



**Ric Thompson
President**

December 2020 Vol. 24, Issue 12 www.wahigroup.com



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Howdy Pilgrims!

I hope this finds you still stuffed from Thanksgiving and ready to head into the rest of the holiday season! This is the time of year to be thankful for all the great things in our lives. This letter will prove to be no different, maybe just not as deep as you may get with your families!

We have just come off one of our two biggest weekends as an association - our fall Education House and Training Seminar. 2020 has been a year full of hurdles and our training event was no exception! From the uncertainty of how many members would attend to losing several education houses to a midnight hour cancellation (10:30 pm Thursday night!) of an Education House speaker. This year's fall event was truly a test of the strength of WAHI!

Since becoming President, I have been pushing for chapters to take more of a lead role in the seminar planning when it is held in their area. Well, I have to say, Central Chapter, you have certainly set the bar high! A huge shout out to the chapter for making the weekend such a great success! You came together and filled in wherever needed without hesitation. This could not have been pulled off without the Central Chapter coming together and working as a team!

Another shower of praise goes to Education House Chair and Central Chapter President Mike Carson! The final week was full of ups and downs for the Education House. Through it all, Mike kept his wits about him and led us through it all - even filling in as a speaker with our last-minute change to our Rotation Training speaker line up.

Julie cannot go unmentioned! I suspect she felt like a switchboard operator as she hopped from phone call to phone call during the week leading up to the event! COVID certainly added to the volume of calls and last minute changes. She is the glue that keeps us together as we run through tough times!

Last but not least, a huge "Thank you" to our membership as a whole. I have never been more proud to serve as your President than I was during the seminar! Our in-person attendance was well beyond my highest expectation for this event and the number of online registrants showed WAHI that it is worthwhile to move forward in offering our training programs online. The volunteers that stepped up to help showed the strength that we have as an association when we stick together for a common goal. PROUD is the only word that comes close to expressing my gratitude to everyone that made the weekend a tremendous success!

Take care all and be sure to reach out at any time with anything I may be able to help with - it's what I am here for!

Be safe out there,
Ric Thompson, President

The Coronavirus recommendations continue to advise against gathering in large groups but several chapters are able to resume in-person meetings. See below for chapter specifics.



NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, December 16
Social at 6:00 pm & Meeting/Dinner/Education at 6:30 pm
[Sconni's Alehouse & Eatery, 1239 Schofield Ave, Schofield, WI 54467](#)
Education: To be determined

For speaker information, or to provide a suggestion/lead, please contact the Chapter Education Chair, Tyler Groshek at 715.212.7341



NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, January 6
Check-in by 5:15 pm. Meeting/Dinner/Education to follow.
In-person at [Hangar 54 Grill \(in CV airport\), 3800 Starr Ave, Eau Claire, WI 54703](#)
Education: To be determined

For speaker information, or to provide a suggestion/lead, please contact Chapter Education Chair, David Welch at 715.382.6058



NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, December 15 with Special Holiday Meal
Social at 5:30 pm & Roundtable/Meeting/Dinner/Education at 6:00 pm
[Waverly Beach, N8870 Fire Lane 2, Menasha, WI 54952](#)
Education: Joe Nagan, Bath Fan Solutions, LLC.
Joe will speak on bath fan ventilation.

For speaker information, or to provide a suggestion/lead, please contact Chapter Education Chair, Scott Hansen at 920.716.3025



NEXT MEETING: The chapter will not meet in December.
Watch your email for the next Madison Chapter meeting.

Calling all Madison members! We need your help to find speakers for our future meetings - we accept a wide range of topics.
Please contact Chapter Education Chair, Ron Miller at 608.235.9836



NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, December 8
Check-in at 6:00 pm, Dinner at 6:30 pm
[The Pallas Restaurant, 1657 S 108th St, Milwaukee](#)
Education: Affiliate Sponsored Holiday Party
No speaker or CE credits.

For speaker information, or to provide a suggestion/lead, please contact Chapter Education Chair, Ryan Eigenfeld at 414.795.9018

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

This is a brief recap of activity in the past month and a preview of what lay ahead. If anyone would ever like further information on something mentioned in this piece, just let me know - julie@wahigroup.com or 414.299.9766.

November 2020

- **Board Meeting:** WAHI always invites and encourages the general membership to attend the WAHI State Board Meetings. Unfortunately, due to COVID, for the November 13th meeting we did limit attendance to the Board only. Look for the minutes on the website under the Members Only tab in mid-December.
- **2020 Fall Education House and Training Seminar:** Our fall training event November 13th and 14th in Stevens Point was a tremendous success...in very uncertain times! Our in-person trainings were held responsibly and professionally - keeping everyone's safety in mind. Our 1st go-around with offering our seminar online was a success as well...THANK YOU Cassidy Kuchenbecker and Tracey Schultz of Environmental Initiatives for the use of your YETI microphone!

December 2020 and Beyond

- **State Election:** In spring 2021, WAHI will conduct the statewide election of State Board President. In addition, the chapters will elect their local chapter officers and their Chapter-Elected Member at Large to serve on the State Board of Directors. Think about increasing your involvement and giving back to the association!
- **Affiliate Membership Drive/Contest:** Please do not lose sight of this important effort. Without question, the Coronavirus has impacted our chapter meetings which are so instrumental in formulating relationships between our Home Inspector and Affiliate members. See details on page 5 in this newsletter. Due to the Coronavirus, we may extend the contest beyond the spring 2021 seminar.
- **Chapter Meetings:** Some of our chapters have made their meetings available for online viewing. Audio and visual effects may not have been perfect, but without question, the effort was there! WAHI is working to ensure ALL of our chapter meetings can be viewed by ALL of our members who are not comfortable gathering in groups. The goal is to simplify viewing, payment and issuing credits. Stay tuned!
- **Home Inspector License Renewal:** Wisconsin Home Inspectors renew their certification every 2 years - by December 15th in even-numbered years. The Department of Safety and Professional Services is extending the deadline for Dec 2018 to Dec 2020 continuing education requirement (not your renewal) if COVID impacted your ability to obtain all of your credits. See emails sent by me on Nov 30th and Dec 1st for details.
- **COVID-19 Safety Practices:** As cases rise in our state, please remember that regardless of your position on the virus, to be respectful of the position your buyer, the seller and/or agents involved may have. We are not out of the woods on this yet and we must continue to be mindful and respectful of those your job impacts.
- **2021 Spring Education House and Training Seminar:** In spite of COVID, our fall training event was a GREAT success! As a result, we are going to plan a very similar event for Spring. We will conduct the Education House in the very safe manner conducted this fall and will offer our Saturday seminar in-person and online. If you plan to physically attend, know that we will be in the Fox Valley area this time. Stay tuned as plans come together.



Julie Arnstein
Executive Director

You can **add your photo and/or a link to your website** to your WAHI profile!

Submit photo and/or company website info. to: julie@wahigroup.com

DEFECTS & LIABILITY IN WI

In November 2020, I made a presentation at the WAHI Fall 202 Training Seminar on the definition of defect in Wisconsin. Things are changing, and I'm not sure I make one point clear.

I was involved in WAHI leadership for about 20 years. Just like always, WAHI has worked hard to represent home inspectors in WI. The proposed change in the "defect" definition has been a long and difficult negotiation for WAHI. Personally, I think the new definition is just fine.

Let's look at the definition of a residential "defect" in Wisconsin over time:

1991:

When I started inspecting homes there were no specific Standards for home inspection in WI so most of us relied on the ASHI Standards of Practice.

1997 - Inspectors in WI became Licensed:

A home inspector must describe the condition of those items, including the condition of any items that, if not repaired, will have "significant adverse effect" on the life expectancy of the item. The report must also list any "material adverse facts" (MAF) that the inspector has knowledge of or has observed." (MAF = significantly reducing the functionality, structural integrity or posing a health or safety risk.) The word "defect" was not used. No summary page was required.

2018:

"Defect" is defined as a condition of any component of an improvement that would significantly impair the health or safety of future occupants of a property or that, if not repaired, removed, or replaced, would significantly shorten or adversely affect the expected normal life of the component of the improvement. No requirement to use the term Defect. No summary page was required.

2021 - IF BILL AB 655 IS SIGNED:

"Defect" means a condition of any component of an improvement that a home inspector determines, on the basis of the home inspector's judgement on the day of an inspection, would significantly impair the health or safety of occupants of a property or that, if not repaired, removed, or replaced would significantly shorten or adversely affect the expected normal life of the component of the improvement. Use of the term Defect IS REQUIRED if a condition aligns with the definition. A prescribed summary page is required.

My thoughts...

Frustration reigns when dealing with legislation. BUT, I think the new 2021 defect definition might be better for home inspectors. We have a real defect definition and eliminated the weird terms "significant adverse effect" and "material adverse fact". Perhaps the 2021 definition of a defect will limit the wide and varied interpretations of issues in a home.

Realtors wanted the defect definition to be the same in the Offer to Purchase, Real Estate Condition Report and Home Inspection Reports. That makes good sense but is really impossible because home inspectors do not address value and realtors do.

It would appear that Realtors also want the home inspector to decide what is a defect so they are not caught up in negotiations with upset buyers and sellers. Time will tell if that is a good idea.

MY FINDING WITH A REASONABLE DEGREE OF ENGINEERING CERTAINTY:

Your job is to inspect homes based on the Standards of Practice. If you do a thorough inspection and follow the standards, you are golden. Let's see how this works out and kudos to WAHI for working through another tough legislative challenge. Not happy? Get involved!



Tom Feiza

Longtime WAHI Home
Inspector Member,
Recovering
Professional Engineer,
Legal Expert Witness

tom@htoyh.com

WHICH CHAPTER will be the WINNER of the WAHI AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP DRIVE?

As of the WAHI Spring 2020 Education House and Training Seminar WAHI will be conducting an **Affiliate Membership Drive**. The goal of this effort is to increase our pool of qualified contractors and product or service providers. To bring out everyone's *competitive spirit*, we have decided to make this a **contest!** The original contest end date of November 13th has been extended to the WAHI Spring 2021 seminar weekend due to COVID-19.

The rules are simple...

1. Each chapter will need to increase their affiliate membership by at least 5% of their total chapter membership as of March 5th. Based on counts at that time:
 - Central chapter will need at least 3 new affiliate members
 - Chippewa Valley chapter will need at least 3 new affiliate members
 - Fox Valley chapter will need at least 4 new affiliate members
 - Madison chapter will need at least 4 new affiliate members
 - Milwaukee chapter will need at least 8 new affiliate members
2. The new Affiliate member must be a paying member, not the recipient of a complimentary membership for speaking at a chapter meeting or seminar.
3. Direct interested parties to the Member Benefits page on the WAHI website to complete an online application - <https://wahigroup.com/Member-Benefits>

The chapter with the largest percentage of new affiliate members, over the minimum, will be deemed the winner!

The “prize” for the winning chapter is a complimentary chapter meeting - paid for out of the WAHI state coffers - AND more importantly, will be known as THE BEST CHAPTER IN WAHI, complete with bragging rights!

Watch for “progress reports” in the newsletter each month to see which chapter is in the lead. **Let the games begin and may the BEST chapter win!**



Ron Miller
Membership Chair

**Please contact me with
any questions:**

608-235-9836
or
ronmiller547@gmail.com

ARBITRATION COMMITTEE - SEEKING FEEDBACK!

In early 2019 the WAHI Arbitration Committee went through the process to find a new arbitration provider for our members. In April 2019, several WAHI members attended arbitrator training, and in May 2019, WAHI distributed a new Inspection Agreement to the membership naming Construction Dispute Resolution Services (CDRS) as the arbitration provider.

The primary reason for seeking out a new provider was to improve the arbitration process by only using arbitrators who are experienced in the construction and inspection industries and, in order to maintain impartiality, no connection to WAHI. After meeting with other industry professionals, the Committee decided to proceed with CDRS. The level of professionalism and training provided by CDRS were very important in the Committee's decision. The ability to have some oversight and obtain feedback was also important to the Committee to ensure that the program is serving the WAHI membership well.

The Committee has learned that there have been some home inspector cases brought before CDRS for resolution. For privacy reasons, the Committee is not given the personal or business names of the parties involved with the arbitration, only that the arbitration occurred, the complaint details and the decision made.

In order to maintain oversight of the program from the home inspectors perspective, the Committee is asking any inspector member involved in arbitration to provide feedback. The member may remain anonymous, if they desire, and can provide the amount of feedback they are comfortable with. Any information about the process will be very beneficial to WAHI and our members.



David Nason
Arbitration
Committee Chair
See David's contact
information below.

WAHI ARBITRATION PROGRAM

Not every homeowner/inspector interaction goes smoothly. Although all members are encouraged to make every effort to resolve disputes on their own, we know that is not always successful. **WAHI's Dispute Resolution Program** is here for you during those difficult times.

For information, please contact:

WAHI Arbitration Chair David Nason
262.443.8958 or bestinspectionsllc@gmail.com

WAHI was recently asked, and answered, a question presented by a Home Inspector member on the "cusp" of retirement.

Must a home inspector continue his/her WAHI membership for the 2 year liability period following retirement to take advantage of the arbitration system in the event of a claim? If so, at what level...Home Inspector member or Retired member?

While WAHI would appreciate your continued support and involvement as a Retired member, it is not required. Currently, if a Home Inspector member has not renewed their state license they are eligible to renew their membership in WAHI at the Retired status.

5 SCHEDULING MISTAKES TO AVOID

By Stephanie Jaynes, Marketing Director at InspectorPro Insurance

As a home inspector, your job starts long before you get to the inspection property. In fact, you can employ some of the best risk management techniques before your inspections. And yet, many home inspectors miss the opportunity to limit their liability prior to the inspection. Here are five scheduling mistakes to avoid so you can better protect your business.

Mistake 1: You didn't do your research

For many home inspectors, technology has simplified scheduling. By filling out a short form online, customer can book an inspection. However, most of the time, these forms don't give inspectors the full picture. Often these forms are missing key details about your clients or the property. They might also include bad information, like the wrong square footage. By not doing your research ahead of time, you risk walking into a different inspection than the one you'd planned to do. You also might undercharge for your services.



"Real estate agents don't have courses to teach them how to write listing. You need to find out what kind of a house it is, because if they say it's 2,000 square feet, and you find out that there's a 1,000 square foot basement, you price is going to be different," said Mark S. Londner from [LBI Home & Building Inspection](#).

Mistake 2: You didn't ask about pets

Pets pose a threat to unsuspecting inspectors. While many animals are friendly, pets can be aggressive due to irresponsible ownership, lack of education and training, and irresponsible breeding. To avoid being attacked by a homeowner's pet, ask that they remove any pets from the inspection site. Asking the property occupants to remove their animals, rather than simply securing them behind a fence or in another room, is the best way to keep both you and their pets safe. Even if a pet isn't dangerous, not having it onsite absolved you of any responsibility a homeowner may try to put upon you to look after their pet.

"In the last 30 days, two of my inspectors have been chased out of a house where a dog was initially contained in a cage or on a patio and the dog broke out," said Steven Rinehart of [Rinehart Real Estate Inspection Service](#).

Mistake 3: You didn't explain what is and isn't included in your inspection

Because most home buyers don't have the time or forethought to research the inspection process ahead of time, it's important for you to provide them with some basic information. By defining a home inspection for your client, you can make sure they understand your responsibility. In so doing, you decrease the likelihood of receiving a claim for something outside of your scope.

"Try to explain what the inspection will entail. Let them know what to expect and let your clients know to ask questions if they don't understand something," said Richard Stockton from [A Better Home Inspection Service, LLC](#).

READ MORE

See our ad on page 13!

SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS

A realtor contacted me regarding a WAHI inspector who turned off 2 video cameras in a home he was inspecting. The agent was calling for clarification as she was not certain what the rules are concerning recording devices. At the time of the inspection, the inspector explained he disengaged the 2 cameras in order to be compliant with the State Statutes - he explained that if his actions and any commentary were recorded and viewed by a party of than his client he would be in violation of State Statute 440.975 (7)(b):

(7) A home inspector may not do any of the following:

(b) Deliver a home inspection report to any person other than the client without the client's consent.

In the inspector's mind, by being filmed, he was "delivering" contents of his report to someone other than his client. I reached out to the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) to see how they would view this situation should someone file a complaint.

The Department would not view it as the inspector did. They said that video surveillance does not fall under sharing contents of the inspection and/or an inspection report. State Statute 440.975 (3) reads as follows:

After completing a home inspection, a home inspector shall submit a WRITTEN report to a client that does all of the following: etc. etc.(See 440.975 (3) (a-d) for remaining details)

In January 2020, Senate Bill 247 passed and a portion reads as follows:

995.60 (2) USE OF SURVEILLANCE DEVICES. Except as provided under sub. (3), an owner of real estate may use a surveillance device in or on the real estate to observe or record an individual who is present in or on the real estate for a private showing, open house, or other viewing of the real estate in connection with the owner's attempt to sell the real estate.

At the WAHI Spring 2019 Training Seminar, a speaker touched on surveillance cameras. He suggested attendees seek legal advice regarding privacy/disclosure rules in our state and/or add a disclaimer to their report. Something along the lines of:

We will make every reasonable effort to keep the results of the inspection confidential and will provide a report to you only (unless otherwise directed by you in writing). However, we have no control over home security surveillance systems that may be present and activated during the inspection, and it is possible that other parties might observe the inspection without our knowledge.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns – julie@wahigroup.com or 414.299.9766



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NEW MEMBERS

John Biersack (Milwaukee)

Home Inspector Member
Safe Home Inspectors, LLC.
262.206.8979
john@safehomeinspectors.com

Kenya Conley (Milwaukee)

Home Inspector Member
Onpoint Home Inspections
414.339.2876
onpointinspects@yahoo.com

Matthew Hankey (Fox Valley)

Home Inspector Member
ACME Home Inspection
207.649.7485
mfhfinishes@gmail.com

Kenneth Pizzurro (Madison)

Home Inspector Member
KTS Home Inspections
608.728.1708
ktshome@charter.net



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Affiliate member Attorney Lauren Triebenbach of Michael Best and Friedrich offers a risk-free, INITIAL consultation to WAHI members with legal concerns. WAHI members have the right to contact any attorney of their choice. Should a WAHI member decide to work with Lauren, the steps below, provided by Lauren, provide an explanation of her services.

1. If you receive an email, letter, text, or pleading from a customer, please contact my office.
2. I will ask that you provide me with the communication you received plus your inspection agreement and report. If there are other communications related to the claim, I will ask for those too.
3. After I review your documents, I will schedule a time to talk to you. Calls generally last 15-30 minutes. I will discuss with you your options, which could include working it out on your own, engaging me to respond on your behalf, or tendering the claim to your insurance company. The strategy I discuss will be based on your specific claim, whether litigation or arbitration has already been initiated, and whether your inspection agreement specifies arbitration as the method of dispute resolution.
4. If you don't hire me, you don't get a bill. If you do hire me, the time spent reviewing the case will be included in the final billing.
5. Knowledge is power. I want inspectors to know their options so they can the decision that's best for them and their business.

Visit the WAHI Affiliate Member page to contact Lauren: <https://wahigroup.com/Affiliate->

OFFICE DEPOT/MAX

Office Max and Office Depot merged some time ago. The Office Max discount program offered to WAHI members no longer exists – the savings became spotty as the merger was coming together and then finalized.

Office Depot has come to WAHI with a new, improved program.

See page 15 for information on their in-store program and page 16 for a program overview and the contact person to establish an online account.

From one of our Central Chapter members - "I needed 2,000 copies made – they quoted me \$160.00. AFTER I presented my WAHI card, the cost dropped to \$50.00! What an AWESOME savings!"

From one of our Madison Chapter members - "I recently had printing done at my local Office Depot/Max. Cost before WAHI discount = \$137.00. AFTER the WAHI discount was applied = \$36.00!!! WOW!"

UPDATE YOUR WAHI PROFILE IN 5 EASY STEPS

1. Go to www.wahigroup.com.
2. From the Home Page - upper right corner, **select "LOG IN."**
ENTER your email address on file with WAHI and password.
*If you have questions, contact Julie at julie@wahigroup.com.
3. Once logged in, the upper right corner shows your name,
"Change Password" and "Log Out." **CLICK on your name.**
4. You should now be on the "My Profile" page. **Select "EDIT PROFILE"** in the gray rectangular box.
5. After making your updates, **select "SAVE"** in the gray rectangular box at the bottom of the page.



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MEMBERS ONLY INTERACTIVE FORUM

It has come to our attention that many of you may be unaware the WAHI website hosts an interactive forum on the Members Only page. We encourage all members to check it out!

This is a very useful tool for communicating directly with fellow members and with our large membership, chances are very good that you will find someone who has a shared experience similar to yours or an answer to your question!

To access the forum section of the website you need to log-in to the website.

See page 11 for step-by-step instructions to log-in to your profile and make use of this additional "tool" and benefit WAHI offers to their members.

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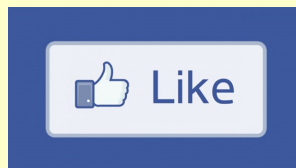
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Stay in touch with the WAHI Facebook page!

Our WAHI Facebook community provides the perfect opportunity to post minutes, make chapter announcements, post meeting changes, start a dialog/ask questions of other inspectors or just see what your fellow WAHI members have been up to.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Bob Turicik
920.892.7654
homeview@wi.rr.com



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See page 7 for an informative article provided by InspectorPro

WAHI WELCOME COMMITTEE

Our Welcome Committee is intended to do just that....*welcome* our new members into WAHI. As a new member, expect a call from a member from your chapter. If you are a "newer" member – maybe you joined a while ago but haven't yet attended a meeting - feel free to reach out to a committee member from your chapter and make arrangements to meet at the next or an upcoming meeting.

We want our new members to feel "welcome", feel a connection with the group... and the members listed below are the right people to do that!

CENTRAL

Mike Carson - 715.212.4051 or carsonhomeinspector@gmail.com

Kyle Zimmerman - 715.387.1815 or kyle@royaltinspections.com

CHIPPEWA VALLEY

Jon Hempel - 715.210.3217 or jhempel@newageinspection.com

Marc Steig - 715.797.1475 or inspectormarc3@gmail.com

FOX VALLEY

Dave Brading - 920.889.2120 or dave.brading@yahoo.com

Bob Turicik - 920.946.0433 or homereview@wi.rr.com

MADISON

Sean Martinsen - 608.206.1108 or sktailhook@yahoo.com

Rich Reinart - 608.535.9206 or thehomeinspectorllcwi@gmail.com

MILWAUKEE

Brian Derewicz - 262.343.1614 or briandthehomeinspector@gmail.com

Nick Hammetter - 414.412.2637 or humblehomeinspector@gmail.com

Andy Helgeson - 414.315.0266 or helge4674@outlook.com

Scott LeMarr - 262.424.5587 or scott@honesthomeinspections.com

Mike von Gunten - 262.945.2446 or mike@lahigroup.com

Thank you all for stepping up to serve on one of the **most important** committees within the WAHI organization!

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Phone: (855) 337-6811 ext. 12809
Email: paul.gomez1@officedepot.com

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