



**Ric Thompson
President**

January 2020

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www.wahigroup.com



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Happy New Year Troops!

As we close on 2019, I want to take a look at the year since I took office.

On May 1st I took leadership as President of WAHI. It is a position I was, and still am, proud to hold. It is hard to put into words the excitement I felt when Julie shared the news that I would be the voice of 350+ inspectors in the state of Wisconsin...even though I believe I was running against Yosemite Sam and Bugs Bunny!

Since taking office, the Long Term Planning Committee was formed - thank you, Chair Andy Helgeson! The role of this committee is to identify items that can help the association not only sustain what has been but grow and evolve to an even better WAHI!

Our arbitration program underwent a big change in moving to a new vendor, Construction Dispute Resolution Services (CDRS). CDRS was recommended to WAHI as an arbitration administrator that could better serve our members. We have several trained arbitrators in WAHI now, allowing our members to get a fair shake when a disagreement comes about.

Mark Thomas led a group of inspectors in discussions about revamping our current Standards of Practice. Those discussions led WAHI to consider other avenues first before really attacking the Standards. Without Mark's leadership however, the idea would be floating out in space somewhere! This is a task that is still being worked on and will come to fruition in the future.

WAHI was made aware of legislation brought forward by an outside group that would significantly impact how we do inspections. Lots of time and energy has been spent - first negotiating the bill and now fighting what we feel is unacceptable. See an article from our lobbyist, Kathi Kilgore, on page 3 in this newsletter - she provides important details.

Our Madison Chapter has made changes to their meeting night and location to improve attendance at their meetings. It is so encouraging to see our members working together to make changes to improve things for everyone.

The Membership Committee will be putting together a plan to recruit both Home Inspector and Affiliate members. Growing our Affiliate membership is very important as they are a GREAT resource to answer our questions - especially when we see something and think "What the heck is that?" - not to mention a referral source for our clients in need.

Those are just some of the highlights since May - I look forward to providing a 2020 review next year! My goal is additional improvements to the inspection industry in our state. As a member of WAHI you have the opportunity to play a role in changes and advancements, so please, get involved and voice your opinions. It's vital our members share their thoughts with the Chapter representatives - WAHI leadership can't address what we don't know.

Best wishes to all in 2020! And remember, my phone and email is always available to all of you - my motto is "How can I help?" so please do not hesitate to ask!

Ric Thompson, WAHI President



NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, January 15

Social at 6:00 pm & Meeting/Dinner/Education at 6:30 pm

[Sconni's Alehouse & Eatery, 1239 Schofield Ave, Schofield, WI 54467](#)

Education: Chapter President Mike Carson and Chapter Education Chair Tyler Groshek
Mike and Tyler will present an interactive Field Case Study.

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



NEXT MEETING: DATE CHANGE: 2ND Wednesday, January 8

Buffet Dinner at 5:30 pm & Meeting/Education at 6:00 pm

[Pizza Ranch, 2451 Truax Blvd, Eau Claire, WI 54703](#)

Education: Dan Sandberg, an experienced local plumber in the Eau Claire area.
Dan will be discussing concerns with water and sewage systems.

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



NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, January 21

Social at 5:30 pm & Roundtable/Meeting/Dinner/Education at 6:00 pm

[The Stone Toad, 1109 S. Oneida St., Menasha](#)

Roundtable Discussion: Bring pictures on your smart phone or jump drive to load onto the projector!

Education: Affiliate Member Torrance Kramer, Accurate-Air Tight Exteriors
Torrance will address home performance.

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



NEXT MEETING: NEW NIGHT: 2nd TUESDAY, JANUARY 14

NEW LOCATION: [MAPLE TREE SUPPER CLUB, 6010 US-51, McFARLAND, WI 53558](#)

Social at 5:00 pm & Meeting/Dinner/Education at 5:30 pm

Education: WAHI President, Ric Thompson

Ric will address the Standards of Practice.

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, January 14

Social time starts at 5:30 pm, Buffet Dinner available from 6:00 - 7:00 pm

Meeting/Education at 6:30 pm

[The Pallas Restaurant, 1657 S 108th St, Milwaukee](#)

Education: To be determined

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

LOBBYING UPDATE

Over the past few months you have been hearing from WAHI leadership about the legislation regarding the regulation of home inspectors introduced by Representative Rob Brooks (R-Saukville) and Senator Kathy Bernier (R-Chippewa Falls.).

In the Senate, the bill is [SB 599](#) and it has been referred to the [Senate Committee](#) on Utilities and Housing. In the Assembly, the bill is [AB 655](#) and it has been referred to the [Assembly Committee](#) on Regulatory Licensing Reform. The bills are identical at this point in the process.

In December, Julie Arnstein, Ric Thompson and I met with some of the legislators who serve on these two legislative Committees to provide them with WAHI's perspective on the bills. We raised the concerns that have been outlined in previous newsletters, email alerts and sample letters to legislators, and found that most of them have not heard much about this legislation at this point. The legislators we have met with so far have been receptive to WAHI's concerns because we have made it clear that WAHI is focused on WISCONSIN home inspections and WAHI did not seek this legislation.

In January, we plan to meet with the remaining legislators who serve on the two Committees.

The next step in the legislative process is for the bills to have Committee hearings. We may not have much notice for these public hearings so we have already drafted a rough draft of testimony for use at one or both hearings. We anticipate a hearing could be held as early as the week of January 6th.

Please watch your email for further information about contacting your legislators, contacting the legislators on the Committees and possibly attending the hearing. We will need EVERYONE'S involvement in these future calls to action to defeat this legislation.

I look forward to working with WAHI in 2020!



**WAHI Lobbyist
Kathi Kilgore,
Swandby/Kilgore
Associates, Inc.**

Questions or Concerns

If you have questions about this legislation or other legislative or regulatory issues, please feel free to contact me at 608.286.9599 or Kilgore@swandby.com.

I look forward to working with WAHI in 2021!

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN WAHI?

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 2019

- **Proposed Legislation:** As reported in December, the proposed legislation was released for co-sponsorship by Senator Rob Brooks (R-Saukville) and Senator Kathy Bernier (R-Chippewa Falls) in early November. All of our Home Inspector, Associate and Retired members received several emails over the past couple of months. The emails provided details on the legislation, important dates and suggested talking points when reaching out to legislators and Realtors you work with. WAHI President Ric Thompson, WAHI Lobbyist Kathi Kilgore and I met with several legislators on the Senate and Assembly committees handling this bill. The silver lining in all of this is that we are creating an awareness of WAHI. Until now, WAHI has had very limited involvement in any legislative action. Meeting with the legislators has provided a great opportunity to explain who we are, what we do and our commitment to home inspectors, and the betterment of the home inspection industry as a whole, in our state. Be sure to continue to monitor your email for **time-sensitive** updates and announcements. We need your participation in this call to action.

January 2020 and Beyond...

- **WRA Conference:** WAHI will again staff a booth at the WRA Convention in January - Lac du Flambeau. State President Ric Thompson has been asked to be a presenter during one of their breakout sessions. Quite an honor!
- **State Election 2020:** WAHI conducts a State election each year to avoid a complete turnover of the Board of Directors. In even-numbered years, the voting membership elects 4 Member-at Large positions to serve a 2-year term. Please consider increasing your level of involvement. Contact Nominations and Elections Chair Andy Helgeson with any questions or to put your name on the ballot! helge4674@outlook.com or 414.315.0266. See further details from Andy on page 5 in this newsletter.
- **2020 Education House and Training Seminars:** SAVE the DATES! It's official... Spring 2020 will be March 6th and 7th in Milwaukee and Fall 2020 will be November 13th and 14th in Stevens Point!
- **Future WAHI Education House and Seminar Training:** Nothing is official yet but I am exploring locations in the Fox Valley area for Spring 2021 and Madison/WI Dells for Fall 2021.



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

WAHI STATE ELECTION 2020

Attention WAHI members! In March we will be holding our statewide election for 5 State Board positions - Vice President and 4 Member at Large positions. WAHI board positions are 2 year terms.

Whether you have only been in the business for a few years or for many years, we welcome your candidacy. What the WAHI Board needs are members who can look at issues thoughtfully, from all sides, and are willing to voice their opinion to the other members of the Board. Serving as a Member at Large is a great entry-level position for someone new to the Board.

If you have interest and/or questions, please contact me, I am happy to discuss the role of a Board Member - helge4674@outlook.com or 414.315.0266.

Now is the time to give back to your association!



Andy Helgeson
WAHI Nomination
and Elections Chair



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NEW MEMBERS

Joseph Dillenburg (Fox Valley)
Associate/Student Member
608.772.2788
j.dillenburg@outlook.com

Todd Miller (Milwaukee)
Home Inspector Member
Inspextions Group, LLC
414.573.9871
todd@inspextions.com

Andy Johnson (Madison)
Affiliate Member offering asbestos, lead and mold abatement and demolition
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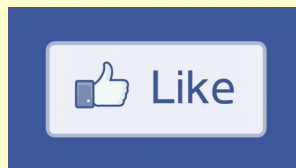
1. Go to www.wahigroup.com.
2. From the Home Page - upper right corner, **select "LOG IN."** **ENTER your email address** on file with WAHI and **password.**
*If you have questions, contact Julie at julie@wahigroup.com.
3. Once logged in, the upper right corner shows your name, "Change Password" and "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.

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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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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tom@shamrockwi.com

DISPUTE PROCESS

All member-to-member or member-to-association disputes must go through the Membership Committee. A member going public, with disputes of these types, risks disciplinary action. The Membership Committee will implement this policy.

For more information on this process, contact Membership Committee Chair:

Ron Miller
608.235.9836 or ronmiller547@gmail.com

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See page 10 for an informative article provided by InspectorPro

HOW TO RESPOND TO NEGATIVE ONLINE REVIEWS

By Stephanie Jaynes, Marketing Director at InspectorPro Insurance

Online reviews matter. But just how can reviews affect your home inspection business?

- A 2017 survey by [Podium](#) revealed that [reviews impact 93 percent of consumers'](#) purchasing decisions.
- According to the [Harvard Business School](#), a one-star increase in Yelp ratings leads to a [five to nine percent increase](#) in that business' revenue.
- The 2018 [ReviewTrackers Online Reviews Survey](#) found that 94 percent of consumers choose to avoid a business based on a negative online review.



The bottom line? Online customer reviews can directly impact your success. Which led one of our readers to ask us this question:

"I've had an issue with receiving negative seller reviews. Usually, the buyers are my clients and, so far, they've liked my inspections and my reports. What do I do when it's not even my client leaving a negative review?" – John Paul Oliveira

At InspectorPro, we know a thing or two about receiving negative reviews from people that aren't clients. Receiving negative reviews, especially from non-clients, can be frustrating and disconcerting. The good news? Your response to reviews can make a difference.

In a [recent study](#), the [Harvard Business Review](#) found that replying to customer reviews, positive or negative, results in better ratings. Software company [Vendasta](#) listed three reasons why responding to unpleasant reviews is beneficial in a [recent blog post](#):

"You're not just replying to just the one reviewer. You're speaking to everyone who reads this review, including potential future customers.

"Replying is your opportunity to make things right. If a customer brought a complaint to you in person, you would try to make it right. The same goes for online reviews—despite the impersonal nature of online reviews, it's not over just yet. You can turn this things around!

"Replying shows other readers you are not shady or neglectful to feedback, and have taken steps to ensure this problem won't happen to the next customer."

In this article, we discuss how to respond to negative online reviews to defend your reputation and discourage potential claims.

Investigate the allegations internally.

Before responding, look into what the reviewer is saying. See if they are a client of yours or otherwise related to an inspection you performed (i.e. seller, real estate agent). Then, examine how their claims match up to your recollection of the inspection and your report. If you weren't the one who performed the inspection, take time to discuss the review with the inspector that did to make sure you have all the facts.

Evaluating the feedback first also gives you the opportunity to put your emotions in check. Reacting defensively could inspire your negative reviewer to escalate. Worse still, if your upset reviewer is particularly angry or petty, they might seek to get a bigger reaction from you by spreading their unfavorable assessment across online platforms.

[READ MORE](#)

To learn more about InspectorPro Insurance, please see our ad on page 9 of this newsletter.

Affiliate members Attorney Roy Wagner and Attorney Lauren Triebenbach of Michael Best and Friedrich offer 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 Roy or Lauren, the steps below, provided by Lauren, provide an explanation of their services.

1. If you receive an email, letter, text, or pleading from a customer, please contact our office. Lauren is generally more accessible than Roy, but feel free to call either of us.
2. We will ask that you provide us with the communication you received plus your inspection agreement and report. If there are other communications related to the claim, we will ask for those too.
3. After we review your documents, we will schedule a time to talk to you. Calls generally last 15-30 minutes. We will discuss with you your options, which could include working it out on your own, engaging us to respond on your behalf, or tendering the claim to your insurance company. The strategy we 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 us, you don't get a bill. If you do hire us, the time spent reviewing the case will be included in the final billing.
5. Knowledge is power. We 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 or Roy: <https://wahigroup.com/Affiliate-Members/>



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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 6](#) 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.



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!"

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

Brittany Thomas - 414.486.2367 or thomasradontesting@gmail.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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Email: paul.gomez1@officedepot.com

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Paul Gomez

WAHI National Program Manager | Office Depot

Tel: (855) 337-6811, Ext 12809 | paul.gomez1@officedepot.com

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Mike von Gunten
262.945.2446

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262.343.1614

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262.636.9909

Dennis Kruger
608.575.0371

WAHI COMMITTEES

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Mark Thomas
Attorney Roy Wagner

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Welcome

See page 14 in this newsletter

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