



SEPTEMBER 2022

REPORTER

Inspection News and Views from the American Society of Home Inspectors, Inc.



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ASHI National Officers and Board of Directors

OFFICERS

John Wessling President
St. Louis, MO | john@wesslinginspections.com

Lisa Alajajian Giroux President-Elect
Milford, MA | homequest1@comcast.net

Bronson Anderson Treasurer
Waynesboro, VA | 2inspect4u@gmail.com

Steve Cross Secretary
Ortonville MI | crossinspectionsservices@gmail.com

Bruce Barker Immediate Past President
Cary, NC | bruce@dreamhomeconsultants.com

DIRECTORS

Mark Goodman 2020-2022
Manchester, MO | mark@homeinspectstl.com

Robert Guyer 2022-2024
Eagle, ID | GuyerInspections@icloud.com

Doug Johnson 2020-2022
Mobile, AL | inspectmobile@gmail.com

Scott Johnson 2020-2022
Marietta, GA | whpis@me.com

Jeffrey Leighton 2021-2023
Scarborough, ME | jeffrey.leighton54@gmail.com

Kyle Rodgers 2021-2023
Siloam Springs, AR | kyle@aplus-inspection.com

Vince Tecce 2021-2023
Yardley, PA | bioavince@gmail.com

Jim Vaughn 2020-2022
Arlington, VA | jim@homeauthority.biz

ASHI Staff

Phone: 847-759-2820 | 8:30 am – 5:00 pm | Monday – Friday, CT

Executive Director

James Thomas | jamest@ashi.org

Reporter Editor

Laura Rote | editor@ashi.org

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Susan Lane, Director of Membership and Chapter Relations | susanl@ashi.org

Michael Krauszowski Membership Advancement and Services Administrator
michaelk@ashi.org

Rose Stanfa Membership Service Associate | roses@ashi.org

EDUCATION AND EVENTS

Edwin Barrera Director of Education and Curriculum Development | edwinb@ashi.org

Michelle Santiago The ASHI School Education Manager
michelle@theashischool.com

Mercy Achura Continuing Education Coordinator | mercy@ashi.org

Sonia Brewer Education and LMS Administrator | soniab@ashi.org

Angela Hall Instructional Designer
angelah@ashi.org

Carrie Maddox Instructional Designer
carriem@ashi.org

Stefanie Willis Curriculum — Technical Writer | stefaniew@ashi.org

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Tim Buell Financial Services Director and ASHI President 2018 | timb@ashi.org

Alicia McCray Financial Services Administrator | aliciam@ashi.org

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Marianne Sackett Director of Communications | marianne@ashi.org

Heather Candella Marketing Manager
heatherc@ashi.org

Saxon McCullough Content Writer
saxonm@ashi.org

Pamela Norman Graphic Designer
pamelan@ashi.org

Rose Buckley Inspection Connection Podcast Host | roseb@ashi.org

Frank Lesh, ASHI Ambassador
frankl@ashi.org

TECHNOLOGY

Rhett Claypool Director of IT
rhettc@ashi.org



Publisher James Thomas

Editor Laura Rote

Graphic Designer Pamela Norman

American Society of Home Inspectors, Inc.
932 Lee Street, Suite 101 | Des Plaines, IL 60016

Questions, Comments and Article Submissions editor@ashi.org

Advertising Marianne Sackett
communications@ashi.org

ASHI REPORTER – ISSN 1076-1942 – the official publication of the American Society of Home Inspectors, Inc. (ASHI), 932 Lee St., Suite 101, Des Plaines IL 60016, is published monthly. Periodical postage paid at Des Plaines, IL 60016 and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to ASHI Reporter, 932 Lee Street, Suite 101, Des Plaines, IL 60016-6546.

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Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Home Inspectors

By Alyssa Cink, Content Marketing Specialist, InspectorPro Insurance

One morning in 1991, a Tennessee power lineman drove to work expecting another routine Monday. His first job of the day: Cut down a three-wire voltage system with a residential connection. He'd performed this task more times than he could count. However, one small mistake in his work attire transformed an ordinary Monday into a life-altering experience. He was not wearing gloves designed for handling high-voltage electricity.

The lineman touched an energized overhead conductor with more than 13,200 volts of electricity, causing him to lose both hands.

This former lineman's name is Lee Shelby. Thirty years after his accident, Shelby is an internationally recognized motivational speaker who shares his story with today's employees and teaches the value of workplace safety—notably, the value of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Home Inspectors and PPE

Inspecting homes is a dangerous job. From slippery roofs to aggressive animals, rotted subflooring to electrical exposures, the average home inspector encounters countless perils during their career. Even though Shelby wasn't a home inspector, many in this industry can relate to his message: No inconvenience is worth more than your life. And taking the right precautions, like wearing personal protective equipment, can mean the difference between a serious injury and a normal Monday.

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Note: The Managing Risk column with InspectorPro Insurance provides home inspectors with tips to protect their businesses against insurance claims, craft effective pre-inspection agreements, offer additional inspection services, and use new tools and equipment.

In this article, we consider the most popular types of PPE that home inspectors use and experts recommend. We also discuss environmental conditions that often prompt wearing PPE and ways to manage risk while doing so.

What is PPE?

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) defines PPE as “equipment worn to minimize exposure to hazards that cause serious workplace injuries and illnesses.” Per OSHA’s definition, this article excludes any equipment—like flashlights, ladder tie-offs, caution signs, and insulated screwdrivers—that isn’t worn as a protective covering.



Alyssa Cink is a content marketing specialist for InspectorPro Insurance, which offers ASHI members exclusive benefits through its program:

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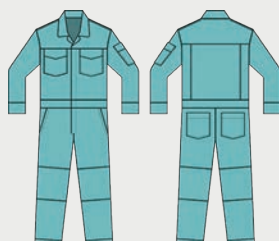
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COVERALLS

- Full-body protection: biological, chemical, and electrical dangers.
- Keeps harmful substances away from your skin.
- Reduce the likelihood of tracking dirt into your client's home.



EYEWEAR

- Safety glasses: protection against smaller particles.
- Goggles: deflecting splashes, sprays, and other liquids.
- Face shields: protection against electrical exposures.



HEADGEAR

- Bump Caps: protection from bumps and scrapes, best for crawl spaces and attics with low-hanging beams and protruding objects.
- Hard Hats: the best option for advanced protection from heavy falling objects, electrical exposures, etc.



RESPIRATOR

- Protects against contaminants—like harmful dusts, fogs, smokes, mists, gases, vapors, and sprays.



GLOVES & PADS

- Gloves: protects skin from harsh surfaces, cuts from nails and other sharp objects, and temperature extremes. Hazardous materials including mold, sewage, animal carcasses, fecal matter, and other substances.
- Pads: Elbow, forearm, and knee pads, padded forearm gloves, provide extra cushioning.



FOOTWEAR

- Protection from slippery surfaces, electrical dangers, heavy objects, falling materials, and extreme temperatures.

According to our research, some of the most popular types of PPE for home inspectors include:

1 Coveralls

Coveralls offer full-body protection from biological, chemical, and electrical dangers. In addition to keeping harmful substances away from your skin, coveralls also reduce the likelihood of tracking dirt into your home or the client's home. Some home inspectors choose to wear coveralls in attics and crawl spaces.

2 Eyewear

Covering your eyes reduces your risk of eye injuries and diseases. For many workers, this is common knowledge.

Even so, nearly 45% of head injuries that cause work absences come from eye-related injuries, writes HexArmor in their blog post “Workplace eye injury statistics - Don't be one of them.” Furthermore, Hexmore writes, 300,000 workers end up in the emergency room each year due to occupational eye injuries. On top of that, 90% of these injuries could have been prevented with well-fitted and comfortable eyewear.

Among the many environmental factors that sealed, splash-proof goggles can protect against:

- Mold spores or sawdust in the air,
- Sparks from electrical panels,
- Liquids, like chemicals or sewage, that can splash into the eyes,
- Smoke and other gases, and
- Moving or falling debris, like wet or dry cement powder, glass, metal, or fiberglass.



45%

**OF HEAD INJURIES THAT CAUSE
WORK ABSENCES COME FROM
EYE-RELATED INJURIES.**

Some eyewear provides better security than others. Safety glasses are the most common and best protection against smaller particles, according to “Eye Protection: A Basic Understanding of the OSHA Standard,” available online. As mentioned earlier, goggles, when fit snugly against the face and with appropriate venting and anti-fog coating, are better for deflecting splashes, sprays, and other liquids. Some inspectors even wear face shields to protect themselves against electrical exposures.

3 Headgear

Headgear helps prevent trauma to the brain, scalp, or skull caused by falling, flying, or low-hanging objects, as well as electrical exposures, OSHA explains in “OSHA Fact Sheet: Personal Protective Equipment,” available online.

Home inspectors have two options for protective headgear: bump caps and hard hats. Bump caps look like baseball caps with plastic inserts on the inside. As the name suggests, these

hats are ideal for workers prone to bumps and scrapes. Some inspectors prefer them for crawl spaces and attics with low-hanging beams and protruding objects like nails. However, they do not offer the same level of protection as hard hats.

4 Respirators

OSHA mandates properly fitted respirators for workers exposed to contaminated air. Some contaminants—like harmful dusts, fogs, smokes, mists, gases, vapors, and sprays—put workers at risk of lung cancers, diseases, and even death, according to OSHA.

Mike Leggett of the BrickKicker of Georgia believes respirators are essential for him and his inspector employees.

“Getting a proper respirator is critical,” Leggett said. “Repeatedly breathing contaminated crawl space air will take a cumulative toll on your body. Our inspectors are forbidden from entering an attic or a crawl space without a proper respirator and headlamp.”

5 Gloves and Pads

Depending on the space they're inspecting and the SOP they follow, some inspectors find gloves more useful than others.

For example, an inspector may put on gloves before entering an attic to protect their skin from harsh surfaces, cuts from nails and other sharp objects, and temperature extremes. Additionally, crawl spaces are especially infamous for mold, sewage, animal carcasses, fecal matter, and other substances inspectors wouldn't want to touch with bare hands.

It's essential to match the equipment to the hazard. Elbow, forearm, and knee pads worn underneath coveralls, or even padded forearm gloves, provide extra cushioning and reduce damage while crawling. Insulated rubber gloves can protect your hands from electrical injuries, depending on their voltage rating, according to OSHA's electrical hazards manual, available online. Meanwhile, inspectors more concerned about moderate heat, cuts, or burns may opt for leather gloves.

6 Footwear

As Marilyn Monroe famously said, "Give a girl the right shoes and she can conquer the world." It turns out the quote also applies to home inspectors.

A good pair of shoes can make a big impact, especially when you work on your feet all day. Proper footwear minimizes foot infections, injuries, and conditions like bunions; improves posture; offers additional support; reduces foot pain; and protects you in hazardous work conditions, explains the nonprofit Soles4Souls in their blog article "Life Without Shoes: A Look at the Benefits of Shoes." Furthermore, under OSHA regulations, employers may be required to provide and ensure the use of protective footwear.

“WHETHER YOU’RE A SOLO INSPECTOR, INSPECTING FOR ANOTHER BUSINESS, OR MANAGING A MULTI-INSPECTOR FIRM, SELECTING —OR NOT SELECTING—THE RIGHT PPE CAN OPEN YOU UP TO RISK.”



The safety education website realsafety.org shares the following considerations for foot safety:

- Falling materials? Consider steel-toed boots.
- Worried about stepping on sharp objects, like nails? Look for thick, heavy-duty soles.
- Possibility of electrical dangers? Choose non-conductive shoes made from materials like rubber.
- Frequently climb ladders and slippery surfaces? Properly fitting shoes with good traction can prevent slips and falls.
- Live in a cold state with frequent rain and snow? Waterproof and insulated shoes help inspectors stay healthy while working in frigid temperatures.

Managing Risk with PPE

Whether you're a solo inspector, inspecting for another business, or managing a multi-inspector firm, selecting—or not selecting—the right

PPE can open you up to risk. Below we offer suggestions for limiting your liability.

Educate and communicate.

If you own a multi-inspector firm, you need to educate your inspectors about PPE and communicate its importance. In their handout "Employers Must Provide and Pay for PPE," available online, OSHA suggests:

- Identifying PPE that's appropriate for the job,
- Making sure employees have and wear this PPE,
- Re-evaluating their PPE's effectiveness and updating as necessary, and
- Training employees on appropriate use and maintenance.

As an employer, understanding these standards helps keep your employees safe, happy, and productive. Also, if an employer neglects to purchase mandated PPE for their staff, and their negligence results in an inspector's illness, injury, or



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death, a negligence claim could lead to a lawsuit. Furthermore, this familiarity keeps employees aware of their rights and what's expected of them.

Even if you're a sole proprietor and not required to follow OSHA regulations, inspectors should familiarize themselves with them to stay safe on the job. To best manage your risk, stay up-to-date on OSHA's reference and reading materials to verify your compliance with workplace safety standards. Know what the standards mean and how they apply to you. Visit OSHA's website to learn more about the resources available to small employers.

Perform routine equipment inspections.

"Like humans, personal protective equipment has a life expectancy," wrote Marianne Wait in a United Rentals' article "How to Inspect Your PPE," available online.

PPE is only safe and effective when it's in good condition. As such, inspectors should routinely check their equipment for signs of weathering and damage. These visual inspections will help you decide when to repair your PPE or replace it entirely.

Read your manufacturer's recommendations to learn what you should be looking for.

Prioritize safety over convenience.

In his blog post "Don't Forget Your PPE," Mike McFadden of Hero Inspection Services in Florida acknowledges that wearing PPE can be frustrating. Inspectors may feel pressure to remove their PPE so they can perform the inspection faster. However, in doing so, these inspectors open themselves up to undue risk.

"Don't take [PPE] off until the work is done," McFadden writes. "Most PPE is inconvenient and sometimes also uncomfortable. It might be tempting to take them off just to get

the job done quicker. But many times, that is when injuries happen."

Rushing also means you're more likely to make mistakes. Follow McFadden's advice and avoid speeding through your inspections and reports. After all, your long-term well-being will always be more important than a short-term inconvenience.

If you own a multi-inspector firm, be prepared in case your employees push back. One of the best ways you can combat employees' resistance to PPE policies is to lead by example. By debunking common PPE myths, maintaining open communication, and sticking to your policies, you can protect your team and your business from unnecessary risk.

Carry workers' compensation insurance.

If you or one of your home inspectors is injured during an inspection, workers' compensation benefits may be available to you.

Workers' comp insurance provides employees who suffer from work-related injuries or diseases with access to medical and wage benefits. Unlike general liability (GL) insurance, which covers inspection-related bodily injury and property damage claims for non-employees, workers' compensation looks out for you and the people who work for your company.

“THE AMOUNT THAT IT COSTS FOR WORKMAN’S COMP IS MINOR [COMPARED] TO WHAT IT COULD COST YOU OR YOUR EMPLOYEE IF YOU DIDN’T HAVE IT.”

"One accident can not only hurt you and maybe put you out of business, but more importantly that employee has to have a way of making a living and getting his bills paid for if it happens on the job," said Alan Grubb of 4U Home in Maryland.

By covering job-related injury and illness costs, workers' comp protects both employees and employers. And employees work under less financial risk knowing they have on-the-job protection. Additionally, employers limit their liability and deter litigation.

"If you have any employees, they need to have workman's comp," Grubb said. "The amount that it costs for workman's comp is minor [compared] to what it could cost you or your employee if you didn't have it."

Protect Yourself with PPE and Workers' Comp

Do your part to abide by state law and protect your employees and your business by carrying workers' compensation insurance. And do so with a company prepared to meet the inspection industry's unique coverage needs.

Get a quote for workers' comp for home inspectors today by completing an application with InspectorPro Insurance. Or you can learn more about workers' comp by reading InspectorPro's article "Workers' Comp for Home Inspectors: Everything You Need to Know," available online. ■



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Air Conditioning: What You Can't See

By Tom Feiza, Mr. Fix-It, Inc.
HowToOperateYourHome.com (htoyh.com)



Tom Feiza has been a professional home inspector since 1992 and has a degree in engineering. Through HowToOperateYourHome.com (htoyh.com) he provides high-quality books and marketing materials that help professional home inspectors educate their customers. Copyright ©2022 by Tom Feiza, Mr. Fix-It, Inc. Reproduced with permission.

Home inspectors visually inspect and report on residential air conditioning systems. We operate the systems and check for water leaks, and we may also measure the temperature drop across the evaporator coil. But we don't get a chance to see several components.

Visible components of the AC system are shown in **Illustration A032**: compressor, condenser coil, expansion device, and an expansion "A" coil. We can see the exterior of the furnace or fan coil unit (**Photo 1**). Outside the house (**Photo 2**), we see the exterior of the condenser coil and maybe the fan.

But which parts of the system can you *not* see?

You can't see much of the compressor.

Compressors are buried inside the condensing coil within a metal housing (**Illustration A039**). Older compressors use a piston and crankshaft system, just like a small lawnmower engine. The piston moves back and forth in a cylinder to compress the refrigerant gas. This type of system is more sensitive to liquid refrigerant.

Many modern systems use a scroll compressor. This compresses the refrigerant gas with a rotation scroll that spins inside a similar-shaped scroll. In general, this is more efficient and durable than a reciprocating piston.

You can't see the "A" coil – evaporator components.

Photo 3 shows a typical evaporator or "A" coil that's buried in the ductwork near the blower fan. Normally there is no access panel to this coil.

Liquid refrigerant enters the coil through the small copper line. Refrigerant passes through a metering device that maintains proper flow by using a temperature-sensing bulb.

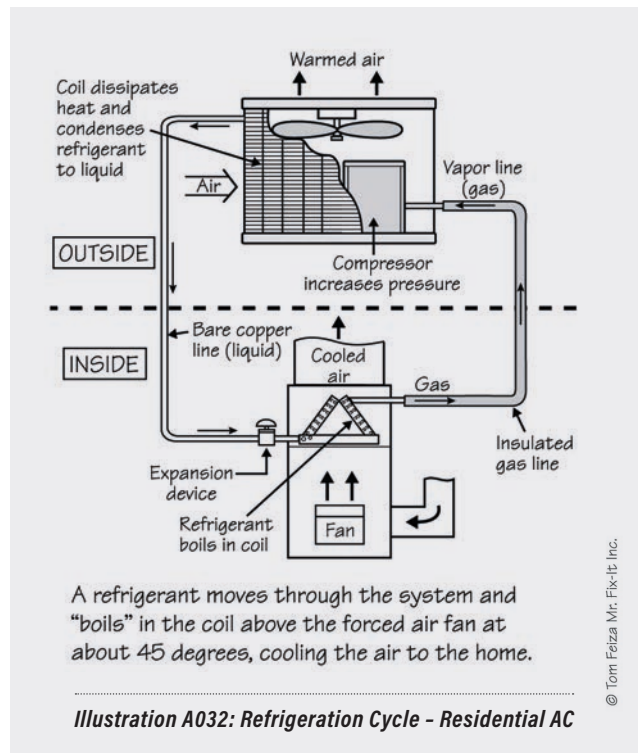


Photo 1: AC Coil Connections at Furnace

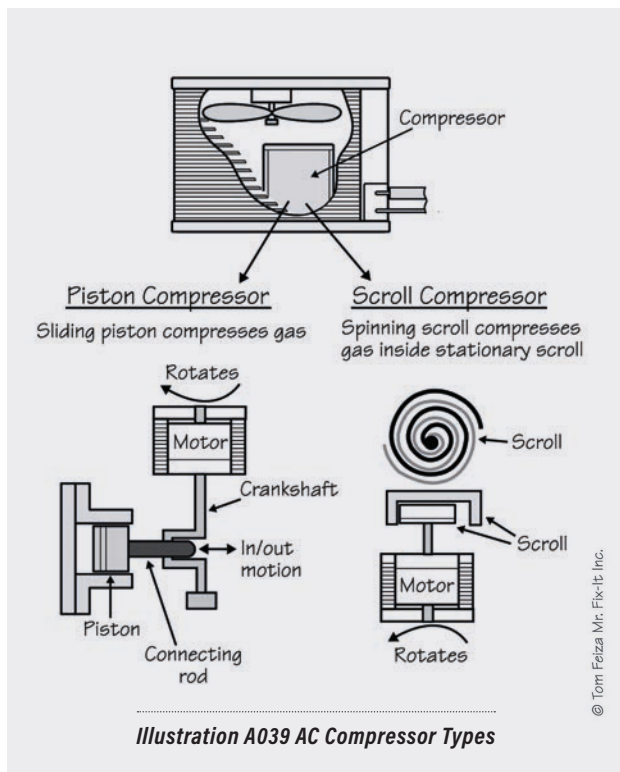


Photo 2: AC Exterior Units

The liquid refrigerant is “boiled” in the coil with heat transfer from the air blown through the fins. Gas (vapor) refrigerant returns from the top of the A coil through the larger insulated copper tube to the compressor outside.

Because the humid home air is cooled below its dew point, water condenses on the coil and drips into the black plastic pan below. The water (condensate) is drained through a tube or pipe;



Photo 3: Air Conditioning A Coil

the drain line and the plugged secondary drain line are visible here. All pans have a higher drain connection that is normally plugged.

The Takeaway

You should understand the components and operation of an air conditioning system. While you don't need to report on components you can't see, you must report signs of failure. Signs of water leaks at the evaporator coil mean you must recommend further evaluation. You should check for an air temperature drop of 14 to 22 degrees Fahrenheit across the evaporator. Outside, the coil should be clean, with a clear path for airflow. The exterior unit should be level. ■

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To learn more, attend Tom's technical presentations at educational sessions for ASHI chapters and local groups. Tom can also provide his knowledge for your educational event; contact him at Tom@htoyh.com.



How to Operate Your Home is a proud ASHI Affiliate member.

Getting Involved

How stepping up and volunteering benefits you, too

By Mark Goodman

I have been a proud member of ASHI since 2014. The first thing I did when I joined ASHI was to also join the St. Louis Chapter of ASHI and start attending meetings. I joined the chapter to be listed on their website and for the local education opportunities, PR opportunities, camaraderie, and the built-in home inspector support network. The chapter also has a legislative voice and protects consumers by empowering Missouri home inspectors in the same ways as ASHI National.

Like many other chapters, the St. Louis chapter meets every month. It has two speakers, a roundtable discussion, and the main speaker in addition to its biannual seminars. I first got involved primarily because I thought my chapter could do better on the



monthly education. So, I volunteered to join the education committee and was chair of that committee before long. I had previously been involved in educating others in volunteer programs and was a contractor for many years, so I thought it was a good fit. By getting involved, I could help improve the quality of my chapter's monthly education, resulting in change for the better.

The other reason was that I observed we had a hard time getting members who haven't been involved in leadership roles to volunteer, even though St. Louis ASHI is a strong chapter. The chapter needed younger members to start participating. Some of the leaders had been doing it for a long time, and, quite honestly, were getting a little tired of being the only people to step up.

Like many others, the chapter has a problem with volunteerism. Some chapters have a round-robin of the same leaders year after year, rotating roles. So I ask you: Why not be a part of the solution and get involved?

Why to Volunteer

This problem is not unique to ASHI. Many other associations with chapters have the same problem. Getting involved is important. When you get involved, you have a voice, an opinion, are heard, and effect change.

I don't understand why our outspoken members who are happy to speak out on social media hesitate to volunteer and get involved. Whether you're a long-time member or a younger one, you can offer a fresh perspective, new voice, and some new ideas. Without new ideas and volunteers, things never change or improve.

We must move forward as our industry and the industries impacting ours evolve. We

"When you get involved, you have a voice, an opinion, are heard,...

...and effect change."

must move to the future, which was why

I got involved at the national level. I know I certainly have a lot of ideas. In fact, in some circles, they call me "the idea man." I have been known to be outspoken, so I chose to be part of the solution.

I have been on my chapter's board of directors for six years. While serving as a committee member, I was soon asked to be on the board. I wanted to continue to be involved in education, so I agreed to run for vice president. The chapter vice president is responsible for overseeing education, so I decided to toss my name in the hat. From there, I moved up to the president, serving two terms, and then to a director.

I also chose to get involved at the national level. I felt ASHI should do more to help the chapters, so I volunteered to be on the chapter relations committee, and Scott Patterson—ASHI's 2019 President—asked me to serve as the committee chair. The following year I submitted my name to the nominating committee for inclusion on the ASHI National Ballot for a director. I was elected as a director to serve the term of 2020 – 2022. To date, I have served on committees and task forces, as a director, and as the board liaison to the MRC (member relations committee) and the standards and ethics committee.

Enough about me. I want to discuss

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getting involved and the opportunities you have to become a custodian of the home inspection industry. Although I hope you get involved for the betterment of the society and to protect our profession, some choose to get involved because it helps them in business, and that's okay if you make a difference. Being involved is a great marketing tool for your business. I got involved because I saw a need and wanted to make a difference. I found this to be very rewarding in many ways.

Everyone gets involved for different reasons. I told everyone about my involvement and used it as an opportunity to promote ASHI. At the same time, I was indirectly promoting myself. My involvement gave me a lot of credentials that helped open a lot of doors that may otherwise never have opened. When potential referral sources and clients found out I was respected enough to be elected to serve in a leadership role by my peers, it paid off organically.

Getting Your Chapter Members Involved

Chapter leaders should consider asking their members to be a part of micro-projects; after members have been involved in these small short-term projects, ask them to serve on a committee.

The most popular committee in my chapter is the education committee. Think of the committees as a funnel of future leaders that will fill officer and director positions on the chapter board.

The national board and committees consider the chapters as their funnel to fill ASHI National positions. We also look to the membership at-large to populate committees, so you don't need to be a chapter member to get involved at the national level.

Making a Difference

You can make a difference in many ways. You can form your own ASHI meeting group, start a new chapter, or join an existing chapter. You can serve on a committee or task force and become a leader at the chapter or national level, mentor others, or share your knowledge by teaching other home inspectors. Getting involved helps you understand the industry's landscape and make a difference.

Some choose to help protect our profession by getting involved with organizations like the Examination Board of Professional Home Inspectors, also known as EBPHI. I decided to get involved in ASHI early on at the chapter level, then at the national level, and by becoming an

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knowledgeable home
inspectors, ensure your
reputation and the
reputation of all
home inspectors,
the profession,
and ASHI.**



SME (subject matter expert) for EBPHI. Many ASHI members have chosen to get involved in the EBPHI, ASHI, or both.

In comparison, ASHI is the voice of the industry. "The mission of ASHI is to set and promote standards for property inspections and to provide the educational programs needed to achieve excellence in the profession and to meet the needs of our members." EBPHI sets the standard for the National Home Inspector Exam—one of the core elements used by ASHI to become an ASHI Certified Home Inspector, and the exam chosen by most states with licensed home inspectors.

Volunteering today encourages you to deepen your engagement in ASHI and with your peers. The more you get involved, the more you will benefit! ASHI offers a variety of ways to get involved, from short-term volunteer projects to joining a committee, becoming a mentor, and board service. Various committees include bylaws, complaints, education, member relations, standards & ethics, technical, and women in ASHI. Something is bound to interest you. Please consider the benefits and volunteer. Being involved provides opportunities to grow professionally and personally, take on responsibility, become a steward, and offer you leadership opportunities for the good of the home inspector community and ASHI. You will hopefully find, as I did, that you'll become a motivator, and it should be rewarding—opening doors and allowing you to impact ASHI proactively.

Educators and Influencers

While attending many educational events, peer reviews, seminars, and conferences, I also realized I had the opportunity to pass on my knowledge and expertise to help other home inspectors. In the past, I participated, planned, and helped train others in wilderness search and rescue and community emergency response teams. Why not do the same for home inspectors? I have written articles, contributed to publications, created PowerPoint presentations for others,

and presented at ASHI's leadership development conferences, chapter meetings, community groups, and many Realtor groups on technical topics and home inspections. Many of you can do the same.

Educated, knowledgeable home inspectors, ensure your reputation and the reputation of all home inspectors, the profession, and ASHI. You can be a thought leader, contribute to the *ASHI Reporter*, and share your expertise as an educator. Please share your knowledge and offer to speak at an educational event.

You can ignite interest, re-energize chapters, and bolster membership by getting involved and creating new and exciting programs, training opportunities, benefits, and speaking. Volunteers are critical to ASHI's well-being, as we are the subject matter experts, so the ASHI staff can fully understand and develop the right member benefits for all of ASHI's members.

Although ASHI has much to offer, we know we need to do more for our members. Imagine we leverage all of the opportunities we have, and use our thought leaders' experience, knowledge, and expertise. Then we can develop new and exciting benefits, communicate better, increase our followers, and bolster member engagement. When we strengthen member engagement, non-ASHI members see the exciting things happening in the ASHI community. They will see all of the tremendous opportunities, the quality education, and new, unique membership benefits. They will want to be part of the excitement and grow membership in ASHI chapters and meeting groups. ■

Volunteer to join a committee by scanning this code today...



Mark Goodman is an ASHI Certified Home Inspector, serves on the ASHI Board of Directors, and continues to work as a home inspector as part of BPG Inspections.

coming up: Stay tuned to learn how you can get involved in ASHI's new *Women of the Home Inspection Industry* group.

Join the Club

The benefits of being a chapter member

By Laura Rote

When you become an ASHI Member, you get access to a whole host of benefits—from business development and education to professional support and community.

Roger D. Skaggs has been an inspector for 23 years and is currently president of the Arizona Chapter. Part of Inspect-It 1st Property Inspection of Prescott, Skaggs first became involved with ASHI after attending a chapter class in the fall of 1999.

"I was very impressed with the content. One of the segments at the chapter meeting that was given by Brion Grant and Cole Greenburg (they were practicing) was going to be presented at IW 2000. You might say I was hooked on ASHI after that," he said.

More Business

Looking back, he said it's hard to count just how many "golden nuggets" he's taken from ASHI meetings or colleagues over the years. He learned that networking at chapter meetings is quite effective, and he's benefitted from 1 to 2 referrals from other ASHI inspectors each month.

Camaraderie

"ASHI inspectors will pick up the phone and call someone if there is something we haven't seen before and can't find on the internet," Skaggs said.

Bill Haughey agrees. The Keystone ASHI of South Central Pennsylvania member said a sense of community has taught him many things in his five years as an ASHI member. He joined ASHI as soon as he launched his



May 2022 Inspect A House. Courtesy of Inspect-It 1st Property Inspection of Prescott, Arizona.

business and said the connections he's made are priceless.

"Probably the biggest benefit has been the collective wisdom that experienced inspectors provide each month as we meet," Haughery said.

For example, through his local chapter, Haughery joined a "texting pod" with three other inspectors. The group texts each other throughout the day when they encounter unfamiliar situations on the job. "If one of us needs help interpreting a defect, we will text a photo and ask the others for help. We usually get responses within minutes that enable us to move forward in our inspection and more accurately define a specific defect. Invaluable wisdom," he said.

Expertise

Report writing is another perhaps unexpected benefit, as ASHI Home Inspector Members learn from the best. "My report writing skills have been accentuated with every meeting I attend," Skaggs said. "I've become the best inspector I can be with ASHI's help. Knock on wood, I've been sued only once and refunded the fee three times in 23 years. My complaint ratio is ½ or 1%. I couldn't have done it without the education that ASHI provides."

The ASHI name goes far, too. "ASHI National has provided an umbrella organization that brings respect and credibility to my business," Haughery said. "This is very important." ■

Want to Do More?

1 Join the MRC

The ASHI Membership Relations Committee (MRC), formally established in April 2020, is always looking for volunteers. The MRC has three subcommittees: Membership, Chapter Relations, and Legislative. Each subcommittee has a chair and a number of members.

MRC subcommittees meet regularly to achieve their goals. Ideas to increase the value of ASHI membership may be presented to this group from various sources: the general membership, the ASHI Board or staff, or from within the MRC itself. In 2022, the committee is working to:

- Build out chapter resources on the website (one new topic a month)
- Develop a chapter president toolkit, and,
- Develop a report writing content library.

To volunteer or find out more about the MRC, email 2020ashimrc@gmail.com.

3 Become a Mentor

Mentoring is another fulfilling way to get more involved with ASHI.

The ASHI Mentorship Program helps new or less experienced home inspectors get the guidance they need to be exceptional home inspectors by pairing them with experienced home inspectors who volunteer to serve as their mentors.

ASHI Mentors are ASHI-Certified Inspectors or ASHI Retired members looking to share their knowledge and expertise. This is a voluntary program to ensure ASHI Members continue to

You can become even more active in ASHI. Volunteer, mentor, or nominate a colleague for a prestigious award.

2 Nominate a Colleague for an Award

ASHI award nominations are now open, so nominate a colleague, visit homeinspector.org/About/Awards. Nomination forms are available for Monahan and Cox under awards.

The **Philip C. Monahan Award** recognizes an ASHI member who has made exceptional and innovative contributions to the ASHI membership. Nominations open Sept. 1, 2022.

The **John E. Cox Member of the Year Award** recognizes an ASHI member who has made exceptional contributions to an ASHI chapter. Nominations are open now.

The **Ironman Award** recognizes an ASHI Member who has given time, energy, talent, and determination to ASHI over a long period of time with little recognition.

The **President's Award** recognizes an ASHI member for outstanding service to the association.

elevate the profession for future generations. ASHI members who become mentors will earn five CEs for their time each year. They will also receive a digital badge to use to promote their involvement in the ASHI Mentorship Program.

Find out more about mentoring by emailing mentor@ashi.org.



To **volunteer** or find out more about the MRC, email 2020ashimrc@gmail.com. For more **information** about the ASHI Mentorship Program, email mentor@ashi.org.

Working Toward Safer Decks

By Laura Rote

Deck failure can be catastrophic, ending in injury or even death. And deck inspections are not something to be taken lightly, says ASHI President John Wessling. "We can help keep your families safe and help you maintain your deck in good condition for many years," Wessling said.

A key contributor to that safety is making sure inspectors are up-to-date on deck code and safety. With more than 50 million residential decks in the US, it's estimated that 30 million decks are past their useful life and need to be replaced or repaired, according to NADRA, the North American Deck and Railing Association.

What is NADRA?

NADRA works to provide a "unified source for the professional development, promotion, growth, and sustenance of the deck and railing building industry in North America so that members can exceed the expectations of their customers," according to their mission statement. NADRA says it's crucial for homeowners to have their decks inspected to verify the integrity of their deck to ensure user safety and help extend the deck's

life span, improve appearance, and increase livability.

Wessling calls NADRA the leader in the industry, and he said their expertise can be hugely beneficial to ASHI Home Inspector Members. "A building inspector ought to be looking at a deck with scrutinizing eyes," he said. "NADRA has an inspection manual, and they're working very closely with code officials—quickly becoming the go-to source for deck information. What we want to do for ASHI is become the go-to source for deck inspectors."

He's been involved with NADRA for more than a decade and has not only seen business from his involvement, he's learned a lot. "It really does fill your knowledge base with deck-specific information. It gives you some of the ins and outs of how to look at a deck in a very critical manner to promote safety and longevity of the deck," he said. "It does open your eyes."

He said having the NADRA certification is beneficial for business, as it carries



Learn more at
nadra.org/education

**“THE DECK INSPECTION
WORLD HAS GROWN UP...
ASHI’S RELATIONSHIP
WITH NADRA CAN BENEFIT
ASHI MEMBERS THROUGH
KNOWLEDGE AND A
POTENTIAL REVENUE
STREAM.”**— John Wessling,
ASHI President

weight in the industry. He renews every three years as part of the ASHI partnership because he wants to keep up with the changing world of decks. When he was originally certified for NADRA, he said the code book didn’t have much to say about deck inspection, but that’s changing. What used to be just a few sentences is now more than 200 pages dedicated to decks, he said.

“The deck inspection world has grown up,” Wessling said. “ASHI’s relationship with NADRA can benefit ASHI members through knowledge and a potential revenue stream—especially in places like California, where they are going to require deck inspections routinely for homes.”

According to NADRA, California and Maryland already require deck inspections, and more states could follow suit soon.

Educational Opportunities

NADRA is currently offering all ASHI members a special membership rate. Join today as a new member and receive 25% off a one-year membership or a three-year membership plan. Just use promo code **ashi2022**.

NADRA provides three types of classes—in-person, live Zoom webinars, and ore-recorded on-demand. Among the on-demand courses, you’ll find “Master Deck Professional-CODE” and “How To Build a Freestanding Deck.”

A free deck-specific course is offered monthly to current members of NADRA.

You can register for all classes at nadra.org/education#!form/Education ■

Do you have an idea for an article?

The *Reporter* is always looking for new articles, and we encourage ASHI members to call upon their experience and knowledge to submit articles to be considered for publication. Here are some upcoming topics being featured in future issues:

November

InspectionWorld
Education
Veterans

Deadline:
Sept. 15

January 2023

Finding your voice
in the industry
Mentorship

Deadline:
Nov. 15

December

Scaling Up
Appliances

Deadline:
Oct. 14

February 2023

Older Homes
Vs. New Builds
DIYs

Deadline: Dec. 15

Submit your articles to
editor@ashi.org



REPORTER

From Rocket Science to Building Science

"People don't seem to know they're not getting the right information, and they're not taking the time to really understand what's going on," said Dr. Joseph Lstiburek, Ph.D., ASHRAE Fellow, and founding principal of Building Science Corporation.

As an expert in building codes and practices, Lstiburek is continually working to educate people across the industry—including home inspectors. He's made a particular impact in the areas of air barriers, vapor barriers, and vented and unvented roof assemblies. His work with industry partners through the Department of Energy's Building America program led to significant research into the wetting and drying of walls and ultimately to a major code change relaxing the requirement for vapor barriers in the International Residential Code.


Lstiburek is scheduled to teach two sessions at the upcoming InspectionWorld in Las Vegas in January 2023—one on healthy homes and another on indoor air quality.

"People don't really understand very much about indoor air quality and healthy homes because of the misinformation that's being given out by people who have vested interests," he said. "You shouldn't have

bad stuff in your house that makes you sick. It's not complicated."

In his Healthy Home course, Lstiburek will define what makes a "healthy home" and how to create, operate, and maintain one. Does a healthy home mean that the occupants are not doing unhealthy things in the home? Does it mean that the builder hasn't used materials that are unhealthy? How can a home inspector look at a home and decide if it is healthy?

"One of the misunderstandings of healthy houses is people think if they bring in a lot of outside air they can exhaust the pollutants in the



*Meet building
science expert
Joseph Lstiburek.*

By Laura Rote

house,” Lstiburek said. But he likes to point out: “Dilution is not the solution to indoor pollution.” He said using air to flush contaminants out of a building is not very effective in dealing with strong contaminants, though. “Any powerful contaminant will overpower your ability to dilute it out. Ventilation works best for people and the odors that people generate. You should ventilate for the contaminants the human itself gives off and then everything else you use source control. This concept is not new; it’s just not being executed very well.”

Lstiburek’s Indoor Air Quality course will define indoor air quality, identify contaminant sources, identify strategies to provide acceptable indoor air quality, and more. How does humidity affect indoor air quality and buildings? And how will Covid change indoor air quality?

Lstiburek has been teaching home inspectors and others in the building industry since the late 1970s. But this wasn’t always the plan. His father was a builder, and a young Lstiburek put himself through school as a builder before getting an aerospace engineering degree. He graduated as a rocket scientist in the late ’70s—a time when jobs in the field were difficult to come by. So he returned to the construction industry.

“I went back and became a laborer. I was one of the few people who could read plans,” he said. He started asking questions about why things were being done the way they were being done. Soon he was hooked. “It was the best thing that ever happened to me,” he said.

Lstiburek holds a Bachelor of Applied Science in Mechanical Engineering, a Master of Engineering in Civil Engineering, and a

IN HIS HEALTHY HOME COURSE, LSTIBUREK WILL DEFINE WHAT MAKES A ‘HEALTHY HOME’ AND HOW TO CREATE, OPERATE, AND MAINTAIN ONE.”

Doctor of Philosophy in Building Science. As an undergrad, he worked as a residential construction manager, and while he was getting his master’s he developed the Air Drywall Approach to air barriers. He also worked on the Canada-wide Super Energy Efficient Housing R-2000 program.

Today Building Science Corporation provides a diverse range of services to the industry—from forensic investigations to building performance consultations. ■



Read more at **buildingscience.com**. And learn more from Lstiburek at the upcoming InspectionWorld, taking place Sunday, January 29 to Wednesday, February 1, 2023.

Don’t Miss InspectionWorld 2023 in Las Vegas!

Registration for home inspectors opens Sept. 6, and early-bird pricing is available through Nov. 19.


Home Inspector ASHI Members pay \$600, Non-Member Home Inspectors \$1,000, and ASHI Retired Members \$275.

Regular IW 2023 pricing for home inspectors runs from Nov. 20 through Feb. 1, 2023.

Find out more at: inspectionworld.org



INSPECTIONWORLD
LAS VEGAS • 2023



Helping People Learn

By Laura Rote

Michelle Santiago likes helping people. As education manager for the ASHI School, she talks to many people just starting in their careers every day.

"I love being able to help people start a new career or make a big change in their life," she said. "A lot of people who come through here are looking to make a career change."

Santiago was instrumental in helping to move The ASHI School from a stand-alone for-profit entity into ASHI's Education Department. Under her direction, the ASHI School experienced its most profitable year in 2021, according to ASHI 2021 President Bruce Barker. Santiago said the move also made things much more efficient. "It's really intertwined with ASHI now," she said.

Santiago started working with ASHI in late 2016, starting in more of an administrative role. Today

she runs the ASHI School, covering everything from answering the phone to invoicing to talking students through what to expect. She signs people up for their courses, develops marketing materials, answers frequent questions, and more.

She says she's continued to stay with ASHI both for the fulfilling work it offers and the camaraderie. "Everybody collaborates, and you feel like you're part of a big family. It's not just coworkers," she said. "I've always liked that you can talk to the board members, you can talk to management, and you always feel a part of something."

She says a typical day may begin with a call from someone interested in becoming a home inspector but who doesn't know where to start. Santiago learns their



background and where they're from, as every state has different rules and regulations. "I make sure the course we're offering is the right fit for them and then I give them information on what we provide and how the process will work—from taking the course to taking their state exam to walking them through the process of joining ASHI."

Most prospective students are not yet ASHI members when they make the call, as they're just beginning their journeys and figuring things out. The ASHI School offers them their first year of membership for \$99 when they take an ASHI pre-licensing course.

Santiago said the ASHI School has gone through many changes in recent years, including adapting their own curriculum, which they now own. They're also developing their own online courses. With new management in place, she said the ASHI School is working to reach even more people—both online and in person. "We're looking to host more in-person classes in states across the US," she said.

In exciting new offerings online, the ASHI School now offers its three-day commercial class as a live webinar. They are also working to create their three-day mold class as a live webinar, which is expected to be released in late 2022. For more information on these and other courses, visit theashischool.com

Santiago currently works from her home in a Chicago suburb, and she says her two children—ages 14 and 5—alongside her supportive husband William drive her to continue to want to do more and do better. "I love to be organized and to help others. I find joy in helping others and knowing other people are happy makes me happy." ■



Opposite: Michelle At InspectionWorld in San Diego.
Above: At the ASHI School booth, InspectionWorld 2018, in Orlando.



Award-Winning

Santiago recently received the 2021 Presidential Staff Award, which isn't awarded annually like most other ASHI awards.

"I don't know that it was given out in the last few years so I almost forgot about it," she laughed. "I was at a loss for words."

ASHI 2021 President Bruce Barker personally called Santiago to share the news. "That was very touching. It makes it all worth it," she said.

Barker said part of why Santiago received the award was because she embraces the challenges in front of her and continues to help move ASHI forward. He said anyone who knows her knows she always aims to support however she can. She's appreciated by the many instructors she helps manage as well as the students she impacts daily. Most of all, she is respected by her colleagues and ASHI leadership.

NEW MEMBERS

*New Associate Members from
June 29, 2022 to July 15, 2022*

Arkansas

David Larsen, North Pole

Alaska

Dalton Penfield, Alabaster

California

Mike Doose, Napa
Erik Bryant, Sacramento
Christopher Briggs, San Jose

Connecticut

Thomas Lochtefeld, Darien

Florida

Fernando Santana, Saint Cloud

Georgia

Thomas Wheeler, Canton

Hawaii

Prince Brown, Eva Beach

Illinois

Matthew Dwyer, St. Charles

Kentucky

Nathan Francis, Henderson

Maryland

Robert Tice Jr, Port Deposit

Michigan

Sharon Skeels, East Lansing

Missouri

Pamela Erickson, Monticello

New York

Kenneth Levy, Huntington

Pennsylvania

Ryan Lebus, Oxford
Kevin Williams, Strabane

South Carolina

Jeffrey Johnson, Florence

Tennessee

James Bowden, Jamestown

Virginia

Patrick Fouse, Arlington

Washington

Mathew Blaha, Valley

CHAPTER UPDATES**Ohio Fall Seminar**

DATE: Sept. 17, 2022

LOCATION: Hilton Akron Fairlawn Hotel & Suites
3180 West Market St., Akron, OH 44333
akronfairlawn.hilton.com

The NCO ASHI Fall Seminar will take place in person and live via Zoom! Earn 8 hours of CE and 8 hours of state licensure CE for Ohio. Keynote speaker is Tom Fieza "Mr Fix-It, HowToOperateYourHome.com. The seminar will be offered and advertised to all State of Ohio-licensed home inspectors and ASHI National.

Call 330-867-5000 to book rooms and ask for the special rate block for ASHI.

FULL SCHEDULE

7 to 8 am Registration and breakfast	12:15 to 1:15 pm Lunch
8 to 10 am Class	1:15 to 3:15 pm Class
10 to 10:15am Break	3:15 to 3:30 pm Break
10:15 am to 12:15 pm Class	3:30 to 5:30 pm Class

More Info: Vendors will get a free booth; \$100 to be on the advertisement; \$250 to be the main sponsor

**Tri-State ASHI Chapter
Southeastern PA****Live In-Person Annual Seminar**

DATE: 8 am to 5 pm Friday, Sept. 30, 2022

LOCATION: Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462

Attention inspectors in PA, NJ, CT, DE, and MD.

8 hours pending CE credits

Registration for the seminar is open.

SPEAKERS/TOPICS:

Plastic Piping by Lance MacNevin, P. Eng.

Vinyl Siding Installation by Robert J Balfanz

Flat Low Slope Roofing by Russell Roofing

Structural Defects & Repairs by BQ Basements

Complaints and Expert Witness by Joe Denebler, Esq.

*For more information or to register,
visit tristateashi.org*

SEPTEMBER MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

40

Stephen Smallman
Steve Smallman Property
Inspections, LLC

30

Alden Gibson
Inspections by Gibson

James Josephson
Abode Inspection Services

Larry Smiley
Elite Property
Inspections, LLC

25

Michael Atwell
J. May Home Inspection

Terry Clark
Clark Inspections Inc.

Douglas Carmack

Joseph Raffone
AA-MSA, Inc

James Sipe
Heartland Home
Inspection Training

Robert Feather
New Horizon Inspection Co

20

Scott Latosky
Latosky Inspection and
Environmental Services LLC

Phil Sager
HomePro of MidFlorida

Bill Anderson
Anderson Home
Inspection Services

Michael Stocknoff
A & M Engineering
Services, Inc.

Thomas Fitzpatrick
Total Home Environmental

Michael Collins-Smythe
The Inspection Company
of Georgia, Inc.

John Pesek
J. Charles Associates, LLC

15

Bret Petersen
American Dream Home
Inspections Inc

Keith Tarkington
Tarkington Home
Inspections

10

Rudy Schlosser
Ace in the Home
Inspection Services

Andrew Wolf
NEV-CAL Home
Inspections

Randall Wolf
NEV-CAL Home
Inspections

Andrew Joseph

Brett Cortez
Academy Home
Inspections, LLC

Timothy Davis
Top 2 Bottom Home
Inspections

Steve Mehring
Precision Home
Inspections LLC

Lou Scerbo
HOMES ARE US, Inc.

Shawn Jones
Quality Pro Home
Inspections

Gregory Davis
ProSpect Property
Inspections

Kevin McDonald
Pillar To Post
Atlantic County

5

Daniel Liegghio

Matt Hefferin
Hero Home Inspection

David Henke
DEH Sales Group, LLC

Richard Davenport
Pillar to Post

Jennifer Gould
Cape Quality
Home Inspection LLC

Robert Herndon
Jonathan Becker

Imran Qillawala
Pillar to Post
Home Inspectors

Jessie Fisher
Home Standards
Inspection Services

A. Scott Truax
US Inspect

Royce Lloyd
The Pearce Group

John Brunzell
Green Point Home
Inspections, LLC

Todd Strader
Romulus Group of Georgia
Home Inspections

Troy Sciumbato
Pillar to Post Home
Inspectors

Paul Stokle
Sunrise Inspection
Services

Kurt Lampert
KDL Home Inspection

David Leuthy
Sound View Inspections

Brett Lotspeich
Pillar to Post Home
Inspectors

Steven Peterson
Pillar to Post Home
Inspectors

Dustin Diede
Pillar to Post

Brandon Craig

Ryan Rengstorf
AJR Home Inspections

Chad Banosky
Initial Inspections LLC

Eric Angerstein

Scott Biller
Biller and Associates

Robert Johnson
Orange Door Inspections

Troy Emter
Rock Solid Home
Inspection

Dave Mitchell
Seagate Inspections, Inc.

Michael Drew
Focused Property
Inspections

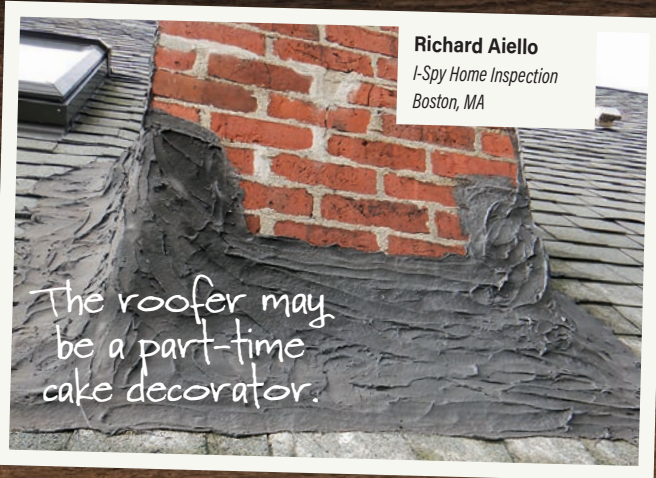
John Rhodes
Heritage Home
Inspections



POSTCARDS FROM THE FIELD



Aaron Dean
Dean's Home Inspections
Keauau, HI



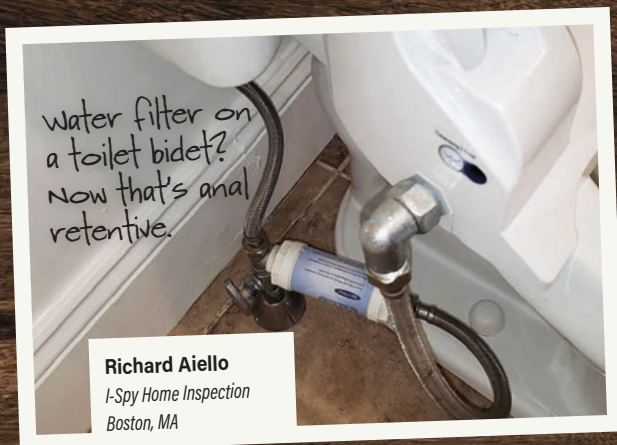
Richard Aiello
I-Spy Home Inspection
Boston, MA



Jeffrey Johansen Sr.
Peace of Mind Home Inspections
Strongsville, OH



Aidan Brock
Boston Home Inspectors
Boston, MA



Richard Aiello
I-Spy Home Inspection
Boston, MA



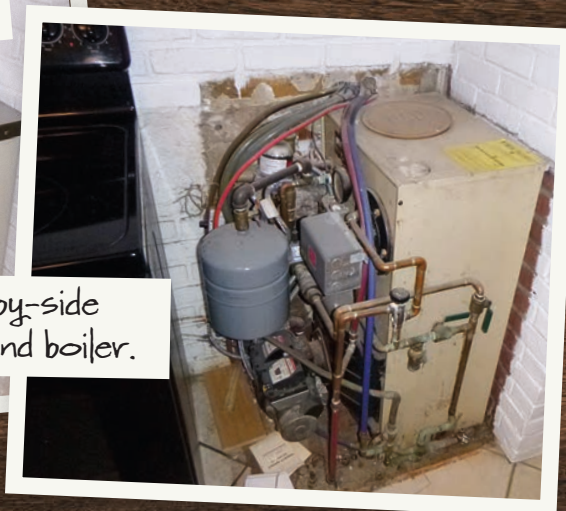
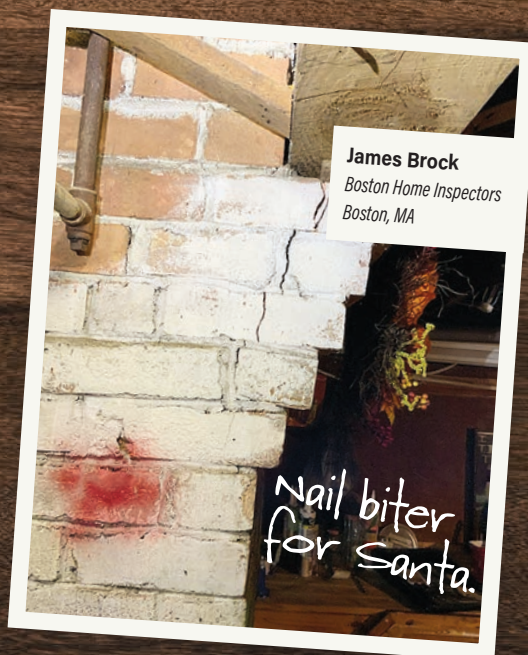
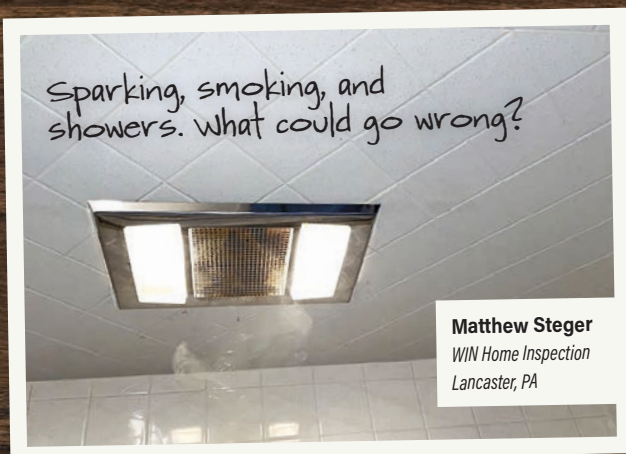
James Brock
Boston Home Inspectors
Boston, MA



Please send your name, city, state, photos, headings and captions to:

POSTCARDS@ASHI.ORG

By sending in your postcard(s), you are expressly granting ASHI the right to us the postcard and your name with it in the ASHI REPORTER and in other publications ASHI may select.



Make Every Inspection Count



Help prevent electrical fires with AFCI protection.

From new construction to handyman special, every home should have the benefit of superior arc-fault detection to help protect against electrical fires. Leviton solutions include AFCI receptacles, Bluetooth® diagnostic AFCI receptacles, and our innovative Smart AFCI circuit breakers designed exclusively for use in the Leviton Load Center.

Choose Leviton AFCI protection, the trusted brand for electrical safety.

Learn more at leviton.com/afci



THE FUTURE IS ON®

LEVITON®