

Inspector's Insider™

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Winter watch

- It would be prudent to have a maintenance inspection on your home or investment property by a qualified Home Inspector prior to the first snow fall to head off potential building damage and expensive repairs.
- Remember homeowners, watch for freezing downspouts especially on flat roofs. Look for heating coils/wiring that you can purchase to safely use for thawing frozen downspouts and rear roof areas.

Editor's Letter

By Curtis S. Niles CRI, Niles Enterprises Prof. Real Estate Services

It's the fall season. For many Home Inspectors that means the last phase before a well deserved break. Inspector chapters are reconvening and elections to board positions are planned. Among all this activity, it's a real good idea to take this last leg of our busy season to market your business. Don't let the winter months catch you off guard. You've heard me say before and I'll say it again, the best time to market your business is when your busy.. Don't wait until the phone stops ringing to decide that you've got to get out there and start marketing. You ought to be doing some sort of marketing all the time. So, if you haven't been out there getting your company's name in front of your market, it's not too late. Remember marketing is approximately

half of the Home Inspectors' business.

This fall issue attempts to bring you up to date on what's been taking place in the profession, and in our local chapter. You can read about our Chapter's 1st Annual Picnic which was held in August...to what's been taking place in the profession with regard to the ARELLO Conference held in Pittsburg.



From left to right: Ralph J. Wirth, (Past NAHI President) Mallory Anderson, (NAHI Executive Director) Claude McGavic, (Current NAHI President). Curtis S. Niles, (NAHI PA, President & PHIC, Vice-Pres. (PA Home Inspectors Coalition).

Photo left: Event sign up table at the chapter picnic

Franchises... Can they be trusted?

By Curtis S. Niles, CRI, Niles Enterprises Prof. Real Estate Services

The William Penn Hotel was the site for the ARELLO conference sponsored largely in part by the AHIA (American Home Inspector Association). Some believe that the large Inspection franchise companies have hidden agendas while

propagating that Home Inspection ought to be a profession which qualifies its' practitioners through processes similar to that of other professionals such as Doctors and Lawyers. This would include: 1)Professional education and training,

2) Licensing, 3) Internship, 4) Certification/Testing, and 5) Practice. This is, in fact, a very good model to follow. However, is this truly the main focus and goal of the franchise companies, or is it a cloak for some far more sinister plot?

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Where are the Franchise owners aiming? To improve the profession, or to line their pockets, or both? Is there anything wrong with that?

Could this just be a clever way to line deep pockets with another area for their businesses to grow. Most, if not all, will agree that professional structure would be welcomed in the profession. The question is who is doing the teaching? And if the franchises can, is there a reason why they shouldn't. After all this is a country with certain rights to earn a living, isn't it?



Commercial Verses Residential Inspections

By Ira Einsenstein, Strictly Business Commercial Inspections

Boiler in a commercial bldg.



“Commercial clients have a different perspective...”

We've all done residential inspections on single family homes, and we're all pretty good at it, or we wouldn't be here, right?

That's fine for residential, but what do we do with those requests we all get from time to time for COMMERCIAL inspections?

Don't turn business away because you may not have done any commercial inspections.

How are commercial inspections different from residential?

To begin with, commercial clients have a very different perspective on the purchase, the property, and what answers they are looking for from your inspection report.

Home buyers want to fall in love with a house.

Commercial buyers have a specific use in mind for their building, whether it's an apartment house, a hair salon, or a gas station with convenience store.

Emotions rarely, if ever, play a part in their purchase decision. When a commercial

buyer looks at a building (or YOU look at it FOR him), he wants to know whether this building will support his business needs. If there are problems with the building, he wants to know what, if anything, he will have to spend before he can use it for his intended purpose.

His “bottom line” question (which you are there to answer) is “What will I have to do and what will it cost me before I can ***open the doors*** to the public, and start making money here?”

What do you do differently for commercial?

What you do the same is describe the property and report on any defects you see. You still have to inspect the foundation, walls, roof, etc, and tell the buyer where the problem areas are, just like for residential inspections.

What you do differently is to evaluate the property from the point of view of the buyer, and what he intends to do with it.

For example: Suppose you are inspecting a building with a new 40 gallon gas hot water heater and 100 amp single phase



“Home buyers want to fall in love...”

electric service for a buyer who wants to set up a laundromat with 50 washers and 30 dryers ... The hot water heater may be new and the electric service may be perfect, but they won't meet his needs.

You would have to make a recommendation for a plumber and electrician to upgrade to two 125-gallon quick recovery hot water heaters piped together, and a 250 amp 3-phase electric service with associated circuit breakers and new wiring. He would also need an upgraded natural gas service if he wanted to use gas fired dryers.

How would the report be different for COMMERCIAL?

Besides describing what's there, and what condition it's in, you would also describe it in relation to the intended use...

"40 gallon gas fired HW heater model.xxxx.... Good condition, inadequate for intended use of property as a laundromat... Recommend 2 125 gallon.....".

The report would also have more headings and categories to reflect specialized equipment that might be there (such as an elevator or a trash compactor).

The electric and heating/conditioning descriptions might have to be broken out to show the distribution of power and heat to common uses such as hallways and lobby, and how much to apartments, if it was an apartment house. You might also need to comment on items the buyer would need that are not presently there, such as a (cooking) exhaust hood and fire suppression system if the buyer wanted to open a restaurant. A cooking exhaust hood would need ducting, similar to that used for fireplace flues, run to the roof or rear of the property, and that might not be possible in the property the buyer was looking at.

In writing your report, remember that the buyer wants to "open the doors" as soon as possible, and spend as little as possible.

Your report must provide the commercial buyer with a prioritized list of recommendations for things that "absolutely have to be done", and things that would be nice to do when cash flow catches up.

Needless to say, conditions that constitute safety or health hazards, or items that are required by law such as the cooking exhaust hood for a restaurant, make the top of the list.

Things that will result in on-going damage to the building if they're not fixed (such as a leaking roof) also head up the list.

Other considerations:

Compliance with fire safety and liability requirements are also a part of the inspection and report.

These include emergency exits (with proper doors and latches), emergency lighting, fire extinguishers, and similar items.

With a residential inspection, there is a limited list of specific things to inspect.

When doing a commercial inspection, be prepared to inspect everything.

"Everything" can include 3-phase electric power, HVAC units located on the roof, elevator machinery, steam or hydronic boilers (which may be the size of a living room with a flue pipe 2 feet in diameter), and fire sprinkler systems.

There may be specialized industrial machinery particular to the industry that the buyer will be setting up his building for. If there is, you will need the cooperation and participation of the seller and the buyer to test it.

Ira Eisenstein can be reached at 908-202-2208, or at iraeise@earthlink.net.

See our website at
WWW.STRICTLYBUSINESSCOMMERCIALINSPECTIONS.COM



Contractor Rehabbed Homes

Lately what I have been seeing is a lot of contractor rehabbed homes. Although these homes look great aesthetically, I have been finding many defects not visible to the typical homebuyer. A lot of these homes are bought well below market value and rehabbed the most inexpensive way possible. Many of the repairs being made in the home are being performed by unqualified people. At first glance the home looks beautiful but lurking below the "beauty", corners are cut to try and save money in important areas like plumbing, electrical, roofing and heating.

Just remember new paint, rugs and appliances are not the only things that make a great home. Properly installed electrical systems, heating systems, roofing and plumbing are equally if not more important. These are all more reasons the get a Home Inspection.

By Jim Makara, County Wide Home Inspections, Inc. 215-355-4726 or

www.countywideinspections.com

NAHIPA, Board Member



www.nahipa.org



Chapter News

This summer, our first chapter picnic was packed with games, food, and fun. The location was truly picturesque, (much thanks to Lori Niles for her endless search for just the right location) Great job. The kids and the kids at heart had a great time beating up on the adults. Door prizes, organized games, rest and relaxation were enjoyed by all. It was great to meet the spouses/business partners of our fellow members. Thanks to the chapter member support for making this 1st Chapter picnic a success. If you missed it this year, you'll get another chance next summer. See photos next page.

This fall, elections were held and new officers were elected. The Chapters new board will consist of; Treasurer-Dave Scott, Secretary- Jim Makara, Membership Coordinator-John Arnold, Vice President-Paul Edwards, and President-Curtis Niles. Dave Artiglieri, our current Secretary, has completed his term and will be attending a different chapter closer to his home.

This December, the Chapter will attend a Real Estate convention in Atlantic City, NJ. We look forward to having the opportunity to broaden the NAHI exposure in a single concentrated effort. Our brochure is planned to be ready by the December 7th kick off which will contain an insert of our current membership contact information. Thanks, to NAHI corporate for their overwhelming support.

As a direct result of the ARELLO Round Table Discussion, held back in Pittsburg this fall of which PHIC attended, PHIC was contacted by a representative of the PA Real Estate Commission, to hear our petition for a Home Inspection Board. This meeting is scheduled this November. The PHIC officers will be presenting our case before a number of dignitaries which have the ability to dramatically affect the careers of each Inspector in the Commonwealth. Here, once again, is an example as to why all compliant inspectors need to support PHIC. We need to unite as one voice to make it clear to our government that we need enforcement of the law enacted to protect the consumer and ultimately our livelihood and families. PHIC dues hard at work, Supporting PHIC=Supporting your business, your families, yourselves. Be involved and make a difference in your profession. Stay plugged in for the results of this meeting.



www.nahipa.org

Chapter meetings are held every 3rd Monday of the month, 6:00 pm at the Best Western Inn in Lansdale, PA. New inspectors are invited to attend. Contact John Arnold, Membership Coordinator, at 215-487-3599 or visit NAHIPA.org for additional information.



www.phic.info



"Working together to promote and develop the Home Inspection Industry"

Left Photos of CEO's, PHIC representatives, and others at the ARELLO Conference.



"Trust is like a paycheck, it must be earned."

C.S.N



Chapter Members List

John Arnold– Arnold Home Inspection, 215-487-1645

David Artigliere– ARTI Home Inspections, LLC, 610-220-1907

www.artihomeinspections.com

Paul Edwards– Buyers Alliance Inspections, Inc., 610-831-1977

Ron Flood– All Systems Inspections, LLC, 814-364-2549

George Groeber—Best Residential Inspections, 610-662-2303

Paul Kearney–Paul Kearney Inspections, 610-738-4177

Stanley Kornsey— Cover Your Assets Home Inspections, Inc. 215-368-5128

Jim Makara– County Wide Inspections, Inc., 215-355-4726

www.countywideinspections.com

Bill Mohan– WJM Engineering, 215-283-3434

Tom Mulqueen— Tam Home Inspections, Inc. 610-366-7950

Curtis Niles– Niles Enterprises Prof. Home Inspections, LLC 888-382-8628

www.nilesenterprises.com

Nick Ostrowski– Strong Foundations Home Inspections, 610-792-9498

Charles Park– Cover Your Assets Home Inspections, Inc. 215-368-5128

Ed Schluth– Insight Home Inspections, Inc., 215-674-1808~www.insightservices-pa.com

Richard Schwankl–CDR Improvements, Inc., 717-733-8331

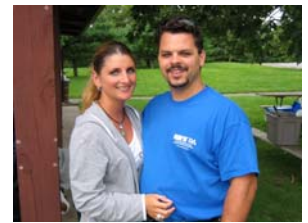
William Shultz– Federal Building Inspections, Inc., 215-822-2888

www.betterhomeinspections.com

Al Schmidt– Certified Home Inspections, Inc., 800-252-8080

David Scott– Sherlock Home Inspections, 610-792-0383

Bruce Berman– Berman Inspections, 215-605-4380



Nail Drive competition



Frisbee Throw



Ladies and Babies



The checker Challenge



Winners Circle



Group Photo of attendees



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