



APRIL 2021

REPORTER

INSPECTION NEWS & VIEWS FROM THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF HOME INSPECTORS, INC.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL HOME INSPECTION MONTH

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FOR HOME INSPECTORS
BY HOME INSPECTORS**

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**HAPPY NATIONAL
HOME INSPECTION MONTH!
WELCOME, NEW
MEMBERS OF
THE ASHI TEAM!**

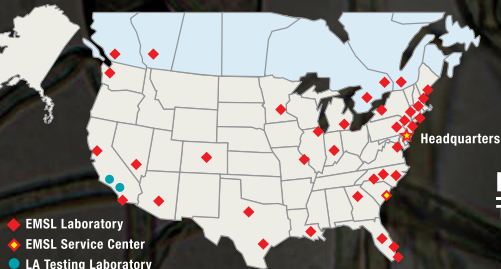
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ASHI National Officers and Board of Directors

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*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.*

OFFICERS

Bruce Barker, President
Cary, NC, 919-322-4491
bruce@dreamhomeconsultants.com

John Wessling, President-Elect
St. Louis, MO, 314-520-1103
john@wesslinginspections.com

Lisa Alajajian Giroux, Treasurer
Milford, MA, 508-634-2010
homequest1@comcast.net

Bronson Anderson, Secretary
Waynesboro, VA, 540-932-7557
2inspect4u@gmail.com

Mike Wagner,
Immediate Past-President
Westfield, IN, 317-867-7688
mwagner@ralis.com

DIRECTORS

Michael Burroughs 2019-2021
Monroe, LA, 318-376-0482
mike.qedservice@gmail.com

Rob Cornish 2019-2021
Ottawa, ON, 613-858-5000
robc@homexam.ca

Steve Cross 2019-2021
Ortonville, MI, 248-342-4205
crossinspectionservices@gmail.com

Mark Goodman 2020-2022
Manchester, MO, 314-409-3991
mark@homeinspectstl.com

Doug Johnson 2020-2022
Mobile, AL, 251-295-7254
inspectmobile@gmail.com

Scott Johnson 2020-2022
Marietta, GA, 678-232-6769
whpis@me.com

Jeffrey Leighton 2021-2023
Scarborough, ME, 207-650-8653
jeffrey.leighton54@gmail.com

Kyle Rodgers 2021-2023
Siloam Springs, AR, 479-599-9314
kyle@aplus-inspection.com

Nashaat Roufaiel 2019-2021
Ottawa, ON, 613-823-7706
nr1990@hotmail.com

Vince Tecce 2021-2023
Yardley, PA, 215-527-5710
bioavince@gmail.com

Jim Vaughn 2020-2022
Arlington, VA, 703-675-5452
jim@homeauthority.biz

Publisher: James Thomas
Editor: Carol Dikelsky
Art Director: Juraj Ilavsky

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

847-954-3179 Reporter calls only
847-299-2505 (fax) Reporter only
Email: jamest@ashi.org

Advertising: James Thomas
Phone: 847-954-3182
Email: communications@ashi.org

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ASHI STAFF

Main Phone: 847-759-2820, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm
Monday - Friday, CST

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

James Thomas, Executive Director
847-954-3182, jamest@ashi.org

Bonnie Bruno-Castaneda, Executive Assistant
847-954-3177, bonnieb@ashi.org

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Jen Gallegos, Manager of Membership Services &
U.S. DOE Home Energy Score Assessor Coordinator
847-954-3185, jeng@ashi.org

Michael Krauszowski, Membership Services Administrator
847-954-3175, Michaelk@ashi.org

Gaby Nava, Membership Supervisor
847-954-3176, Gabyn@ashi.org

Melinda Puente, Membership Administrator
847-954-3196, melindap@ashi.org

Maria Delgado, Membership Administrator
847-954-3180, mariad@ashi.org

EDUCATION

Edwin Barrera, Director of Education and Curriculum Development
847-954-3188, edwinb@ashi.org

Michelle Santiago, The ASHI School Education Manager
847-954-3198, Michelle@theashischool.com

Glen Rogers, Instructional Designer
847-954-3194, Gleng@ashi.org

Jazz Schools, Educational Administrator
847-954-3181, Jazzs@ashi.org

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Beverly Canham, Financial Assistant
847-954-3184, beverlyc@ashi.org

COMMUNICATIONS

Marianne Sackett, Director of Communications
847-954-3198, Mariannes@ashi.org

Frank Lesh, ASHI Ambassador
847-954-3197, frankl@ashi.org

Rose Buckley, Social Media Liaison
roseb@ashi.org

CREATIVE

Kate Laurent, Creative Director
847-954-3179, katel@ashi.org

Chris Karczewski, Brand Manager
847-954-3183, chrisk@ashi.org

Juraj Ilavsky, Art Director
847-759-2820, georgei@ashi.org



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Managing Risk

PEST INSPECTIONS

By Stephanie Jaynes, Marketing Director,
InspectorPro Insurance



Stephanie Jaynes is the Marketing Director for InspectorPro Insurance, which offers ASHI members exclusive benefits through its program: InspectorPro with the ASHI Advantage. Through risk management articles in the ASHI Reporter and on the InspectorPro website, InspectorPro helps inspectors protect their livelihood and avoid unnecessary risk. Get peace of mind and better protection with InspectorPro's pre-claims assistance and straightforward coverage. Learn more at www.inspectorproinsurance.com/ashi-advantage.

American homeowners aren't living alone. Whether homeowners know it or not, they share their homes with uninvited guests, like termites, rodents or bats—the three vermin about which homeowners express the most concern.



WHY INSPECTORS INSPECT FOR PESTS

When asked why they offer pest inspections, the home inspectors we interviewed said that they began offering the service for one or more of the following reasons:

REASON 1: THEY WANTED TO MEET DEMAND.

Pests are everywhere, as illustrated in the statistics below (see Resources section for links to sources cited).

- **TERMITES:** In 2015, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Research Service (ARS) estimated that termites destroy parts of more than 600,000 U.S. homes annually. According to the National Pest Management Association (NPMA), subterranean termites eat 24/7 and large colonies can eat as much as a pound of wood each day. With their big appetites, termites cause an estimated \$5 billion in property damage each year. (And with repair estimates 10 to 30 times the typical home inspection fees, many homeowners turn to their inspectors to foot the bill.)
- **RODENTS:** In their 2013 survey, the NPMA found that nearly one-third (29 percent) of their 2,000 participants had a rodent problem in their home. Since their teeth grow continuously throughout their life, rodents can gnaw unceasingly without wearing down their teeth. Thus, having rodents in the home can present serious property damage risks that, at their worst, are dangerous. Since rodents can chew through wood and electrical wires, their presence increases the risk of electrical fires.
- **BATS:** According to Bat Conservation International, almost three-fourths of the 47 bat species in the United States and Canada have been documented in structures. Many homeowners find bats unsettling. But beyond being startled by their squeaks and their rustling wings, homeowners fear how bats could harm them and their property. While most bats don't carry rabies, they can carry bat bugs and histoplasmosis, a fungal infection that causes cold symptoms. Bat droppings and urine can present minor health risks and ruin insulation. It can also soak through sheet rock or particle board, which can cause damage.

With the prevalence of pests in American homes, many inspection clients expect home inspectors to report evidence of pests. In fact, many states require a pest inspection before a home loan can close.

***Note:** The Managing Risk column with InspectorPro Insurance provides home inspectors with tips to protect their businesses against insurance claims and examines best practices for crafting effective pre-inspection agreements.*

The opinions expressed in this article are those of the author only and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of ASHI. The information contained in the article is general and readers should always independently verify for accuracy, completeness and reliability.

"I STARTED OFFERING PEST INSPECTIONS SO THAT MY CLIENTS WOULDN'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT FINDING SOMEONE [ELSE] TO DO THEM," said Anthony Cooper of Cooper Inspections, LLC (cooperinspectionsllc.com) in Ohio.

"I [WAS] INSPECT[ING] ALL THE AREAS THAT GET INSPECTED FOR A PEST INSPECTION ALREADY, [WHICH MADE IT AN EASY SERVICE TO ADD ON]."

REASON 2: THEY WANTED AN ADDITIONAL SOURCE OF REVENUE.

After receiving training from an inspector who performed pest inspections, Gordon Glidden of Inland Lakes Inspection Services (inlandlakesinspectionerservices.com/) in Michigan decided it made sense financially for him to offer the service, too.

"I started offering pest inspections in 1998 when I started doing home inspections," Glidden said. "It was an easy \$75 to add on."

According to HomeAdvisor, a digital marketplace for home services, inspectors typically charge \$50 to \$280 per pest or termite inspection. The exact cost depends on which services you offer, whether it's a stand-alone service or combined with other inspections, and what price point you think is appropriate for your region and personal expertise.

PEST INSPECTION INVESTMENTS

EDUCATION AND LICENSING

While not all pest inspections require licensing, many states require home inspectors to receive certification, licensure or both to inspect for termites or other wood-destroying insects.

Depending on your locale, initial licensing or certification courses cost an average of \$300 and can be obtained through third parties or the state. To maintain your license or certification, you will likely need to pay renewal fees and take regular continuing education courses. To learn about the pest inspection licensing and certification requirements in your state, visit your state government's website.

ENDORSEMENTS

An endorsement is a form that either modifies or adds coverage to your insurance policy. Most home inspection insurance policies exclude additional services like pest inspections. Thus, an insurance company will not offer coverage for those additional services without an endorsement. So, if you perform pest inspections or want defense and indemnity for claims involving pests, you may wish to change an existing policy exclusion with an endorsement.

Typically, insurers charge a flat, annual fee around \$100 for a pest endorsement. However, some insurance policies offered by other providers may give you pest coverage before you even ask for it, but with a sublimit.

Sublimits cap certain risks, usually additional services, defined in your insurance policy, which gives you less coverage per individual service. For example, a home inspector who purchases \$1,000,000 / \$1,000,000 in coverage with a \$100,000 sublimit receives only \$100,000 per claim and per policy period for pest-related issues. So, when choosing your coverage, you must be sure to take sublimits into account.

LIMITING YOUR LIABILITY AGAINST PEST-RELATED CLAIMS

Pest claims are the seventh most common type of allegation in the home inspection industry. Carrying a pest endorsement is one of the most important things you can do to protect against pest-related claims. However, there are additional risk management techniques you can employ to safeguard your business. Here are some suggestions:

SET EXPECTATIONS

"I mitigate risk by telling my customers the limitations of a pest inspection," Glidden said.

Make sure your clients understand the limitations of your inspection and how they apply to household pests.

According to the ASHI Standard of Practice (SoP), home inspections are visual, non-invasive examinations of the home's physical structures and systems. Because you can only inspect what you can see, you cannot account for anything hidden from view, such as things behind walls or below ground.

"The thing about pests that's hard to deal with is that they're alive, so they move," said Travis Hill of Premier Inspections (premier-inspections.com/) in Texas. "And because pests move, they are not always visible at the time of the inspection."

You can also help your clients have realistic expectations by referring them to national, state and local standards. In many cases, such standards can act as one of your lines of defense.

William Chandler of Property 360 (thebuildinginspector.net/) in Florida provides this example: "The Florida Department of Agriculture protects us," Chandler said. "It basically says that we can't see behind walls and, if there is no visible indication—the wall is not rippled, the paint's not bubbled, the wood is not rotted—and these termites are in the wall because they came up through the middle of the house, we are not liable."

Since termites, rodents and bats lead to the most claims, we strongly suggest addressing these types of pests in your pre-inspection agreement and reports. Explain what services you provide to discover these pests, if any.

For more information on setting expectations, read the article "How to Set Home Buyers' Expectations" on the InspectorPro Insurance website.

PROVIDE EXCLUSIONS

One of the ways to explain which pest inspections are and are not covered in your inspection is through exclusions.

Michael Patton of AA Home Inspection (aahomeinspection.net/) in Kentucky and Ohio provides a list of exclusions in both his pre-inspection agreement and his inspection report.

"In our agreement, we specifically state: We don't do bats, we don't do rats, we don't do mice. And we don't do structural pests unless it's requested," Patton said. "Then, we reiterate [the exclusions] in our inspection report."

If you don't perform pest inspections, it's wise to include an advisement in your contract's limitation of liabilities clause. To ensure that your clients read your exclusions, our claims team recommends making the advisement stand out with bold or colored font. It's also smart to have your client initial any advisement to show that they agree to the terms.

To learn more about the limitation of liability clause, read the InspectorPro Insurance Managing Risk article “Your Pre-Inspection Agreement: Limitation of Liability” published in the April 2020 issue of the *ASHI Reporter*.

TAKE PICTURES

For Jim Troth of Habitation Investigation (homeinspectionsinohio.com/) in Ohio, setting appropriate expectations and supporting those expectations in your report are essential risk management techniques.

“We’ve had one complaint about termites, but [the client] tore up the floor in the kitchen to find them,” Troth said. “That’s why it’s so important to put pictures in your report, to show what activity is going on [on the day of the inspection].”

Note that it’s important to take pictures of not just the defects, but of the non-problem areas. Photographs of non-problem areas can exonerate you when issues arise post-inspection.

“TAKE YOUR TIME, INSPECT EVERYTHING CLOSELY AND TAKE A LOT OF PICTURES,” Cooper said.

INSPECT DEFENSIVELY

When performing pest inspections, it’s important to perform to both national and regional standards. Inspecting beyond such standards without additional licensure may increase liability.

For example, in the state of Kentucky, the Department of Agriculture requires an additional license for each type of pest inspection. For instance, if you point out the presence of termites, you must have a termite license. Or, if you want to inspect for rodents, you must have a rodent license.

“We never come out and say [clients] have bats in the attic, even though I’ve stared at them several times. I don’t hold the license for it so, in Kentucky, I can’t say that I’ve seen it,” Patton said. “We say [there] appears to be a bat infestation and recommend further assessment by a pest control company.”

DON’T PROVIDE REMEDIATION SERVICES

After discovering pests during an inspection, do not perform remediation services yourself. Fixing problems you discovered during your inspection may be a conflict of interest. Additionally, most home inspector insurance providers exclude pesticide application from their policies, which means you would not receive coverage for claims in which you treated for pests. Rather than providing remediation services yourself, refer your clients to licensed commercial applicators or other professionals.

PEST INSPECTIONS AND YOUR HOME INSPECTIONS

Is there a lot of public interest in pest inspections in your area? Are you looking for additional revenue sources and job security for your inspection business? Do you want to be proactive in protecting your business against the seventh most common claim in the industry?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, perhaps it’s time for your company to offer pest inspections.

RESOURCES

U.S. Department of Agriculture (usda.gov)

Agricultural Research Service (ars.usda.gov):

<https://www.ars.usda.gov/news-events/news/research-news/2015/learning-what-wood-a-termite-prefers/>

National Pest Management Association:

<https://www.pestworld.org/pest-control-help/pest-control-faqs/termites/#direct-link-what-are-termites>

Home Advisor.com:

• home inspection fees: <https://www.homeadvisor.com/cost/inspectors-and-appraisers/hire-a-home-inspector/>

• pest or termite inspection fees: <https://www.homeadvisor.com/cost/inspectors-and-appraisers/termite-pest-inspection/>

National Pest Management Association, 2013 study: <https://www.pestworld.org/news-hub/press-releases/of-mice-and-men-rodent-infestations-plague-nearly-a-third-of-americans/>

Bat Conservation International. <https://www.batcon.org/>; <https://www.batcon.org/about-bats/bats-in-homes-buildings/>

Veterans United Home Loans:

<https://www.veteransunited.com/valoans/va-termite-pest-inspections/>

InspectorPro Insurance:

• <https://www.inspectorproinsurance.com/business/set-expectations/>

• <https://www.inspectorproinsurance.com/inspection-assets/limitation-of-liability/>

MESSAGE FROM THE ASHI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

HAPPY NATIONAL HOME INSPECTION MONTH! WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS OF THE ASHI TEAM!

By James Thomas, ASHI Executive Director





The ASHI team is always excited about April because it gives national recognition to you—our members. You are all part of a profession that truly impacts your clients' lives by providing expertise on understanding the property that they hope to make their home.

ASHI has been creating a team that is focused on meeting members' needs and continuing to improve our services to you as you serve your communities. There have been some strategic shifts in ASHI's staffing recently and I'm excited to introduce you to some of the members of the ASHI team.

MARIANNE SACKET

COMMUNICATIONS

ASHI has been working behind the scenes to update our channels and methods of communication. A massive overhaul of the ASHI website happened in July 2020 and the Inspection Connection Podcast launched in August to reach an even broader audience. More initiatives and strategic planning are under way regarding engagement with our members, and ways to successfully track your input and ideas. This requires a strong leader who can provide direction, vision and expertise.



Marianne Sacket, Director of Communications: ASHI welcomed Marianne Sacket, Director of Communications, in February. She was chosen to join ASHI from a number of qualified candidates. Marianne has an extensive background in marketing and communications. In her latest role, she was the director of membership and communications at the Association of Real Estate License Law Officials. She has a dual bachelor's degree from DePaul University and has earned numerous certificates, including project management for professionals from Northwestern University. Marianne brings a solid vision and will provide strategic direction as she oversees the creative team, social media and podcast as we redefine ASHI's communication processes and marketing efforts. She will help in defining key performance indicators in all of those areas, and the team is excited to have her lead different initiatives and endeavors.

EDUCATION

Another key area that ASHI is focusing on this year is our educational offerings. As you are all aware, InspectionWorld® was to take place in January 2021, but it didn't make sense to hold the event with all the restrictions in place in the midst of a global pandemic. The health and safety of our members come first and we also want to be able to provide the true IW experience when we meet together in person again. We are gearing up for another exciting InspectionWorld® to take place in Orlando in January 2022.

The Education Team is responsible for events like this and so much more. Last month, we were fortunate enough to provide the ASHI Virtual Summit. This event was the first of its kind for ASHI. The success of this event is due in no small part to the dedication of the Education team in collaboration with the rest of the ASHI staff.

ASHI wants to continue to branch out to offer more to our members than just live in-person and live-stream virtual events. There will be a strategic shift on what ASHI offers from an online standpoint. The current ASHI Online Learning Center (AOLC) has a number of offerings, but there are areas that we must improve on to help our members improve their expertise in the profession. There is a full team now dedicated to the needs of ASHI education.



INSPECTIONWORLD
ORLANDO 2022

GLEN ROGERS EDWIN BARRERA



Edwin Barrera, Director of Education and Curriculum Development: ASHI welcomed Edwin Barrera, Director of Education and Curriculum Development, last October. Edwin has spent the last 18 years leading, creating, managing and improving training programs by building teams and creating systems for success. The majority of his experience has been as a training consultant for private educational companies and for human resources professionals to improve their online training initiatives. He graduated from the University of Chicago with a bachelor's of science degree and he has a strong passion for adult education. He challenges himself to stay on top of developments in the fields of adult learning and instructional design. Edwin has earned certificates in both subjects from the Association for Talent and Development. Edwin has a team that reports to him with different skills and approaches to help push ASHI's educational offerings forward.



Glen Rogers, Instructional Designer: Glen Rogers joined the ASHI team in March as the first Instructional Designer in ASHI history. Glen has worked as an instructional designer for more than 15 years. He has worked with a far-reaching clientele that includes Heritage Healthcare Systems, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Texas, FEMA, KBR and many others. More recently, he worked at Shared Hope International where he led all facets of instructional design, which included storyboarding, eLearning course development and video/audio editing, and he utilized a number of software tools to lead to successful production. Glen holds a bachelor's degree from Houston Baptist University and a master's degree from Stephen F. Austin State University.

JAZZ SCHOOLS MICHELLE SANTIAGO



Jazz Schools, Educational Administration: Another new addition to the Education team is Jazz Schools, with the creation of the Educational Administration position. Jazz started his new role in March and he has experience as a training coordinator for Chris 180. In this role, he had been a learning management system administrator, managed learning management system training plans and led education unit certification projects. Jazz is a proud veteran of our armed forces. Prior to this role, Jazz spent the previous 10 years in the U.S. Air Force in various roles including formal training Instructor, aircraft maintenance manager, and supervisor. Jazz holds a bachelor's degree from Southern New Hampshire University and a master's degree from Liberty University.



Michelle Santiago, ASHI School Education Manager: Last, but definitely not least, is Michelle Santiago, The ASHI School Education Manager. Michelle has been with ASHI since 2016. Michelle is instrumental in overseeing The ASHI School and manages all aspects of the pre-licensing education offered at the numerous sites around the country. She is also responsible for coordinating numerous ancillary trainings, both in person and virtually. Michelle works with states to help ensure that ASHI offerings receive continuing education credits.

The entire ASHI team is focused on serving you and we are all honored to be part of this staff that helps the organization continue to move forward. The new members of the ASHI team bring different expertise, experience and perspectives that will help us strive to deliver benefits in a new and engaging way.

TIPS FOR HOME INSPECTORS

COMMUNICATE PROACTIVELY TO BOOST YOUR BUSINESS

By Inspect.com



Inspect.com is an online marketplace for the public to connect with qualified inspectors across the country. Get discovered and share your expertise. Add your listing to Inspect.com.

To be proactive means that you make things happen instead of waiting for things to happen. Being proactive means you are ready before something happens. Being proactive can be a key to setting your business apart from others.

As a home inspector, you put your feet in the shoes of the people you serve. When you anticipate your client's concerns and address them as part of your process, you help allay your client's fears.

For example, if you can tell that a home seller is anxious about the condition of the property, and you reassure them of your professionalism and objective assessment of the home's current condition, the seller might be more open to listening to your report.

But if you don't spend the two minutes it might take to reassure them, the seller might remain nervous and closed off during the entire inspection. They might even feel that you are "out to get them" and may even quash the sale.

The opinions expressed in this article are those of the author only and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of ASHI. The information contained in the article is general and readers should always independently verify for accuracy, completeness and reliability.

BEING PROACTIVE CAN HELP. IT MEANS PUTTING YOUR CLIENT FIRST.

EFFECTS OF COMMUNICATING PROACTIVELY

You are in business to serve your clients. To do that to the best of your ability, you need to be proactive. You need to have advance awareness of the client's needs at every step.

When you anticipate your clients' needs, they appreciate your understanding. To practice being proactive, think of all the ways you can address client concerns before they mention them. Start with your first connection with your clients and continue thinking through all the interactions you have until you deliver your report.

- **Engage with clients online. Don't make them search for how to connect with you. Tell them the best way: phone, text, email, online form.**
- **Respond to all comments on marketing sites and social media. Be the one who communicates.**
- **Congratulate your clients at the inspection site for making an investment in their future. Explain your objectivity and help them understand the report so they can make a well-informed buying or selling decision.**
- **At the inspection, don't wait for your client to ask questions. As part of your process, explain your findings, alleviate client concerns. Help buyers understand the new property and help sellers understand the true value of the home.**
- **Even though you won't be doing repairs and remediation, explain possible fixes and approximate costs. Providing this information can help your clients make informed decisions about the property.**
- **Make your report easy to understand. Provide a summary of findings and rate their importance so that clients can comprehend the more complete details that will appear in each section of the report.**
- **Be available for follow-up questions after the inspection.**

PROACTIVE COMMUNICATION CAN GET YOU HEARD

Comments about what can seem like tangential points to you might keep your client from hearing what you have to say about a property. If your client is nervous and apprehensive about the inspection, allay their fears before you begin your inspection.

Emphasize your knowledge and experience, and explain how the inspection is an independent, objective take on the current condition of the home.

An anxious client may have difficulty assimilating information. If you make an attempt to relieve your client's anxiety before you begin, you may help them more calmly focus on the information in your findings.

Sometimes clients have other fears that keep them from focusing on the inspection. For example, a homeowner who is concerned about health safety during the pandemic might benefit from hearing how you proactively protect them from exposure.

- **Explain your entire safety routine.**
- **Wear a mask at all times, even if no one is in the home.**
- **Wipe down every surface, including handles and door-knobs, that you touch.**
- **Wear protective foot coverings.**

Set the stage of your home inspection practice so that your clients feel comfortable with your health and safety precautions. If you can help them stay focused on the inspection, they may be more able to relax and listen, to understand the condition of the home.

EMPHASIZE YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE, AND EXPLAIN HOW THE INSPECTION IS AN INDEPENDENT, OBJECTIVE TAKE ON THE CURRENT CONDITION OF THE HOME.



ANTICIPATE AND ADDRESS YOUR CLIENT'S NEEDS

As home inspectors, putting the client first contributes to increasing the value of your business by creating trust. It might be easy to say that you put your clients first, but the best way to prove that is to make it easy and comfortable for them to talk with you and do business with you.

Anticipate your client's needs—from facilitating scheduling an appointment to alleviating concerns. Don't wait for a client to ask you something; instead, ask your client what their concerns are during your conversation. It can be easy to forget to reassure a client because you know what you do and how you work, but it is important to remember that most clients are working with you for the first time and, for some, it might be the first time they've ever experienced a home inspection.

Once you've been in business for a while, you can predict the most common questions your clients will ask. Introduce yourself and your inspection business by answering these questions before your client asks them. Your clients will be able to see that you know their concerns, and having that confidence may help open them up and listen to the findings you share.

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The *Reporter* is always looking for new articles on topics such as technical reviews, marketing ideas and helpful business practices for home inspectors. Personal or business-related stories that share a new spin on the home inspection world are also welcome.

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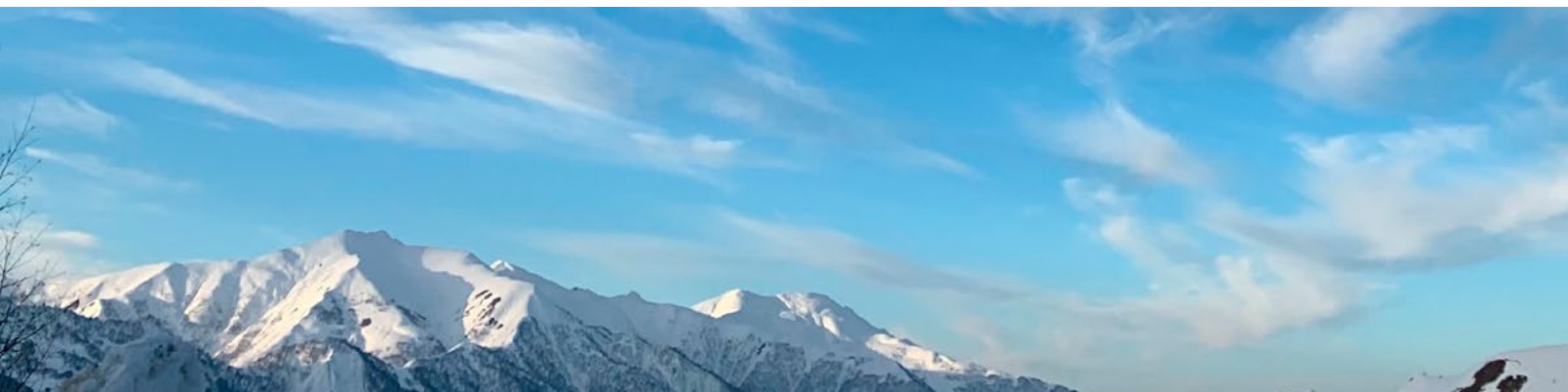
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SMART INSPECTOR SCIENCE

WHAT IS A TON OF COOLING?

EVER HEAR OF A 2- OR 3-TON CENTRAL AIR CONDITIONER? DOES THIS MEAN A 2-TON AIR CONDITIONER WEIGHS 4,000 POUNDS? OR IS IT A RANDOM TERM THAT TECH FOLKS USE TO IMPRESS US?

NO, IT DOESN'T WEIGH 4,000 POUNDS

A “ton” is a unit of refrigeration/cooling capacity. A ton of cooling is equivalent to transferring 12,000 Btu of energy per hour. So, this means a ton of air conditioning cools a home by removing 12,000 Btu from the air in one hour. Likewise, a 4-ton unit removes 48,000 Btu.

On the nameplate of an exterior condenser/compressor AC unit, the rating for tons of cooling is coded in the model number. It also might be listed on the tag.

A QUICK REMINDER: BTU

Btu stands for British thermal unit, the amount of energy needed to raise the temperature of 1 pound of water by 1 degree Fahrenheit. A reasonable equivalent is the energy you get from completely burning one kitchen match (Illustration H099).

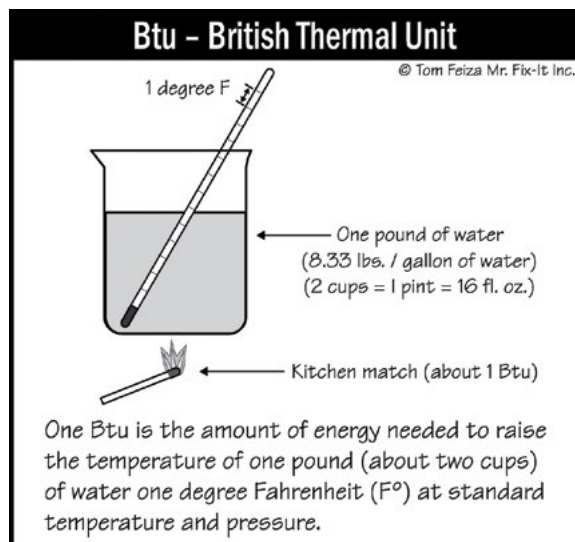


Illustration H099 Btu - British Thermal Unit

WHERE DID “TON” ORIGINATE?

Way back when engineer Joe Cool (and what a great coincidence that “Cool” was his last name) developed the standards for measuring mechanical cooling, ice was commonly used for cooling. You know, in the old days before air conditioning, food was stored in the icebox. So, Joe decided that the cooling capacity measurement should relate to ice (Illustration A047C).

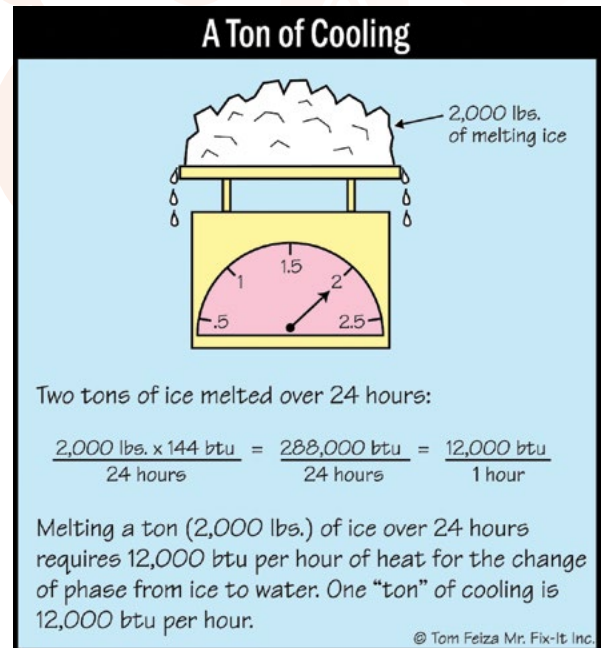


Illustration A047C A Ton of Cooling

A standard was set, equating 1 “ton” of cooling to the amount of energy needed to melt 1 ton (2,000 lbs.) of ice over a 24-hour period. With the change of phase from ice to water, 144 Btu of latent energy is required: 2,000 lbs. x 144 Btu/lb. = 288,000 Btu. Therefore, 288,000 Btu over 24 hours = 12,000 Btu/hour.

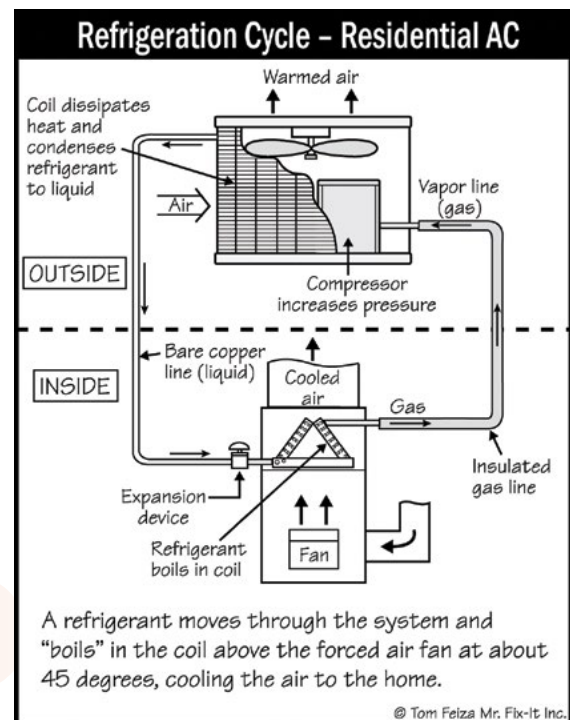


Illustration A032 Refrigeration Cycle - Residential AC

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 marketing materials that help professional home inspectors educate their customers. Copyright © 2021 by Tom Feiza, Mr. Fix-It, Inc. Reproduced with permission.

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



Photo. Air Conditioner A Coil

WHAT TRANSFERS THE “TON” OF ENERGY?

In a refrigeration cycle, two coils, a compressor and a control/metering device mechanically transfer heat (Illustration A032). The refrigerant is compressed and then cooled/condensed into a liquid. The liquid evaporates/boils in the A coil (Photo) with the energy from the warm air circulated over the coil. The warm air is cooled as it passes through the A coil and back into the home.

THE TAKEAWAY

When the nametag designates an AC unit as 3-ton, you know that’s equivalent to melting 3 tons of ice in 24 hours or 36,000 Btu per hour. Use this to impress your clients so you both understand the “tons” of cooling for their home.

TO LEARN MORE, ATTEND TOM’S TECHNICAL PRESENTATIONS AT EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS FOR ASHI CHAPTERS.

Tom can also provide his knowledge for your educational event; contact him at Tom@HTOYH.com.

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**Send your article ideas
or submissions to
stories@ashi.org.**

THANK YOU!



MEMBERSHIP CORNER

ASHI MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

By John Wessling and Lisa Alajajian Giroux





The ASHI Mentorship Program is now officially open! We have mentors registered and ready to consult with mentees. The mentorship program is a collaborative effort of experienced and inexperienced inspectors looking to make a difference.

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Many of our mentors have been in the home inspection business for years and have knowledge that can help inspectors who are starting out.

The mentorship program was established to help newer or less-experienced home inspectors gain the experience they need to be exceptional home inspectors. This is accomplished by pairing them with experienced home inspectors who volunteer to serve as mentors. This program helps inspectors build relationships with others across the nation and demonstrates the comradery on which that ASHI membership is built.

OUR VISION

For more than 40 years, ASHI has focused on setting the standard for the profession and educating its members to elevate the home inspection profession as a whole. Home inspectors join ASHI to broaden their knowledge and skill sets to become the best inspectors out there. The purpose of the mentorship program is to continue ASHI's mission by offering individuals an opportunity to elevate their professionalism and knowledge. The goal of the program is to help aspiring inspectors reach their full potential as they enter the home inspection profession.

WHAT IS MENTORSHIP

Mentorship is a personal development relationship in which a more experienced, knowledgeable person helps to guide a person who does not possess the same level of expertise. Many of our mentors have been in the home inspection business for years and have knowledge that can help inspectors who are starting out.

MENTORING OBJECTIVES

There is a wide range of mentoring services that focus on specific topics related to home inspections, business management and beyond, including report writing, inspecting protocols, business marketing, addressing health and safety concerns, general business practice advice or whatever area on which the mentee would like to focus. Mentors can provide aid with these different subjects, and help the mentee set or obtain goals for their business and their own learning.

The communication method is solely up to the mentee and the ASHI mentor—you decide what will work best for your arrangement. Some examples of communication channels are email, phone, text, Facebook Messenger or video conferencing applications like Zoom or GoToMeeting. In some situations, meeting in person may be an option. For face-to-face meetings, we suggest meeting in public restaurants or offices. Since many communications can be done virtually and there are no location restrictions, mentors and mentees can connect with each other from anywhere.

SIGN UP TO WORK WITH A MENTOR

Newer inspectors can work with experienced ASHI mentors for guidance and advice as they start their career in home inspection. This program is available for all those who want to be involved in the ASHI Mentorship Program. ASHI membership is encouraged, but not required, to participate as a mentee.

You can sign up to be connected with a mentor by visiting this link on the ASHI website: www.homeinspector.org/Resources/ASHI-Mentorship-Program/ASHI-Mentee-Form.

MENTORING, WHY? WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

Have you ever attended a roundtable or a conference and walked away from the conversations having learned something new? That is mentoring in its simplest form.

I personally have been mentored by several ASHI members during the last 22 years. I have developed several professional and personal relationships that have helped me be the best professional for my clients. Being involved in a mentoring program has helped me learn to be more reflective and to understand the way I work, my values, my goals, alternative options and how better to work with others.

When considering becoming an ASHI mentor, one question I urge you to consider is this: "Isn't it great to be able to see someone grow and reach their goals while sharing your experience?"

SIGN UP TO BE A MENTOR

Are you an ASHI Certified Inspector or ASHI Retired Member who is looking to help others learn the ASHI way?

We'd love to have you as an ASHI mentor! Visit the website (www.homeinspector.org/Resources/ASHI-Mentorship-Program/ASHI-Mentor-Form) to learn the requirements and additional benefits you receive by being an ASHI mentor.

For more information about the ASHI Mentorship Program, email mentor@ashi.org.

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BEST BUSINESS TIPS FOR HOME INSPECTORS

BY HOME INSPECTORS

The ASHI Reporter thanks the home inspectors who contributed to this article by sharing strategies that helped their businesses grow and thrive. They answered the following questions:

- **What successful business or marketing strategies do you apply to your home inspection business? Why do you think they work?**
- **What resources do you routinely use or seek out to keep your business successful?**

April is Home Inspection Month—what questions would you like to answer or read responses from your home inspection colleagues? Please send your ideas to stories@ashi.org.

DOUG GIALLUCA

Smart Move Home Inspection LLC, Canton, OH

The greatest business strategy I have found is that a happy client equals a multitude of referrals later on. Customer service continues long after a long way after you are paid and until your clients are satisfied with everything they have learned.

ROGER S. HERDT

Herd Home Inspections, Florence, SC

One flawed approach to business relationships that I have seen through 30+ years of association with other home inspectors is the adversarial approach to real estate agents.

I have taken the other approach and, without compromising standards, have chosen to work with real estate agents. I have found that if you are willing to advise an agent on concerns beyond just writing the report, they remember free consultations and recommendations. Consequently, I depend on word of mouth from previous clients and real estate agents (they include me in the three names they provide to clients under South Carolina standards), and I haven't spent a dime on advertising in 10 years beyond the cost of my website.

There are some agents who think my reports are too tough. Some say my phone number is "1 800 DED DEA," and they recommend other inspectors...and that is okay with me. My calendar stays full.

KYLE S HOTCHKISS

True North Home Inspection, Biwabik, MN

My #1 business tip for home inspectors is communication.

As we know, a majority of our future clients are call-shopping. It is important to establish an open line of communication rather quickly before the customer finds some other company to inspect their future home. As busy as you may be, answer the phone or return the call within minutes or the job could be lost. From then on, let your customer know that you are easy to get a hold of and that you will promptly return their calls or emails. This is huge!

Another reason communication is so important is that it helps to establish from the onset that you are approachable, accountable and trustworthy. Our customers have many, many things happening within the real estate transaction, let alone the trappings of life. When we communicate with our clients and let them know that we have the inspection process handled for them, and that we are accessible and responsive, this will instill client confidence. We essentially take that portion of the whole process off their list.

Make sure that the communication continues right on through the physical inspection, as well as once the report has been issued. I even send a follow-up message to check in with my client a couple days after they have opened their inspection report. Here, I ask the client what we can do to improve our service and ask them to give us a review (good or bad) on Google or Yelp if they are so inclined.

I believe the same holds true when working with real estate agents—communication is important. I always send a 24-hour inspection confirmation to the client, their agent as well as the listing agent, just so everybody knows “what’s happening tomorrow.”

The added benefit of using email to communicate is that disputes can be avoided with a good paper trail.



REESE PERKINS

Perkins Home Services, LLC, Bangor, ME

I think, far too often, home inspectors and other business professionals focus on marketing while not focusing on doing the job right. It is surprising to me when I see a fellow inspector who is always on Facebook,

Twitter or LinkedIn attending real estate agent functions and more, but does a poor job out in the field. All the marketing in the world will not make up for a job done poorly. Do a good job first and then, surprisingly, there is little marketing needed because then your reputation for good work should, on its own, bring clients to you.

Second, the biggest detractor to our reputation is a client who misunderstands what we do and so complains about us afterward. Make sure to set expectations up front as to what we can do for a client and what we are not able to do. Then, if those complaints come, remind the client of what the expectations are, and you will almost always defuse the situation and reduce or eliminate the complaints.



TODD THUSS

Integra Inspection Services, LLC, Madison, AL

When I first entered the business, I followed the standard practice of going out of my way to meet and talk to agents, with a concentration and focus on

them, their business and so on. I also would hand out inexpensive gifts, mail thank-you cards and sponsor various real estate events. I found that none of these things really worked.

Part of this is that my personality type doesn't really click with the typical extroverted agent. Some of the presentations and sponsorships led to a few new referrals, but I discovered quickly that the high-producing and experienced agents weren't present at these events and were instead out in the field busting it. I also learned quickly that agents are experienced salespeople and can smell a sales pitch (“refer me!”) a mile away.

My sole business strategy now is a focus on doing excellent work and letting my report speak for itself. I attempt to be cordial and friendly, but I don't go out of my way to talk to agents unless I am spoken to. No more handing out food out or pretending to be interested in the agent's kid's sports. I simply exceed expectations and attempt to never trouble an agent with questions, tasks or problems whenever possible.

In other words, I simply attempt to be as easy and professional to work with as possible. This tactic has yielded far more new agent referrals than anything I've done in the past. Excellent work speaks for itself and word gets around.

A strong focus on professionalism helps. I answer agents' texts immediately, am always on time (or a little early), and also responsive to questions and inquiries.

One last tip would be developing empathy. When dealing with clients (and agents), it helps to place yourself in their position and attempt to understand what they need and how they are feeling at any given moment. I've found that such an empathetic approach has transformed my narrative comments as well as my personal interactions.

MARY ANNE TONINI

Home Inspection of Kentuckiana, New Albany, IN

I don't have a great marketing plan and I don't have any tricks, but I can tell you that my business has thrived on integrity.

Integrity is just something that has disappeared from the market for many professions. Fake reviews, false claims of experience, and marketing companies you pay to plaster your company name across the internet have taken the energy from companies. I see people raise their effects of customer service, but I personally see those efforts added so that there is someone in place to deal with “upset customers,” for the complaints or ways to draw in more business.

How about just plain old integrity, defined as aligning your conduct with what you know to be excellent. A person of integrity displays a principled dedication to values and beliefs, and seeks to reflect ethical standards and do the right thing regardless of the circumstances.

Most of the ASHI inspectors I know are teachers at heart. They are there to service their clients and help them understand what they are buying. They help them put into perspective the risk, expected expenses and the maintenance that will be needed. These ASHI inspectors also have been in the business for a long time and are confident enough to create reports that give clear direction rather than just directing the purchaser to bring in another professional to evaluate.

I believe the foundation of my success has been the integrity with which I run my business and the care I take with each client. I stand behind what I say and I say what I mean. I care what the client thinks and engage in conversation, as I complete the inspection, to gauge how much they are understanding. Remembering what it feels like to be “new” at owning a house and remembering what owning your first house meant to you are also very helpful things.

MARKETING TIPS FOR HOME INSPECTORS

YOUR INSPECTION BUSINESS

IN THE INTERNET FOREST

By Inspect.com



Inspect.com is an online marketplace for the public to connect with qualified inspectors across the country. Get discovered and share your expertise. Add your listing to Inspect.com.

You can set off into the forest just like Red Riding Hood with your basket of goodies—your inspection business. Along the path, you find the creatures of the internet woods—wolves, trolls, wizards, fairies and goblins—all of whom want to show you the right path and join you on your journey.

Just like a friendly wolf, they'll offer you the best way to crush it online, beat your competition and have juicy sounding shortcuts that sound like the perfect treat. You may have sampled some of the treats and ended up in frustration. You had to hack their concept to fit your inspection business. Maybe the suggestions were for e-commerce or construction and you had to do a workaround for your inspection business. You think it's working, but you're not sure.

You may have given up on it all and settled for your Facebook page and a Yelp listing. And yet, you still might feel that clients aren't finding you.

TEAMWORK COVERS THE MULTI-FACETED WORK OF BUILDING A DIGITAL PROFILE FOR HOME INSPECTORS.

THE MOVING PARTS

When you are busy with your inspection business, it's confusing to know which information is reliable or what works for you. You may wonder if it's worth the time and effort to be online.

You need a website that converts visitors into clients. You want exposure on the web. You think videos will help clients understand your business. You want to write a blog to keep clients up to date. You're not sure if you should spend time on social media and, if you do, which social media channels you should use. You know you should pay attention to metrics, but you don't know how.

You can't do it all. A team to support your efforts leaves you free to do what you do best: perform outstanding home inspections.

THE TEAM APPROACH

Inspect.com was founded on a dream to offer the best home inspectors nationwide to clients who need their services. We realized that those inspectors were busy inspecting properties and might need help finding a path through the online forest.

Inspect.com founder Jeff Bond has been a home inspector for more than 30 years at Inspect.net. His dream was to provide a place that supported home inspectors and gave clients access to the best in the field. As he built Inspect.com, he knew that having a team was the best way to serve the home inspection community. With solid leadership, communication and access to good resources, he built a team to contribute to productive collaboration.



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The opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors only and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of ASHI. The information contained in the article is general and readers should always independently verify for accuracy, completeness and reliability.

Every team member is one of the very best at what they do, and understands and serves the inspection community—that's why they are on the team. Like Jeff, you will want to gather a team with diverse specialties and talents to make your business shine.

Inspect.com teamed with international online marketing and SEO leader Ammon Johns to produce a series of Online Marketing videos just for inspectors. The 10-part series is your introduction to your online presence. You'll find what is important to do and also what you can ignore.

While organic reach with online marketing builds over time, strategic advertising can bring you almost instant results. One of the first actions Jeff took to bring people to Inspect.com was to partner with Imran Sq, owner of Minds Nebula Ltd., to create targeted Google advertising campaigns. Advertising targeting is a skill that makes every dollar you spend create profitable returns.

Inspect.com teamed with Zara Altair to create website content that would resonate with inspectors and their clients. She works on special projects like our Inspect.Pro inspection report writing software and creating articles for inspectors, real estate professionals, and homebuyers and sellers.

Mia Voss of TMC Services is a punch list inspection specialist. She uses her vibrant personality as a brand ambassador at Mia On The Go, offering the perfect combination of talents to be the public face for Inspect.com on video presentations and social media.

Once Inspect.com was established, it was time to replicate services for inspectors who join. Jeff was in contact with Dennis Yu of Blitzmetrics, providing the opportunity to immediately scale both quality and services provided. Dennis brings a brigade of talented individuals who are ready to help inspectors with their local digital marketing.

TEAMWORK PAYS THE BILLS

Team-building takes time. You'll need a combination of skills and resources to identify the right people who are enthusiastic and supportive, and who will work to make you a star. It took five years and lots of work to bring the Inspect.com team together. Be prepared. Know your priorities so you bring on the right people in sequence.

Wherever you are in your online presence, think about building a strong, supportive team to address the actions you don't know how to take and help build your online presence. If you are a self-actualizer, have at it and enjoy the journey.

In the end, doing it on your own yields the most knowledge. If you don't have the time to put it all together for your online presence, Inspect.com can help you navigate the online forest.



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NPI Atlanta

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Inspector/GM,
Power Eye, LLC



“ Taken our business to a whole new level.”



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HOME INSPECTORS' FORUM

THERMAL IMAGING: PART 1



Many home inspectors incorporate thermal imaging into their home inspections—so many, in fact, that we have to break this article into two parts due to the volume of excellent responses from ASHI members. We asked ASHI members to share their perspectives on thermal imaging and infrared cameras and, on the pages that follow, you'll read what some of them said to answer the questions:

- Do you have a thermal imaging / infrared camera and, if so, do you use it? Why or why not?
- If you do, offer tips or strategies for best practices and share what was important to you when selecting a camera for purchase.
- Also, what other principles should home inspectors consider if they are thinking about adding thermal imaging to their inspection toolkit?

**PAUL CUMMINS**

No Surprises Home Inspection,
Alexandria, VA

I was a science teacher, so I love new gadgets that can extend our senses. I stocked up on a moisture meter, thermometer, wall radar device and endoscope when I started my business. I soon found out that the moisture meter just tested surface humidity and that my finger was a much better water sensor; that measuring the temperature differences at a register and return did not necessarily give me a good read on the AC performance; that the wall radar device is a fancy stud finder; and that my endoscope was useless due to its poor resolution.

I took an imaging course from that other professional association and their temperature losses were at very obvious places: around openings, light cans in the ceiling and attic hatch. Their energy efficiency training unit actually contradicted itself. At the end of the evaluation, the instructor doing the air loss tests said the house was bleeding 20%, so there was 20% room for improvement. In the next segment, the expert said if you have a 30% loss, that is OK. As an experienced mold inspector, I prefer to lose some energy efficiency in the service of better airflow. Indeed, in all the new houses where they have sealed every opening, they're adding fresh air vents in the basement and that nice Broan fan in the master bath, which should be run constantly.

So, in regard to thermal imaging, I would be happy to be convinced otherwise, but it seems unnecessary and perhaps a liability if you misinterpret the images. The thermal cameras detect temperature differences. If they are used to detect moisture, they may be right, they may be wrong. A wall could be cold for many reasons. I prefer to look for obvious evidence of moisture like efflorescence, wet drywall, downspouts discharging to the foundation, overflowing gutters and leak rings on ceilings. Furthermore, what if you fail to get a picture of a problem wall?

The digital thermometer is useful for detecting hot circuits. And, without a doubt, the best return on energy efficiency is making sure there is adequate insulation in the attic and foam board coverings over the hatch or stairs.

The opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors only and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of ASHI. The information contained in the article is general and readers should always independently verify for accuracy, completeness and reliability.

THE DIGITAL THERMOMETER IS USEFUL FOR DETECTING HOT CIRCUITS. AND, WITHOUT A DOUBT, THE BEST RETURN ON ENERGY EFFICIENCY IS MAKING SURE THERE IS ADEQUATE INSULATION IN THE ATTIC AND FOAM BOARD COVERINGS OVER THE HATCH OR STAIRS. —Paul Cummins

**JIM EDWARDS**

Preferred Home Inspection Service, LLC,
Murfreesboro, TN

When I first started out, I didn't have a thermal imaging camera. On the advice of my ASHI instructors, I started with the basic tools to start my home inspection company. As the business increased, I invested more into it. I've been using an infrared camera for about two years now and I use my camera at most inspections. For the most part, I'll scan the ceiling around bathrooms and when inspecting the electrical panels.

I recommend buying the best camera you can afford. I asked a few other local inspectors and decided to go with a FLIR E8. I rarely buy the lowest priced in any category; I'm a middle-of-the-road kind of guy. I couldn't pull out a little phone app-type camera and expect to look like a professional.

I highly recommend the training class from Monroe. As with any tool, learn to use it properly. You don't want to look confused in front of your client and their agent.

Continued on Page 34

WITH MORE EQUIPMENT, YOU WILL HAVE MORE OPTIONS AND YOU WILL MAKE YOUR CLIENTS COMFORTABLE THAT THEIR INSPECTOR IS WELL-EQUIPPED TO DO THE JOB —Doug Gialluca

DOUG GIALLUCA

Smart Move Home Inspection LLC, [CITY/STATE]

Having a thermal imaging camera is an absolute must for my business since the camera can be a cross-check for visual concerns or even a cross-check for other instruments. The most inexpensive FLIR camera is an asset and the tool that should be with you on all inspections. Thermal imaging in some cases will even help with detecting insects. With more equipment, you will have more options and you will make your clients comfortable that their inspector is well equipped to do the job.

ROGER S. HERDT

Herd Home Inspections,
Florence, South Carolina

I have chosen not to carry a thermal camera in my inspector toolbox. The answer is simple: litigation.

I have been called to provide expert witness testimony where an unqualified inspector has used thermal imaging to illustrate a problem in the electrical system, but did not use the camera to disclose a leak inside an adjacent wall (staining on ceiling/wall joint). This inspector is no longer in business because the claimant's attorney asked why he didn't evaluate the entire structure since he had the technology to do so.

Unfortunately, our litigious society creates this type of headache. Even an inspector who has been through the full training necessary to be a qualified user of thermal imaging doesn't have time, under normal inspection circumstances, to evaluate all aspects of a structure.

In my experience, operating under the visible and accessible standard of practice has been the best course of action. I would rather not have to explain why I exceeded the standard in one spot and didn't exceed it in all.

Continued on Page 42

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REPORTER

DO YOU HAVE AN IDEA FOR AN ARTICLE IN THE ASHI REPORTER?

The *Reporter* is always looking for new articles on topics such as technical reviews, marketing ideas and helpful business practices for home inspectors. Personal or business-related stories that share a new spin on the home inspection world are also welcome.

Send your article ideas or submissions to
stories@ashi.org.

THANK YOU!



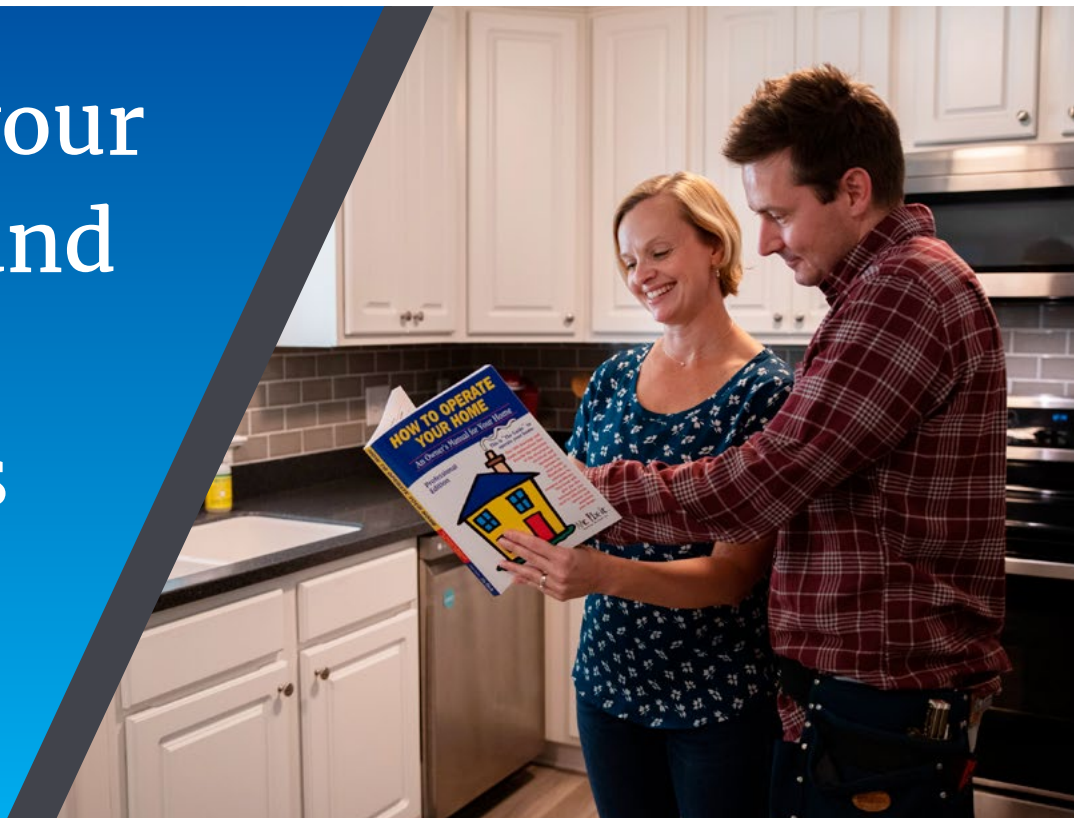
How to Operate Your Home

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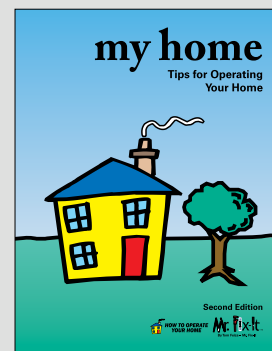
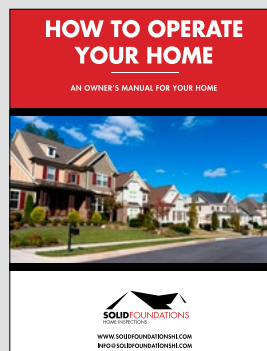
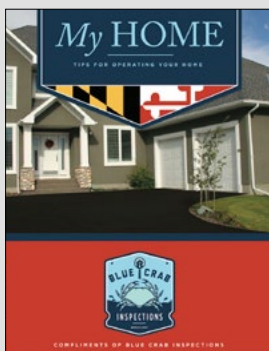
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CHAPTER EVENTS

NNEC-ASHI CHAPTER EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR

JOIN US! WEDNESDAY APRIL 21, 2021

8:30 am Registration and Morning Refreshments

9 am to 4 pm Educational Seminar

Lunch to be held at Puritan Conference Room

245 Hooksett RD, Manchester, NH

NNEC Members FREE | Non-member - \$150

Educational Credits: MA-6, NH-6 and ASHI-7

Reservations are required for this event by

Wednesday, April 14, 2021

It helps our planning if we know you are coming!

Email: nneconash2016@gmail.com or call Karen at 781-789-7040

We will continue to follow the rules established in 2020 by the State of New Hampshire to ensure social-distancing guidelines.

We will need to know your luncheon preference: Beef, Chicken or Lamb

NNEC Annual Members will be offered this seminar ONLINE.

PRESENTED BY

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is the global leader in air conditioning, with HVAC&R, fluorochemical and filtration products powered by unlimited human potential.

Why Heat Pumps? An explanation of how heat pumps work. What Efficiency ratings are used.

How C.O.P. (Coefficient of Performance) is calculated and how it explains the efficiency differences in the various types of heating systems.

Daikin product overview to show the various types of ductless and "ducted" ductless systems.

Proper ductless application. They will show how to properly size ductless heat pumps.

Explanation of correct placement of equipment.

Proper installation. Provide a general overview of proper installation of ductless systems.

Q&A Open discussion about ductless and any other forms of HVAC equipment.

STEVE SMITH, Area Sales Manager, Boston Regional Office, Daikin North America LLC

Steve has spent more than 33 years in the HVAC industry. He began his career as an HVAC service technician and during the next 10 years was able to add proficiency in ductwork design, fabrication and installation, as well as refrigerant piping design and installation. He was then able to transition into a management role and during the next 17 years, has held the role of service manager, project manager, HVAC designer and estimator, general manager and vice president. Six years ago, he began working directly for Daikin as a commercial sales engineer and after three years was promoted to area sales manager.

TOM CAMPBELL, Account Manager, Boston Regional Office, Daikin North America LLC

Tom has spent more than 35 years in the HVAC industry. He graduated high school in 1984 from the HVAC program at Greater Lowell Technical High School. He worked as a HVAC installer/service tech for 16 years before taking a technical rep position for a local HVAC distributor. While working in the industry, he completed his Associates of Applied Science Degree with a concentration in HVAC from New Hampshire Technical College. He now works for Daikin North America supporting Distributors and contractors in VRF and ductless applications throughout New England.

DAN SMITH, Account Manager, Boston Regional Office, Daikin North America LLC

Dan is going into his 25th year in the HVAC industry. More than 8 years after graduating from high school, he gained licenses for NH gas fitter, NH oil burner, MA refrigeration, MA gas fitter and ME Gas Fitter. He has worked for FW Wegg as an HVAC designer and commercial estimator specializing in VRV systems. After five years he moved to Daikin as an account manager working with engineer reps.

CURRENT ASHI MEMBERSHIP

ASHI Certified Inspectors:
3,233

Inspectors:
254

Associates:
2,231

Retired Members:
105

Total: 5,823 Members as of
3/01/2021

FORTY-FIVE YEARS

John Ghent
James Nemastil

THIRTY-FIVE YEARS

Alan Carson
Jay A. Tauber

THIRTY YEARS

Paul J. Bugge
Mark Felion

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

Mathew Adams
Jim Hemsell
Michael Herforth
William D. Hirsch
Robert Jennings
David Marshall
Mark Mustola
Randy Payne
Robert A. Peterson
David P. Rushton
Daniel Schuerman
Warren W. Schultz
Skys Sykes
Frank Turner
John Vaughn

TWENTY YEARS

Henry Blau
Dave Darpinian
Paul J. Ferguson
Dan Gartrell
Kevin A. Martelon
Mark Soroka
Don Stafford
Brad Strange

FIFTEEN YEARS

Joseph Dunlap
Timothy Hemm
Kami S. Karimloo
Greg Kolar
Edward S. Lampl
Robert J. Lawrence
Kristian Meyers
Barry Sigler
Douglas W. Smith
William H. Vicaire
James M. Willis

TEN YEARS

Brett Allendorf
Daniel Leyva
Walter Lindberg
Wayne Peterson
Greg Petruska
Jeff Thorsen
Joseph P. Trimble

FIVE YEARS

John W. Bentley
Christopher J. Daggy
Aron Gebhardt
Michael Haase
Ryan Horton
Aaron Houlne
Zac Knoblauch
Vance Morimoto
Mark Pennington
Jason Ratliff
Keith Stewart
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"Closet niche," built this way, complete with missing steps and guard rail.



Welmoed Sisson
Inspections by Bob
Franklin, MD



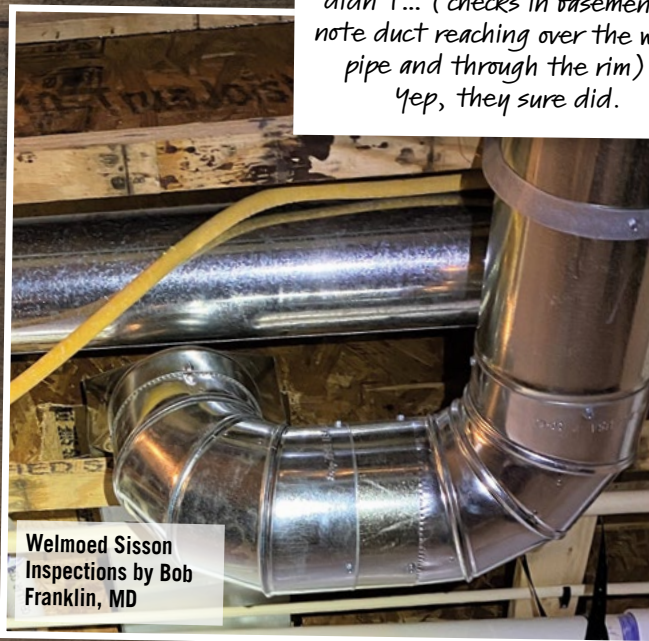
Welmoed Sisson
Inspections by Bob
Franklin, MD

A register in the garage steps?
They couldn't have... they didn't... (checks in basement – note duct reaching over the white pipe and through the rim)...
Yep, they sure did.

There. Fixed it.



Michael Mallott
Checkmark Home Inspections, LLC
Leesburg, VA



Welmoed Sisson
Inspections by Bob
Franklin, MD

Here in Santa Cruz, we have monster stumps.



Chris McDougall
Apex Home Inspection
Santa Cruz, CA



Chris McDougall
Apex Home Inspection
Santa Cruz, CA

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*Who needs a chimney?
Vent a hot water tank,
through a soil stack pipe.
At least it's cast iron and
has a condensation drain!*

Tony Tilenni
Superior Home Inspections Ltd.
Tallmadge, OH



*Do they make a dead
front in chrome?*

Todd Thuss
Integra Inspection Services LLC
Huntsville, AL

*The Coopers must have
built this house!*



Mark Pepin
Advantage Home Inspections Inc.
Longmont, CO

*DIY:
Asbestos Removal / Storage*



James Brock
Boston Home Inspectors
South Boston, MA

*Recycling at its finest—
it took a lot of coffee to
achieve this!*



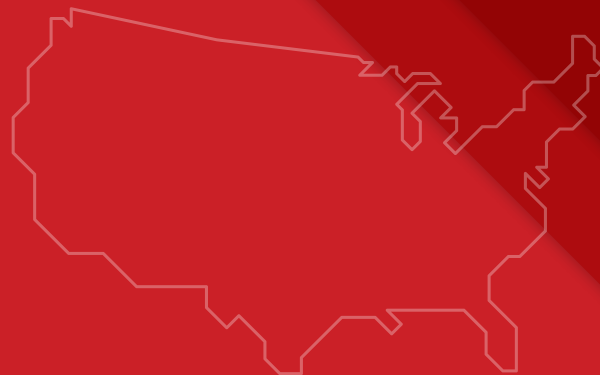
Ryan Walker
Professional Home Inspection Services
Binghamton, NY

*Why do we need clearance?
Just get some napkins, please.*



Barry Martindale
Martindale Home Inspections LLC
Harrison, AR

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Make it easy for potential customers to find you by registering in our online **Inspector Database**.

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Examination®

For these resources and more, visit
NationalHomeInspectorExam.org.

**MICHAEL HESTERBERG**

Building Inspections LLC,
Kentucky and Ohio

We have used thermal cameras in our practice for many years. We use the cameras in two ways:

1. All my inspectors use a FLIR C3 camera that they carry with them. This is strictly to give additional information or show us areas that would not normally be visible. It is a low-resolution infrared (IR) camera, 80x60, 4800 pixels, but with a sufficient temperature Delta between the interior and exterior, and it provides great information. This camera has found issues that were not visible, but would have manifested later. Yes, this is a visual inspection and, in a perfect world, would avail us from liability; however, we all know "don't miss it." We just do not want the call back.
2. My company also offers a separate add-on that we call a Thermal Assessment. In this case, we use a FLIR T540 with a resolution of 464x348, 161,472 pixels. We scan the interior surfaces of the home and provide a report for our clients.

Since we started using IR cameras, when we inspect the bathrooms, we now run hot water into the fixtures while testing the bathrooms. We do this so that when we finish running the water, usually on the second floors, we can briefly scan the ceilings below for any anomalies. It has been amazing how many leaks we have found that were not visible, but just drips from traps that area buried up in the ceiling.

This additional service is becoming popular and has added to our bottom line. Also, it has reduced our liability by providing early warning information or just additional information to issues found in the home during the home inspection.

If you are charging for this kind of inspection, I recommend obtaining a high-resolution camera (for example, no less than a FLIR E85 with a 384x288, 110,592 resolution). Then, when you enter the home, force the Temperature Delta by either turning up or down the thermostat, depending on the time of year, about an hour prior to camera use. This helps accentuate any issues and lets them stand out.

In addition, I have crafted a specific comment, placed in my report, depending on whether I am charging and doing a full assessment or if I am just using the C3.

For example, if I am not doing a full assessment, but using my C3, I use this comment:

Any use of a thermographic infrared camera during this inspection is for screening purposes only. This is not intended to indicate that a full thermographic assessment was conducted on this home. The information is provided only for the purposes of screening areas of the home and presenting thermographic anomalies that may indicate an issue requiring possible repair. In order to do a full thermographic inspection, the home should be prepared, e.g., with the temperature being set so there is a proper difference between the interior or exterior. If a full thermographic assessment is desired, then an additional

fee and equipment with higher resolutions will be used and there will be requests to set the thermostat at proper settings. THIS WAS NOT A FULL THERMOGRAPHIC ASSESSMENT, ONLY AN INFORMATIONAL SCREENING OF SELECTED AREAS OF THE HOME.

If I do an assessment for which we charge the client, I use this comment:

A thermographic assessment was conducted on the interior of this home. The pictures and comments attached to this report reflect the opinions of the thermographer who took the infrared images. Infrared is a technology that can detect radiated heat in the form of infrared light and present this in a photographic manner. The color pallet used in the radiometric pictures is to present to the viewer the best contrast that will show the thermal anomalies present at the time of the inspection. Infrared requires specialized interpretation that can be made by a qualified thermographer. Any anomalies should have further assessment to confirm the source of the anomalies and to determine the repairs that may be needed.

We charge depending on the square foot in our area and it can range from \$150 for smaller homes to \$250 for larger homes.

Some items that have been found using IR have included water leaks, missing waste pipes buried behind drywall where there is no clean-out, the presence of animals, severe air leakage, missing or nonperforming insulation in both ceilings and walls, verifying under the floor or in the ceiling heating elements, water inside block walls and behind EIFS, wet flooring and carpet, and leaking shower doors.

Finally, my advice is that if you are going to use this type of technology, be a prudent inspector and obtain the training appropriate for your service. At a minimum, I would take an introductory certification course. I personally took Monroe Infrared's CRT (Certified Residential Thermography). This will give you the basic understanding about IR and information about the different camera options.

If you plan on charging for this inspection, I recommend obtaining a more advanced training course such as a Level I or Level II Thermographer designation. Both are offered through companies such as ITC, Infrared Training Center and SNELL. My feeling is, if you are going to charge for the service, you should offer the best resolution and have the best certification commensurate with your level of service.

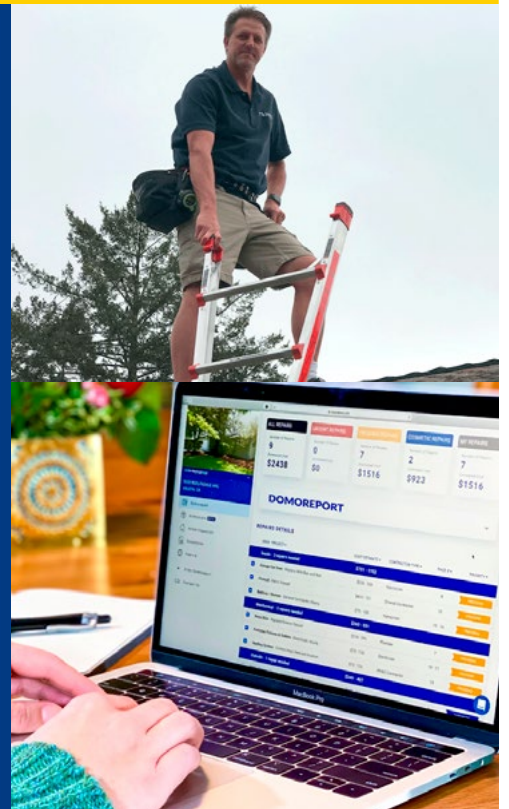
Thermography is here to stay and I feel that the younger, more tech-savvy clients will start to demand this in the years to come. We have found some dramatic issues using the IR camera and it's a real "wow" factor during the inspection, not to mention the "I would not have found that without an IR camera" factor.

**WATCH FOR MORE RESPONSES ON THIS TOPIC IN
THE MAY ISSUE OF THE ASHI REPORTER.**

50% of clients want repair estimates within 24-hours after a home inspection.

A Majordomo survey of **250 homeowners**, who ordered a home inspection, revealed the following:

- 52%** Want estimates for **every defect** within their home inspection.
- 59%** Prefer negotiating with average cost ranges.
- 74%** Desire repair details **broken down by labor and material costs**.
- 70%** Think it's critical to **know the severity** and priority of defects.
- 60%** Want to **request repairs and credits** during negotiations quickly.
- 69%** Are willing to **pay \$99 for repair estimates** within 24-hours.



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