



**Ric Thompson
President**

January 2022

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www.wahigroup.com



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Esteemed Colleagues - 2022 brings a new year, a new attitude and a new point of focus for WAHI!

2020 and 2021 could be summed up in 2 words: Legislative Requirements. WAHI has spent the past two years focused on the Home Inspector Bill, providing our members with all of the information and tools needed to be a compliant, successful inspector based on the legislation. That horse has been dead, kicked, kicked some more, then kicked again after we stopped the truck with the dead horse on the way to the glue factory and kicked it one more time.

The focus for 2022 is increasing the awareness of not only WAHI but the home inspection industry as a whole. WAHI is investing resources in Pre-Licensing Education and in expanding our digital footprint (on the internet). Members have often asked why WAHI doesn't help market them more. Well, that isn't what WAHI is about. We are about educating home inspectors to be the best inspectors in Wisconsin. We are now moving in a new direction to have WAHI inspectors be the most well known in the state too!

With the new projects we have into motion, we will in fact be *indirectly* marketing our members. Our efforts will emphasize that WAHI focuses our education on items found in the State of Wisconsin. While our Pre-Licensing course educates students to pass the exams, our field training takes the knowledge obtained in the classroom and applies it to actually inspecting a home in Wisconsin. No one else can claim that at this time. If I am a Realtor, which I was, a WAHI inspector is exactly who I would want to best serve my client.

I continue to ask you to "spread the WAHI word"! When you do realty and/or lending office visits, of course, market yourself. But, please, take time to explain that if they don't use you, that they should be sure to use a WAHI inspector to ensure their client gets an inspection with the same quality you offer. Even though we are competitors, we are all on the same team... WAHI all the way!

Now for this month's Defect or No? As usual, I want to emphasize that this is how I handle this topic, not necessarily how everyone should be doing it. This month's topic: Arc Fault Circuit Interrupter (AFCI) Breakers. I recently asked my electrician how we should be noting AFCI breakers. He felt that we should not be noting the lack of an AFCI breaker in non-wet rooms. The problem is that they often don't work properly anyway - they tend to trip more often than they should. As discussed in the past, we are not supposed to take the age of the home into consideration when inspecting, but rather, inspect and report solely based on our knowledge of the systems in place. You may feel my decision to not report on AFCI breakers, and thus not identify them as a Defect, contradicts that statement but I feel that the knowledge I gain on AFCI breakers warrants how I address them.

Best wishes in 2022 and as always, be safe out there!
Ric Thompson, WAHI President

CHAPTER UPDATES



NEXT MEETING: **Wednesday January 19 - a Post-Holiday Party with CE Credits**
Social at 6:00 pm & Meeting/Dinner/Education at 6:30 pm
[Sconni's Alehouse & Eatery, 1239 Schofield Ave, Schofield, WI 54467](#)
Education: Jamie Wenzel, Assured Restoration/ServePro
Jamie will address mold removal and proper terminology.

For speaker information, or to provide a suggestion/lead, please contact the Chapter President, Mike Carson 715.212.4051



NEXT MEETING: **Wednesday, January 5**
Check-in by 5:15 pm. & Meeting/Dinner/Education to follow
Meeting may be recorded and available online also - see your email for further details.
[Hangar 54 Grill \(in CV airport\), 3800 Starr Ave, Eau Claire, WI 54703](#)
Education: To Be Announced

For speaker information, or to provide a suggestion/lead, please contact Chapter Education Chair, Dan Kegley at 715.497.3458



NEXT MEETING: **Tuesday, January 18**
Social at 5:30 pm & Roundtable/Meeting/Dinner/Education at 6:00 pm
[Waverly Beach, N8870 Fire Lane 2, Menasha, WI 54952](#)
Education: To Be Announced

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



NEXT MEETING: **Tuesday, January 11**
Check-in starts at 5:00 pm & Meeting/Dinner/Education at 5:30 pm
[Maple Tree Supper Club, 3010 US-51, McFarland, WI 53558](#)
Education: To Be Announced

For speaker information, or to provide a suggestion/lead, please contact Chapter Education Chair, Ron Miller at 608.235.9836



NEXT MEETING: **Tuesday, January 11**
Watch your email for December party schedule changes
[The Pallas Restaurant, 1657 S 108th St, Milwaukee](#)
Education: Affiliate Member Brian Thompson, Lifetime Radon Solutions
Brian will address radon testing and mitigation as January is Radon Awareness Month.

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

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.

December 2021

- **Changing of the Guard:** Fox Valley Home Inspector member Dave Pribyl is stepping down after serving WAHI for nearly his entire 20 years of membership. Dave joined WAHI in May of 2001 and started his first “tour of duty” as Fox Valley’s Vice President in March of 2002. He has been in a position of leadership on the state and/or chapter level ever since! In addition to serving as FV’s VP, he served as their President over 2 terms for a total of 13 years. As the chapter’s Elected Member at Large, he participated on the State Board of Directors from May of 2005 through November of this year. WAHI would not be where it is today without Dave - he was a very contributing member on the Board. Dave will be missed but I am happy to announce that Fox Valley Home Inspector member Jim Weyenberg will join the State Board to complete Dave’s term, which ends in the spring of 2023. Jim is also a long time member, joined in November of 2002, and has already displayed that he too will be a contributing member to the Board! I thank them both for their service to WAHI.
- **Pre-Licensing Training Ad Campaign:** A 3-prong ad campaign is underway to get the word out about our upcoming training starting January 17th in Fond du Lac! This effort is focused on the Fond du Lac area and is comprised of targeted email blasts, banner ads and Facebook posts with a new (slightly shorter) video!
- **Increasing WAHI Awareness:** It’s official... WAHI has signed on with a company to enhance our Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategies and increase our digital footprint. WAHI is striving to increase our awareness among realtors, consumers, nonmember home inspector/affiliates and those interested in entering the industry. As we move forward, we will share ways you can increase your online presence and at the same time you help to elevate WAHI’s. It takes a village to get the best results!
- **YOUR Profile on the WAHI Website:** All members are asked to update their profile -add a photo, add your logo, submit a Testimonial to be included as a Featured Member on the Home Page, detail your Services Provided, etc.



Julie Arnstein
Executive Director

January 2022 and Beyond...

- **WAHI 40 Hour Pre-Licensing Education Program - Monday, January 17 through Friday January 21, 2022:** We ask all members to “spread the word” to all family/friends interested in getting in the home inspection industry. Madison Chapter Home Inspector members Ron Miller and David Strandberg, both experienced educators, will be conducting the class. As reported previously, WAHI produced 2 marketing videos. One is intended to pique the interest of those considering a career in the home inspection industry - <https://youtu.be/K5Qly83IUwc>. The 2nd one, while similar in content, goes further into the many benefits of the membership in WAHI - <https://youtu.be/GTGKbdqYCCA>.
- **Spring Election:** In even-numbered years WAHI elects our 4 Board of Director Member at Large positions. This election includes all WAHI members with voting rights, it is in odd-numbered years that our local chapters vote/elect their Chapter-Elected Member at Large, to serve as a representative of their chapter. If you have interest in running or learning more about the position, please contact Nominations and Elections Chair Andy Helgeson at helge4674@outlook.com or 414.377.0266 or me at julie@wahigroup.com or 414.531.3199.
- **WAHI Spring 2022 Education House and Training Seminar:** Mark those calendars for Friday, March 25th and Saturday, March 26th - we will be at the Holiday Inn South in Eau Claire. Chippewa Valley Chapter - here we come!
- **COVID-19 Practices:** Please remember that regardless of your position on the current status of the virus, it’s important to continue to be mindful and respectful of those your job impacts.

You can **add your photo, logo, services provided, a testimonial and/or a link to your website** to your WAHI profile!

See page 10 in this newsletter for step by step instructions OR submit additions to me at: julie@wahigroup.com

ARBITRATION COMMITTEE UPDATE

This year's fall seminar ended with an informative presentation by Peter Merrill, President and CEO of [Construction Dispute Resolution Services \(CDRS\)](#), WAHI's current arbitration service provider and Brienne Smith, of [Inspector Pro Insurance](#), who shared her insight on arbitration from the point of view of an insurer.

Peter's presentation displayed his passion and wealth of knowledge on arbitration, which he has been involved with nationwide for many years. He focused on two main points with his presentation:

- 1) A CDRS trained arbiter will always make his/her decision based on the contract in place between the two parties.
- 2) Any judge that dismisses an arbitration clause in an agreement or contract signed by both parties is breaking federal law.

Brienne expressed the confidence that Inspector Pro has in the ability of CDRS to arbitrate complaints against their insureds fairly and the importance of having your inspection agreement signed **before** you begin any part of a home inspection.

I encourage any member with any questions or concerns about WAHI's arbitration program to reach out to me; Peter has expressed his willingness to answer any questions WAHI members may have as well. You can find his contact information at <https://www.constructiondisputes-cdrs.com/contact-information.htm>

If you have questions about Inspector Pro Insurance, you can find their contact information in their ad in the newsletter.

The WAHI Arbitration Committee is aware of several arbitrations involving WAHI members that were recently handled by CDRS. 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. I am asking any inspector member involved in an arbitration to provide feedback about their experience with the arbitration process. 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 your fellow members.



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

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



This article is the sole opinion of the author. WAHI strongly advises you to explore any specialized training and/or certification necessary to perform additional services as a part of your inspections.

THE WATER WITCHING HOME INSPECTION CLAIM

Author By Stephanie Jaynes, Marketing Director at InspectorPro Insurance

The following is a real septic claim from our home inspector insurance claim archives. To protect the insured's identity, all identifiable characteristics—including names, associations, and locations—have been omitted or removed.

After a client commissions you for a septic inspection, you face what can be a significant hurdle: finding the system in the first place. Buried beneath the ground, septic systems, also known as individual onsite or small community cluster systems, can be difficult to spot. Much like houses, such systems can differ greatly from one another, and the techniques you use to find the system at one property may not work for another. So, what is an inspector to do?

Well, if you're Giles Corey, you go water witching.

Water witching—also known as dowsing, divining, and doodlebugging—is a pseudoscientific way of locating water underground with a forked stick or rod. With the ends of the instrument in hand, dowsers slowly walk about until the rod dips or twitches over water. (You can read the U.S. Department of Interior/Geological Survey's article on water dowsing [here](#).)

Through water divination, Corey determined that an inspection property had a septic tank. Then, using tracer dye, he ran the property's water fixtures for about an hour and a half. After no dye came out of the leech field and no water backed up in the field or in the house, Corey determined that the septic system was functioning properly.

But there was a problem: The property didn't have a septic system.

The Septic Claim

About four months after his inspection, Corey received upset emails from his client, saying that raw sewage was eliminating from a pipe away from the house. Corey submitted the complaint to [pre-claims assistance](#).

Shortly thereafter, Corey received a letter from an attorney. According to the attorney, there was no septic system on the property at all. According to a contractor bid, it was going to cost about \$17,500 to install a septic system for the home.

"The failure to report the absence of a septic system in this case is gross negligence at best and fraud at worst," wrote the attorney. "It is our suggestion that you forward this on to any insurance carrier that you may have."

Corey followed the attorney's suggestion. Upon reviewing the allegations, our claims team suggested that Corey return to the property to inspect the overflow himself. Corey returned to the property still confident that the septic system was there—just buried deep, more than five feet below. He recommended that a plumber scope to find the location of the tank to prove that the system was present and that the plumbing was merely an overflow.

The Resolution

Our claims team contacted a local plumbing company who said it would cost up to \$1,000 to inspect the property and make a determination. Corey agreed to move forward as quoted, so our team sent the plumber to the property.

Sure enough, the plumber confirmed that there was no septic system. The pipe the client had found was a direct line from the toilet that led into the yard. The plumber even captured video footage to prove it.

Our claims team negotiated a settlement of \$16,500 for the claimant to install a new system. Before issuing the settlement, our team drafted a Release of All Claims to protect the inspector from any further allegations that may have arisen from his inspection.



[READ MORE](#)

See our ad on page 13!

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-Members/>



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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.

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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 10 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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An IMPORTANT Announcement regarding Chapter Meetings Online

WAHI has been, and still is, a believer in our approach to education - what I call the “WAHI way”! We still see great value in holding our seminars and chapter meetings in person, with the speaker right there in the room for full interaction, Affiliate members and vendors in attendance to develop relationships of confidence and trust, and last but certainly not least, your fellow inspectors, many sole proprietors like you, to share experience, insight and lessons learned along the way!

But, with all of that said, we recognize the need for online programming from WAHI, the ONLY continuing education provider **focused solely** on WI inspectors, WI Standards of Practice and WI rules and regulations (State Statutes)! Long before COVID entered our lives, we knew that some of our members found it difficult to attend their local chapter meetings for a variety of reasons.

Since COVID, many of our chapters have been recording and/or live streaming their meetings. As a courtesy to our members, as we coped with these strange, uncertain times, we offered continuing education credits for those meetings at no charge. This process has been by trial and error, while not perfect, the chapters did the best they could. We recognize how critical it is for speakers to speak clearly and at a reasonable volume for the value of the presentation to effectively reach our at-home viewers.

Any member not comfortable or unable to attend a meeting in-person may continue to connect with their chapter online (and we encourage that!), however, **to earn the 2 continuing education credits there will be a charge of \$20.00** - to be paid through your local chapter treasurer, in most cases. You will be notified by email if your chapter has a different plan in place. WAHI will also be **posting one “highlighted” chapter meeting per month on the WAHI YouTube channel** – for now, payment and certificates for that will be handled by WAHI Executive Director Julie Arnstein. Watch your email for specific details each month.

There are online service providers who can streamline this process but for now, we are “testing the water” to explore the response from our members and determine our best route going forward.

On behalf of WAHI, I thank you for your continued support of our educational programming and your patience as we embarked on this new path.

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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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!"



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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 other than his client he would be in violation of State Statute 440.975

(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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See page 5 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

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

Ryan Eigenfeld - 414.795.9018 or flarsbar@gmail.com

Nick Hammetter - 414.412.2637 or humblehomeinspector@gmail.com

Andy Helgeson - 414.315.0266 or helge4674@outlook.com

Mike von Gunten - 262.945.2446 or mvgbvg@wi.rr.com

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

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262.377.0751

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262.377.0751

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