can link to your HomeGauge account, allowing you to unlock reports immediately on a successful payment, or take an online payment before the inspection takes place. HomeGauge integration works with both Authorize.net and eProcessing for gateways, and most merchant account providers will support one of those. We have negotiated good rates for merchant accounts through Guardian Financial and we recommend giving them a call as they know home inspectors (see link below), but you can use any merchant account provider you like.

Read more about getting a merchant account. (login required)

I still want to take credit cards, but am not ready to setup a merchant account and payment gateway, what are my options?

The other popular options include services like Square, where you can swipe a card in hand on your mobile device or manually enter the card information if taken over the phone. These types of services are typically cheaper for card in hand type payments and do offer some online options that cost a little bit more. Because Square does not
support Authorize.net or eProcessing, it does not integrate directly with HomeGauge. Another popular choice is PayPal. PayPal has improved over the years in reputation and security, and a lot of people are familiar with using it. The major objection we have with PayPal is that it doesn’t fall under all the same rules that apply to traditional banks. PayPal has been known to hold funds for extended periods of time or freeze accounts. It’s a fairly rare occurrence, but it is something to consider — you can do online searches to read some of the stories.

**Using the report blocking feature on your HomeGauge.com Dashboard**

To block your report from being viewed before payment is made, you first click on the Request Payment link found by the address of your uploaded report. Enter in an amount, an optional description, and check the box to Require Payment to View Documents. This will block viewing of the inspection report documents, but will still allow the customer to view and agree to online agreements and see any online invoice documents. If you have a merchant account setup and the gateway linked to your HomeGauge account, when the customer goes to view the report they can pay and the report will be immediately unlocked. If you do not have an integrated gateway with your HomeGauge account, the customer will still get a message that they owe money on the report and will not be able to view it. Once you are paid, you can go back to your HomeGauge.com Dashboard and enter the payment information to release the report.

Read more about getting a merchant account. (login required)

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**InspectPAC and Why You Should Donate to it**

InspectPAC is your Political Action Fund - the only such fund in Washington D.C. dedicated solely to help re-elect members of Congress who believe in a strong home inspection profession.

In other words, these members of Congress are looking out for your interests. They’re not working on behalf of real
Earn a FREE Cruise when you book with Ira!

It's easy to earn a free cruise when you're the leader of a group of friends and/or family. For most cruises, just bring a small group of 16 people in a minimum of 8 cabins and you, the organizer, will earn a free cruise*. Bring 32 people in at least 16 cabins and you AND your traveling companion cruise free*.

Call Ira to learn more about fantastic sailings to Alaska, the Caribbean and Europe this year and beyond. It's not too early to book your 2017 and 2018 getaways.

Ira's Cruises/Dream Vacations also offers great savings on land programs to the Caribbean and Mexico, as well as throughout Europe. Ask us how you can start saving today on your dream cruise OR land resort vacation!

estate agents, real estate brokers, home owners or home buyers or even ASHI in general. They are working for you, the home inspector.

The money to pay for this representation does NOT come from your ASHI dues. We all need to donate - not from our business accounts, but from our personal accounts. It's up to you to help make a difference in our home inspection profession.

So what has InspectPAC done for the profession of home inspection?

* ASHI persuaded Congress to pass comprehensive legislation (drafted by ASHI) that requires HUD to broadly incorporate home inspections in the HUD housing counseling programs.
* Brand home inspection as a form of consumer protection and has already convinced the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to let home buyers know that an appraisal is NOT a home inspection.
* Require a FHA mortgage lenders to prompt mortgage applicants (at first contact) to consider obtaining a home inspection.
* Require FHA lenders to provide a "For Your Protection--Get a Home Inspection" flyer at first mortgage meeting.

We (ASHI/InspectPAC) are fighting threats that can impact your business, such as:

* Fighting a "patent troll" who threatens litigation against ASHI members who use infrared devices for inspections.
* Woring with allies on Capitol Hill to protect the home mortgage interest deduction as a crucial revenue driver for ASHI members.
* Opposing higher tax rates for smaller S corporations and is telling allies on Capitol Hill to oppose this concept.

Make your voice heard. help us help you.

From lobbying the government to promoting home inspection as federal policy...

...to defending your revenues and business model among policymakers...

ASHI seeks to defend, protect, and expand your business as an ASHI home inspector.

Your generous contributions to InspectPAC are used to support this action.

Donate Now

Registration Is Open for InspectionWorld Las Vegas | January 22-25, 2017
Contact Ira direct: 708-917-4078 or itaubin@dreamvacations.com. www.irascruises.com

*Free cruise applies to the cruise fare only; taxes, charges and on-board expenses are additional. Other restrictions may apply.

Don't forget to mention that you're an ASHI member!

InspectionWorld Las Vegas is steamrolling ahead. Registration open in about a month and a half (September 1st) and the expo hall is filling up. Don’t miss out on the best and largest home inspection conference in North America.

Reserve your booth space today! Areas outlined in red have already been reserved. Click on the image on the left for the floor plan and the image below for the Exhibitor Registration

ASHI's Year of the Chapter Membership Drive

Limited time offer!!!

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.

Anyone looking for information regarding IW events and activities, education, expo hall, and Las Vegas should click on the homepage of ASHI’s website. Please take a look at the site.
Or, go to www.inspectionworld.com.

A link to the Bally’s reservation site is found here and IW Registration starts today.

On October 1st, there will be a raffle for registrants. Three lucky winners will win a Full Conference Registration to IW Las Vegas.

And for first time members registering for IW, we will be offering One Year Complimentary ASHI membership as we did last year.
Chapter leaders make sure you get the application in your new members hands! Click here to download Membership Form.

This is how the program works:
1. The inspector signs up and pays dues to the chapter.
2. The chapter gives the inspector a application for a 1 year free membership to ASHI National.
3. The inspector gives the application filled out back to the chapter.
4. The chapter emails the application to membership@ashi.org.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact Russell K. Daniels: russelld@ashi.org

Respectfully,

Russell K. Daniels
Assistant Executive Director,
Director of Membership Services & Chapter Relations
American Society of Home Inspectors
Quick Tip #48: Remove Oil Stains from your Driveway

So you’ve got an unsightly oil stain on the driveway. Maybe it came from an old clunker parked there by family or friends. It could be a drip from your latest barbeque or a remnant from the windy day when the garbage can tipped over and left a greasy smudge. In any case, you want that oil stain gone.

For a concrete or asphalt driveway, the fix is pretty simple. Purchase some Mex All-Purpose Cleaner or TSP substitute at the local hardware store. These powdered detergents are very strong and do an excellent job of removing oil stains.

Following label directions, mix a strong solution with very hot water. Wearing gloves and eye protection, scrub the spot with the hot detergent solution and a stiff brush. Scrub and soak, scrub and soak several times. Then scrub the area around the stain to blend into the surrounding surface. Rinse well with a strong blast from the garden hose.

Stubborn stains may require a second treatment. Eventually sunlight and weather will even out the color of the pavement. If you end up with a light spot where you were scrubbing, you may need to scrub the entire drive to even out the color.

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
We have been working hard to 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

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**Building and Engaging a Community**

Perhaps the greatest value of social media marketing is your ability to foster and engage with a community of other people. That engagement is at the heart of social media, and without it, you're left with a megaphone and no one to hear you. You have the opportunity to interact with customers all over the world - including those who are right down the street - on a huge scale. If a current or prospective customer has something to say to you or about you, you now have the ability to respond immediately.

In addition to responsive communication, brands and businesses can begin to build relationships with their customers beyond those that happen during normal transactions. These relationships are what keep customers coming back, increasing both loyalty and retention. If those customers become advocates and increase your word-of-mouth presence, you'll start seeing amazing returns.

By providing a great place of engagement for your community and helping build valuable, authentic resources for your brand's niche, you're also building up authority for your brand within our profession. You'll find your customers increasingly trusting what you say and coming to you for resources that can help them solve their own challenges. Heck, you may even find yourself lending a hand to a competitor in the space. All brands start in a similar unknown place, and the more you give, the more authority you'll get back.
- 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!

Summer’s almost over but Lenovo savings continue!

Now is the time to upgrade your PC with Lenovo's legendary PC's at great summer end discounts. If for either home or home office use, Lenovo designs and engineers legendary technologies, with top performance! As an ASHI member, take advantage of INSTANT SAVINGS up to 24% off now through September 30th.

These exclusive offers are tailored specifically for you and include: FREE shipping on all web orders, access to energy-efficient green technologies and award-winning service.

Shop now, save and enjoy!
Up to 24% off Select Lenovo Laptops
Up to 15% off Select ThinkCentre Desktops
Up to 15% off Select ThinkPad Laptops
Up to 7% off Select Lenovo Tablets

Visit: [www.lenovo.com/lsp](http://www.lenovo.com/lsp)
Call: 1-800-426-7235, ext. 3569 (M-F: 9am-9pm EST, Sat: 9am-6pm EST)
Be sure to check the website often – special offers change frequently.

WHY GOOGLE'S QUICK ANSWER BOX IS CREATING A SEISMIC SHIFT IN ORGANIC SEARCH

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 level.

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

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**ASHI HQ Conference Schedule**

**Where will you be?**

Southeastern Home Inspector Conference
September 9-11, 2016

ASHI New Mexico Seminar
September 9-11, 2016

ASHI Great Plains Conference
September 16-17, 2016

FABI Fall Conference
September 17-18, 2016

CREIA Fall Conference
September 23-26, 2016

Remodeling & Deck Expo

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**HOW BRANDS CAN STAY AHEAD WITH GOOGLE’S QUICK ANSWER BOX**

Google’s quick answer box is quickly transforming how brands approach SEO. You’ve probably seen one. It’s the highly-visible text snippet served up at the top of Google SERPs to answer a question posed by the search query. And they’re having a huge impact on search results.

Google pulls this information from high-ranking, reputable sites appearing in the organic search results. Also known as Quick Answer boxes, Rich Answers, Featured Snippets, and Google Answers, these text snippets are changing user behavior and impacting the success of many websites.

**WHY BRANDS MUST ENGAGE QUICK ANSWERS**

Right now, Quick Answers appear for about 40% of all searches. Where they appear they’re boosting traffic. Research so far shows a Quick Answer with a high-ranking search results significantly increases traffic compared to a high-ranking alone.

But the effects go beyond traffic alone. In one case study, a company that optimized keywords to earn a Quick Answer Box experienced a revenue jump of 600% from an organic search result after the Quick Answer appeared.

Even with the optimization and revenue success, the site never ranked higher than number four on the SERP.

Simply stated, Quick Answers add credibility to a high-ranking search result. It supports a site’s expertise on a subject and their ability to deliver a user what they’re searching for. As the research shows so far, this social proof (served up by Google) has a big impact on clicks and revenue.

And Google plans to expand the number of results with Quick Answers beyond the current 40%.

The dramatic results Quick Answers have delivered with their limited exposure makes it essential for brands to employ strategies to earn Quick Answer Boxes. Brands must continue to evolve their search strategies as the search landscape continues to change.
October 6-7, 2016
Leadership Training
Conference
October 20-21, 2016

**InspectionFuel**
November 10-12, 2016

**InspectionWorld Las Vegas**
January 22-25, 2017