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A Monthly Update from The American Society of Home Inspectors



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### **American Society of Home Inspectors** Welcomes New Executive Director



# **James Thomas**

"I'm excited to help ASHI continue to move forward, and I'm humbled to have been chosen to do that."



### **American Society of Home Inspectors Announces New Executive Director**

DES PLAINES, III. (April 27, 2018) – The American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI) announces that Executive Director Frank Lesh is retiring after serving the organization for nearly 30 years. James Thomas, formerly campus director for the SAE Institute of Technology Chicago, has been appointed as the new executive director effective April 30, 2018.

With almost 20 years of business and management experience working with companies such as Sylvan Corporate, Kaplan and Language Stars, Thomas will be charged with driving strategic financial and marketing objectives with oversight for business planning, finance, regulatory compliance and budgeting in his new role.

"I'm honored to serve ASHI in this capacity," Thomas said. "Mr. Lesh has set a standard of excellence in his time here and has built a legacy through the numerous roles he held. I hope to build on these successes and continue to help ASHI provide excellent service to our members, partners, and the community we impact. I'm excited to help ASHI continue to move forward, and I'm humbled to have been chosen to do that."

Lesh joined ASHI in 1990 and has served in many roles, including member of the Council of Representatives, secretary, vice president, president-elect and president. Lesh took over as executive director in 2013 where he grew membership from 5,100 to more than 8,300 members and doubled the organization's financial reserves.

"It has been an incredible pleasure serving ASHI and its members in so many capacities during my 28 years with the organization," Lesh said. "Along with spending more time with family in retirement, I look forward to continue being involved with ASHI and serving as a mentor and resource to members, especially to new home inspectors getting started in the industry."

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### How to avoid the two most common claims

### against home inspectors

From roof leaks causing water spots to catastrophic floods undermining structural integrity, water intrusion and damage contributes to the two most common claims against home inspectors. Accounting for nearly half of claims against home inspectors in the past three years, water damage poses a serious risk to inspection businesses.

In this article, we provide insights as to why water damage claims are common and what claimants typically allege. That way, you're prepared to prevent such claims against your home inspection business.

Water damage is any destruction caused by water intrusion, meaning water coming in where it shouldn't. Sound vague? It is. Water



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844.268.2677 usinspect.com/join-us damage's expansive definition is part of why its claims are so common and why its claims take not just the first but also the second place in the Top 5 Most Common Claims Against Home Inspectors. (See the full list <u>here</u>.)

"Water intrusion is the number one enemy because it attacks from all potential angles of the home, from the roof down to the foundation," explained Hank Spinnler, Owner of <u>Harmony Inspection Services</u> in Georgia...READ MORE



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The **ASHI** School<sup>®</sup> Hands-on Home Inspection Training

### The ASHI School's **Upcoming Classes 93-Hour Class** Franklin, TN 8/20-8/25 120-Hour Class

Worthington, OH 5/14-5/25 Alpharetta, GA 5/21-6/1 Leesburg, VA 5/21-6/1 Baltimore, MD 6/4-6/15 Golden, CO 6/11-6/22 Columbus, OH 6/18-6/29 Des Plaines, IL 6/18-6/29 Creve Coeur, MO 8/20-8/31 **160-Hour Class** Kirkland, WA 6/4-6/15 **Mold Class** Des Plaines, IL 6/30-7/2 **Commercial Class** Des Plaines, IL 6/15-6/17

**4-Point** Inspections & Wind Mitigation Tampa, FL 9/15 16-Hr Residential

### **Top 5 Tasks for May**

by Applica / Home Wizard

If your clients or real estate agent contacts ask you for the top routine maintenance tasks that they should do during the month of May, here are the ones that we suggest, that will help you catch small problems before they get worse, and keep your home a healthy place for your family.

### Pest Control

Whether you hire a professional, or do-it yourself, the month of May is a good time to address pest control issues around your home. In particular, you should inspect your home for any indications that infestations

have already started, and you should also block any openings which could allow new infestations to start now that the weather is beginning to turn warmer and pest activity will be increasing.

To learn the 10 areas around your home where you should regularly inspect and clean to prevent pest infestations, you

**Radon Webinar** 

May 8-9

June 5-6

#### ASHI@HOME

**Online** 



can read our article and video: "Keeping

Pests Out of Your Home."

### Foundation

May is also a good month to walk around the outside of your home and do an inspection of your foundation. Damage to your home's foundation can cause your home to shift and walls to crack, and termite damage can devastate your home. So by taking just a few minutes to walk around your home, you can check to see if

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have any of signs of deterioration of your foundation or termite "tubes" forming. And while you are at it, you should also check that the ground slopes away from your

foundation and that no soil is touching any wood on your home.

For a description of what to check for, you can see our online How-To Guide on: <u>Foundations</u>.

### Roof

With the weather turning nicer in May, it is a good time to check your roof and roof eaves. Winter can be hard on any home, and with a set of binoculars, you can easily check to see how your roof has fared over the winter. In particular, you should check for signs of loose shingles, missing or damaged flashing, and build-ups of

debris. And you should also check and clean under your roof eaves.

For more information about what to look for when checking your roof and eaves, you can see our online How-To Guide about roofs: <u>Roofs</u>.

#### Basement

If your home has a basement, at least once a year you should do a thorough review of it. In particular, you will want to look for: any signs of dampness, leaks or cracks; pest problems; shifting support columns; loose or missing insulation around walls, floors or HVAC ductwork; and if you have window wells, you will want to clean these out.

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ASHI's Leadership

Development Conference

10/28-10/31

For more information, see our article and video on: "Keeping Your Basement Safe and Dry."

#### **Exhaust Fans**

And finally, at least once a year you should

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clean the exhaust fans in your kitchen and bathrooms. In your kitchen, your exhaust fan for your stove is constantly exposed to moisture and grease, and as this builds up on and in your exhaust fan, it becomes a breeding ground for molds. Similarly, the high humidity environment of your bathroom creates another mold haven for your bathroom's exhaust fan.

You can read about how to clean your exhaust fans in our article and video: "Removing Nasty Gunk From Your Exhaust Fans."



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### **ASHI's New Discussion** Forum

ASHI has upgraded its Discussion Forum. It is cleaner, easier-to-use, and has all the former posts listed on the new forum. Currently, it is available only to ASHI members, however a public forum will be unveiled early this summer. Visit www.ashi.org, scroll over the menu item marked "Members Only" and click on **Discussion Forum.** 



5/9

**Pro-ASHI** Meeting

5/12

### **Reminder: Vote for the ASHI Radon Standard**

As an ASHI member, it is your duty to help shape the industry you work in. To that end, as a voting ASHI member, you'll be receiving a *separate* 

**Heartland Chapter Event** 

5/12

Indiana May Seminar &

Meeting

5/12

MAC ASHI Spring Seminar

5/19

East Tennessee ASHI

5/19

Silicon Valley Education

Event: Inspect This Old



**email** with a link that is just for you to vote on the new Radon Standard. Please take a few moments to read through the new standard and vote on whether we should or

should not have this standard in place for radon.

House Seminar 5/23-5/26 Los Angeles/Ventura County Event 6/2 Tucson Inspect-A-House 6/12 St. Louis Educational Event



### ASHI Online Learning Center

There's been a lot of talk on social media about online education and we want you to know that ASHI members have access to over 120 different courses (FREE) as members. If you're not a member, no problem! It's just \$29 a class. Each course is 2 hours. Take a test at the end and earn 2 ASHI CEs per course. We know it's getting to be the busy season, but there's always time to squeeze in a class.



ASHI Chapters Whether you're a

member of an <u>ASHI chapter</u> or not, now is the time to get involved. Be integral in shaping the home inspection profession in your area. Get involved with your ASHI Chapter Board, take part in the CoR, attend great meetings and learn a thing or two (or provide education) to your peers. Meet new people who can help you grow your business. HOME INSPECTORS Create Reports on iPhones, iPads, Android phones and tablets and Windows devices



Email reports to clients as PDFs from your phone or tablet!







### WHOA!

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

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There are many <u>perks</u> to ASHI membership including:

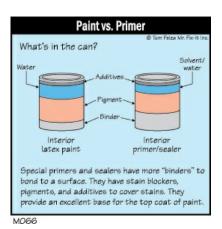
- access to healthcare, supplemental insurance, dental and vision plans
- discounted tickets to shows, sporting events and concerts
- travel discounts on theme parks, rental cars and hotel rooms

• and so much more. Click the image above, log in as a member and check out all the perks ASHI offers its members!



PLATINUM PROVIDER Mastermind Inspector <u>Community</u> **GOLD AFFILIATES Brightwood Home Inspection** Education, powered by <u>Kaplan</u> Business Risk Partners Carson Dunlop **HomeGauge** Home Inspector Pro How To Operate Your Home Inspection Certification <u>Associates</u> InspectorPRO Insurance Inspector Services Group **LiftMaster McKissock OREP** Palm-Tech **Professional Home** Inspection Institute Radalink, Inc. Sun Nuclear TownSquare Interactive SILVER AFFILIATES American Home Inspector Training, LTD (AHIT) **EMSL** Analytical United Infrared **US** Inspect **BRONZE AFFILIATES** ADT Secure24 Allen Insurance America's Call Center BNK Insurance **Boston Environmental Buyers Protection Group** Complete Appliance





### Quick Tip #62 Why Use Primer When Painting?

Most of us do-ityourselfers attempt paint projects because

painting is easy and gives a big bang for the buck.

A fresh coat of paint can totally change the appearance of a surface and make everything look new. Since paint is so great, why would you ever need to use a primer? Why waste the time and money? Well, if the surface has stains or other problems, using primer is never a waste. In fact, it can prevent disasters. A stain could easily push through a fresh coat of paint and ruin the new surface. Always prime when the existing surface has stains, chalking, dark colors or irregular surface conditions.

Primers work because they are specially formulated with additional binders, additives and tougher pigments that cover problem areas. Great primers include Zinsser's BIN, KILZ (by Masterchem Industries), and Zinsser's Bulls Eye 1-2-3. BIN is my favorite for most conditions because it effectively covers stains, is low-odor and dries in 45 minutes. Primers have special qualities for special conditions, so read the labels or consult a painting professional for specific applications. For the best advice, visit a paint store that contractors use.

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### **Heat Up Your Social Media Marketing This** Summer

by Dave Kogan, Director of Marketing

It's almost summer. That time of year that houses are on the market and business is booming. You're up to your eyeballs in inspections and barely have enough time to see your family let alone focus on your business's social media outreach. However, if you do have the time, we'd like you to be aware of what will be the hot social media trends this summer.

### Summer Events



Family Finds Dangerous Levels of Meth Inside New Home

About the House: Questions About Proper Roof Venting Skipping Home Inspections A Major Red Flag for New **Buyers** Getting A Home Inspection Before You List Your Home Home Inspections Could

What events are happening around you that you can tie into your business? First look at the major holidays such as: Memorial Day (you should already have this in the works), Fourth of July and Labor Day (are their parades that you can take part in?). Next look at national and worldwide events (MLB All-Star Game, World Cup, Olympics, major festivals in your area, etc). Next, create a hashtag (#) by piggybacking off these events with your own promotions or specials running at the same time. Expect to see

Cost Homeowners Thousands of Dollars Silent Killers: Managing Transactions With Hazardous Conditions How A Home Inspection Can Put Money In Your Pocket Thumbtack Transforms How Customers Shop For Local Services With Instant Results



#### InspectionWorld,

the largest conference in North America for the home inspection profession is gearing up for one heck of a convention come this January 20-23, 2019 in San Diego. And the floor plan is set with the Early **Bird Exhibitor** selections in place. We are truly excited on what we'll be offering this year in the classrooms and in the expo hall.

summer marketing tie into various summer events, both in the specials offered and hashtags used. And don't forget to update your social media pages with images of summer to tie in your promotions and keep clients coming back to your sites.

#### **Local Events**

Many companies have learned the value of local events and the SEO that is attached to it. One way to leverage local events is to rent a small booth at the event and share images to social media from that event (don't forget to use your hashtag). You'll need to figure out how to reach people on a local level and drive them to your business. There are plenty of local events that happen over the summer to take advantage of. Use Instagram or Facebook to "check in" to these events By sharing pictures from a local event (and using the hashtag) anytime someone looks at event images, your pictures will come up. Make sure your company info makes it into some of the photos.

#### **Great Photos**

Clear photos aren't new to social media, however, the phrase "a picture speaks a thousand words" does bare mentioning. Summertime means barbecues. Share a recipe and take photos of said food in the process. Also share tips on maintaining a grill, distance to the home, use on decks, etc. will help potential and existing customers. Remember, posts get shared and retweeted on Twitter about 150% more often when they have images in them.



However, before

### **GIFs and Emojis**

This may come as a shock, but millennials prefer using emojis, gifs (animated images) and stickers over the written word. To reach this demographic, you'll need to learn to communicate utilizing these icons. You can utilize your knowledge of pop culture from the 1980s and 1990s to utilize icons, Wing Dings and other images to help you

we think about IW, let's look ahead to October for our Leadership Development Conference this October 25-27, 2018 in Des Plaines, IL. This is shaping up to be a truly awesome event. Our education team has put together a great event and you'll need to mar your calendar now to make sure you don't miss this event.



We need your input! <u>Please let us know</u> <u>how you'd like to</u> <u>receive the ASHI</u> <u>Reporter.</u> decipher this generation's web language (remember the pop icon Prince who changed his name to a symbol?)

#### Causes

Many companies embrace social causes year-round centering around whatever the latest social cause may be. A good time to get involved is the summer, but make sure you follow it through (sponsor a local run/race; sponsor the local animal shelter or find a cause closer to your heart). Your branding and logo in conjunction with local causes goes a long way to humanize your business.

#### **Don't Be Too Serious**

Summer is a fun time of year. People like to see pictures of people having fun, barbecues, bright colorful pictures. You don't need to take life too seriously (however, you should always take your job seriously). Show your brand in a fun way. Take advantage of this time of year. Show your home inspection photos, but maybe show yourself kicking back in a hammock or lawn chair after a hard day of work.

Social Media is an ever changing landscape and to keep up with the latest trends requires you to spend more time online than on roofs. These six trends can help you each year especially when realizing what you can do to promote your business and your brand regardless of the social media being used. You should also try to stay up-to-date on the latest trending topics and hashtags as they may help you provide great content and bring in new and recurring business, A successful social media marketing season is all about seeing what the latest trends are, trying new things, and letting yourself think outside the box.

Fill out this quick survey and be entered to win a box of ASHI swag.



