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# First Thing

A Monthly Update from The American Society of Home Inspectors

June 2017



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## ***Scam Alert: Text Messages from ASHI re: ANSI Attestation Fee***

ASHI has recently received messages from several ASHI members stating that they have received text messages from Frank Lesh, Executive Director of ASHI, from a 406 area code.

The messages say:

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*Our policy allows me to contact anyone from  
anywhere  
don't send a check, make via cash deposit,  
this is for proper documentation.*

*This is instructions for payment. Make funds  
via cash deposit to:*

*Luella Duenow-scholl*

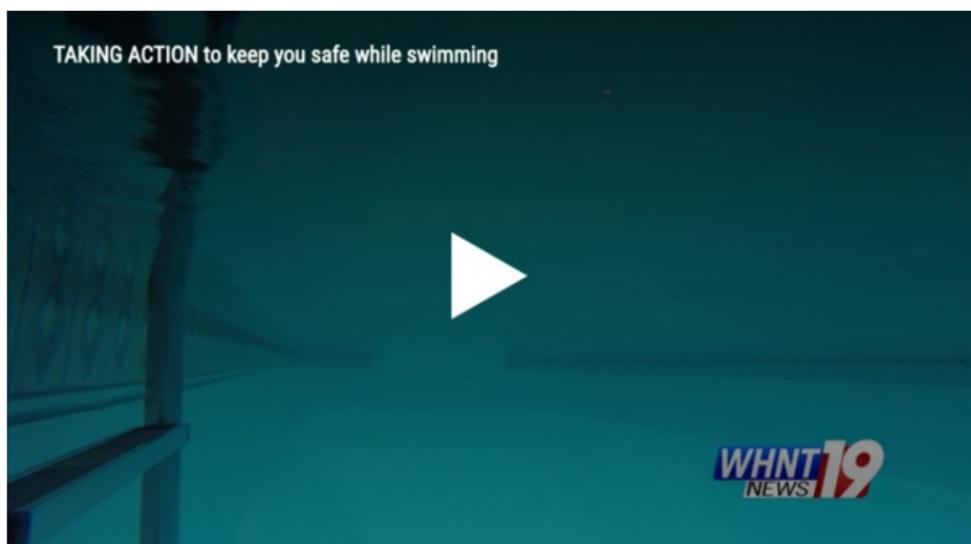
*acct no: 8063294444*

*routing no: 073000228*

*bank:Wells Fargo*

*Take a snap shot of the cash deposit receipt  
and text it for documentation purposes."*

This is a scam and ASHI is looking into it. If  
you do receive the text, please let us know.



**TAKING ACTION: How  
to check your pool's  
bonding to keep you  
safe from  
electric shock**



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[Lakewood, CO: June 12-23](#)  
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Originally posted at *WHNT News 19*

BY [KRISTEN CONNER](#)

MADISON, Ala. - You might already be cooling off in a backyard pool this spring as summer fast approaches.

But experts ask you to take steps to ensure swimmers will stay safe, if there is an electric fault.

Bill Loden, Building Consultant and founder of [Insight Building Inspection, LLC](#), urges you to check your pool's bonding to keep your family safe from electric shock.

"Bonding is interconnecting all the potential electrical paths around the pool," he said. He notes that copper wire is buried between the metal elements surrounding the pool, and then connected to the ground.

"Anything within five feet of the pool must be bonded," he said.

Loden has noticed a problem though, especially in areas where code is not enforced.

"A lot of times unfortunately, a lot of pool companies will not put in the bonding," he said. "It's very common. I frequently see it on swimming pools."

#### **How does bonding work?**

Loden said all the metal components need to be tied together with the copper wire.

"There are metal panels all the way around, four feet down, from the top of this concrete pool. Also, in the hand rails you have metal sleeves in the ground," he said. "If there are lights, anything like that, they have to be bonded in here as well."

#### **The science can save you.**

"If you keep the potential at zero, then even if there is voltage present there is not going to be any flow," he explained. "That flow



## **2017 June Reporter**



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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](mailto:davek@ashi.org)

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

June 15, 2017

Northern New England  
ASHI Summer Seminar  
The Tuckaway Tavern &  
Butchery  
Raymond, NH  
Contact: [Tim Rooney](#)  
7 ASHI CEs

June 17, 2017

The Indiana Chapter of

that we're worried about may go through your body, and that's what causes shock and electrocution."

"If it isn't bonded and one component becomes electrified, and you are in contact with it and another component, then you can be shocked," he explained.

It is unclear if that is [what happened in Florence](#), when two people died following a pool electrocution. Investigators have not released why the pool became electrified during that situation.

But Loden wanted to warn families to check to see if their pool was bonded, as required by the National Electric Code.

He said it is a matter of life and death.

"People can be killed. People can be severely injured when a certain amount of electricity flows through their body," he said. "It's a simple solution: properly bonding the pool."

### **What To Do**

Loden recommends going out to where your motor and pumps are to check for bonding.

Look for an exposed copper wire attached to the motor and pumps, going into the ground. It should connect in a similar way as in the image to the left.

If you live in a municipality, you can also contact the building and inspection department to see if your pool had a code inspection during its construction.

"If you can not find the bonding line, I would contact a reputable pool company that can come in and evaluate it," said Loden, noting that pool companies often employ or contract electricians for this type of work.

Loden warns that if your pool is not bonded,

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it may require some concrete cutting and other digging to install.

"This is one of the things I always look for when I inspect a house with a swimming pool," said Loden. "Even though this is required in the building code, it is often omitted by the company installing the pool. This means that there are hundreds, perhaps thousands of pools throughout North Alabama that are not properly bonded."

Randy Cunningham, Director of Huntsville's Inspection Department, tells WHNT News 19 everyone who installs a pool in Huntsville needs to get electrical and plumbing permits. They are strictly enforced.

Cunningham said they make sure to do bonding inspection on a pool's electrical system, but he also advises you to make sure your contractors are licensed with the state and that you work with a licensed and qualified electrician.



## How to Remodel on a Budget and Stay on Schedule

How to come in under budget, on time, and overjoyed  
by Paul Hope, Consumer Reports  
American homeowners spend upward of \$30 billion per year renovating kitchens and bathrooms, - according to a 2013 survey from Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies. That's more than all the other rooms in the house combined. The out-sized investment



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in these rooms tends to pay off: Per the National Association of Realtors, remodelers report the biggest boost to satisfaction and happiness with their homes after wrapping up a kitchen or bath overhaul.

But it takes some doing to get there. These are complex rooms outfitted with fixtures and appliances that can get expensive, put together by the most skilled pros in the industry. Given the stakes, in 2016 Consumer Reports conducted a nationally representative survey of 1,012 homeowners who had tackled a kitchen or bath project in the previous four years, to learn what they did right and what they wish they'd done differently.

The secret to getting the space that works perfectly for you without blowing your budget? Plan ahead before you spend serious money. Work on the room's design until it's exactly right and do enough research to know when it's smart to splurge on materials and appliances—and when you should save...**READ MORE**

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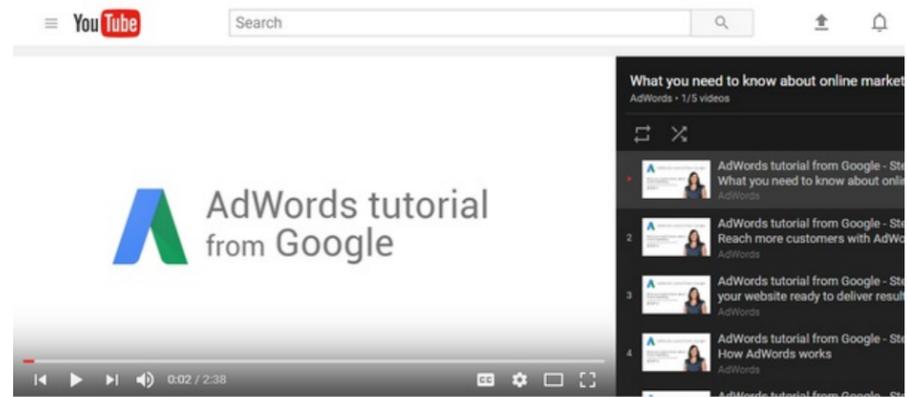
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[NAR Realtors Conference  
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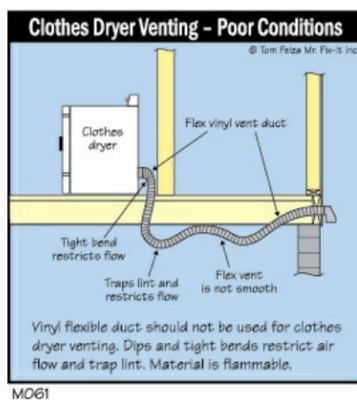
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- Geo Location Targeting Feature- We target more affluent areas which optimizes your campaign saving time and money as well as up's your conversion rates.
- The landing pages are made to convert. They focus on comfortability of your clients. Your reviews are above the fold. This is very important for comfortability of your customers and your demographic of women and families. The landing pages are user and mobile friendly. Your clients can even send you text messages and a call now button.
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AdWords campaign to get the best results possible. They power boost your results with as little cost possible.

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You can contact Courtney Arnold at 404-931-1379 for your evaluation and/or Free Trial.



### **Quick Tip #30: Clothes Dryer Venting - A Hidden Danger!**

Each year many home fires are caused by improperly maintained clothes dryers.

The dryer and vent pipes can overheat and cause a fire. Vents plugged with lint will compound the problem. Don't let your home become the next casualty.

First, always follow the manufacturer's requirements for cleaning the dryer lint screen. On most dryers, the screen is easy to find and clean between each load; just pull the screen from your dryer and remove the lint.

Next, make sure the ducting that vents dryer discharge to the outdoors is properly installed. Many dryer manufacturers and local municipalities require a metal vent duct, not a flexible vinyl vent. The metal duct should have as few bends as possible and be routed outside with as short a duct as possible. The problem with flexible vinyl and flexible metal ducts is that their rough interior traps lint. Also, these ducts are often installed with excessive loops and tight bends that trap lint. When in doubt, contact the manufacturer of your dryer for specific requirements.

A person who cleans chimneys may also

clean and maintain dryer exhaust ducts and will know local code requirements.

By Tom Feiza, Mr. Fix-It

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Social media is a necessity for businesses. Whether you're using it for customer support, sales, marketing, or community outreach, social media has become a major focus of marketing strategies for businesses throughout the world. And while there are hundreds of advantages to social media, there are many disadvantages, too. One major concern of businesses when it comes to social media is brand reputation and how to maintain it. A famous Warren Buffet quote comes to mind - "It takes 20 years to build a reputation and 5 minutes to ruin it."

People tend to believe what they read on social media and it only takes one mishap, or one hacked account, or one fake account, to begin changing the perception of your brand. [According to a study by Proofpoint](#), between April and June of 2016, almost 600 new fraudulent brand accounts were opened on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram on a monthly basis. Pretty astonishing, right? You need to constantly be looking for ways to build and improve upon your company's reputation, so you can hopefully be one of the lucky brands not impacted by one of the many credible threats out there looking to damage it.

### Do Routine Social Media Audits

You should, on a routine basis, search each social media platform you are on for duplicate pages or profiles. You might be surprised how many results you come

across if you have not done this before, and how you see your company is being represented as a result. It's possible some duplicate pages might just be there from employee mishaps, while others could be from people trying to use the name of your business to increase traffic to their website or even criminal implications where phishing scams are in place or people are trying to sell knock-off products, which is surely damaging to your company's reputation.

So it is important you remain vigilant and spot these duplicate pages in a timely manner so they can be reported and removed before traffic is diverted to those pages instead of yours. And not only that, but having multiple social media pages with the same name can be confusing to search engines and then they are forced to pick which one is the correct fit. You should also have a social media policy in place that your employees sign with an understanding that they are prohibited from creating social media pages with your business name to cut down on one source of duplicate pages.

### Double Check Your Content For Spelling & Validity

The credibility of your content means everything. Literally. If your content is not credible, people are not going to take your brand seriously, and your company's reputation will suffer as a result. Of course, larger companies have people whose jobs are dedicated to checking content for validity and spell checking it before it goes out, but most companies do not have the budget for that, so take the few extra minutes to double and triple check everything you post before you hit that publish button, as all of the gloves are off, so to speak, once that happens. And people can be pretty unforgiving on social media.

Just take [this tweet from Total Beauty](#), for example. During the 2016 Oscars, they confused Oprah Winfrey with Whoopi Goldberg. Pretty big oops, don't you think? As a result, they went into damage control mode, and offered to [donate \\$10,000 to a charity](#) favored by the two stars.

Don't put yourself in a position where you have a big "oops moment" like that because you didn't take the time to proofread your content and then you need to go into damage control mode, because that won't always reverse the harm you did to your company's reputation because of your social media mishap...[READ MORE](#)

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