



Central TN Inter-NACHI Chapter

March 2011

Message from the Chapter President:

Friends,

As Home Inspectors we have been kicking around the idea we might possibly be able to reasonably limit our liability with respect to time.

Many have limits in their inspection agreements & our legal mentor, Joe Ferry, has recommended such but also cautioned that being too restrictive here can backfire. Judges can & do legally disregard these limits & can be given to an unfavorable disposition on their interpretation of other issues as well. Only a change in the law can truly insulate us from unreasonable lifetime liability.

This month we will be addressing this topic more openly with a round table discussion with an expert on changing the law; a Lobbyist. Former Williamson County State Representative, Mike Williams, who is currently working for the Oil Industry's legislative interest, has agreed to set down & help us develop an action plan for our hope.

This is no free lunch, but we must know what resources will be required if we are to turn our hope into reality.

Join us this Tuesday at Corky's for a hard look at what it will take.

Best Regards
Michael Amick
Central TN InterNACHI Chapter Pres.

This Month's Meeting:

When: March 8th (Dinner and social time 6:30pm--
Dutch Treat)

Meeting starts @ 7pm

Where: Corky's BBQ
100 Franklin Rd., Brentwood, TN 37027

Register for the meeting:

<http://tn.nachi.org/centraltennessee/events.html>

Guest Speaker: Mike Williamson, Lobbyist

Mark your calendars and plan not to miss this month's meeting.

If you have not been to a meeting lately here are a few of the companies and speakers you have missed!!!!

2010

January: Joy Black, CPA—*In the Black Accounting*

February: Pierre Billard—*Partridge Hill Svcs, Ilc*

March: Nicole Avers—*State Director of Home Insp.*

April: Resolution, Inc.—*Detained from attending (Mike Amick spoke on the new EPA Lead Guidelines)*

May: Geoff Burdine—*United Structural Systems*

June: Tennessee Trappers—*Wildlife Specialists*

July: Eddie Porter—*West Meade Pools*

August: Roundtable

September: Jewell Roofing

October: E3 INNOVATE, LLC—*Green Certification*

November: Roundtable

December: *Meeting cancelled due to inclement weather*

2011

January: Jeff Turner—*National Storm Shelter*

February: Roundtable—*Proposed Rule Changes/Fees*



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Safety Notes By: Ed McDaniel

March Safety

Safety Warnings for Septic System Inspectors

Providing inspection and diagnosis of on-site waste disposal systems is an extremely valuable public service which helps protect people from expensive unanticipated septic system repair costs and helps protect public health by assuring sanitary disposal of sewage and gray water waste from Buildings.

More importantly though, such inspections may detect and warn about serious safety hazards at some properties. The strong warnings issued below intend to reduce septic system safety hazards for inspectors and property owners/occupants, but it is not the author's intention to dissuade inspectors from providing this valuable service.

Danger lurks at cesspools, open covers, tanks or tank covers in poor condition, and from high levels of methane gas. These risk collapse, falling, asphyxiation, and other potentially **fatal hazards** as well as risks of unsanitary conditions.

Septic and Cesspool Inspection Safety:

- **Collapse Hazards:** Septic system inspectors face personal risks of health and safety including **possible fatal system collapse or asphyxiation**. Old steel tanks, thin, rusted steel or rotting home-made wood tank covers, site-built tanks and cesspools, and recently-pumped cesspools are at particular risk of collapse. Falling into a septic tank or cesspool is likely to lead to rapid

asphyxiation from methane and in cases of collapse; there is risk of becoming buried. The author has consulted in cases involving such fatalities (homeowner fell into a site-built cesspool), and at one site inspection, walking near an overgrown area the author himself stepped through a rusting steel septic tank top, surviving only by throwing himself into a nearby clump of brambles! **Beware of**

- flimsy, rusted, old-steel, home-made, or missing septic tank/drywell/cesspool covers
- abandoned systems which may not have been filled-in
- collapsed, or collapsing septic tanks or cesspools
- possible presence of multiple components at a property, abandoned or in-use
- **Entering or Looking into Tanks:** No person, except those licensed, equipped, and trained, should ever enter a septic tank. Special equipment is needed. Tank inspection (or service) should not be performed alone. Even leaning over to look into a (recently pumped) tank has been reported to cause asphyxiation.
- **Unsanitary conditions:** Be alert for unsanitary conditions such as surface effluent or sewage backups into Buildings, events which risk serious viral and bacterial hazards and which indoors, may require professional cleaning.
- **Issue appropriate warnings:** Septic system inspectors (and service personnel) must recognize and respond properly unsafe conditions at a site, including issuing appropriate warnings and in some cases, marking off unsafe



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areas where, for example, there is visual evidence of a risk of collapse hazard.

- **Avoid damaging septic system components or the Building:** Improper septic testing procedures, such as flooding a dosing-system, can damage the system. Also, remember to check for leaks into or under the Building being tested when running water into the Building fixtures and drains. Don't leave water running unattended - at risk of flooding the Building.
- **Don't do anything dangerous:** Inspectors should omit and report the omission of any planned inspection procedure which in the inspector's judgment is unsafe or unsanitary.

Septic System Warnings to Home Owners and Home Buyers

Septic system concerns for a Building owner start with safety. Here are some red flags:

- **Signs of collapse-possible fatal hazards:** include depressions or "soil subsidence" anywhere on or around the property. Any suspect area should be roped-off and absolutely no one should walk over or even close to such a spot until it has been investigated by a professional.
- **Old or abandoned systems:** such as site-built cesspools or drywells were often made with a thin steel or wood cover which with age can collapse. If the history of the site or visual observation suggests that there are or were old systems at the property, professional investigation is warranted. Improper "abandonment" (failing to fill-in a pit) can lead to sudden collapses. Signs that

there may be old systems at a property might come from anecdotal evidence (ask a neighbor, ask the local septic installing or service companies), or visual evidence such as seeing abandoned waste pipes at basement or crawl space walls or floors. Don't assume that an old house which is now connected to the public sewer didn't previously have an on-site waste disposal system.

- **Septic service by untrained workers:** such as aerating, agitating, or pumping out an old site-built cesspool, can lead to sudden system collapse. Prevent access over or near any such systems.
 - **Unsanitary conditions** such as discharge of sewage effluent to the yard surface, to a nearby well or stream, or previous septic backups into a Building deserve professional attention. Indoors special cleaning may be needed to remove bacteria or other pathogens.
 - **Septic testing by inexperienced "inspectors"** who may not follow an adequate procedure increases the risk of a costly surprise.
 - **Uninformed homeowners may not notice a danger or malfunction** .Homeowners should review the [safety warnings listed above](#). The information here is general in nature. Since conditions and requirements vary widely at individual sites, the you should obtain qualified expert advice pertaining to the specific system about which you have questions, and should not rely on this general text for costly diagnostic/repair/replacement decisions. In other words, I'll try to give you some helpful information. In exchange, don't expect me to pay for your new septic system.
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Here's a chance to share your unique, strange, weird or most dangerous photos. Just send your photos with a brief description of what we are looking at to me. Each month we will include 2-4 photos in the monthly newsletter.

Also, send any information that you may like to share with all of our members. Please photos, documents, etc. as Jpeg, PDF or Doc. Jpeg and PDF are the preferred forms.

Send your photos and comments to: Terry Wilson
(wlsntw@comcast.net)

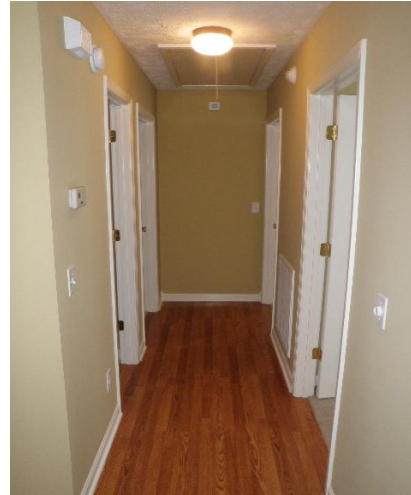
Monthly Submission:



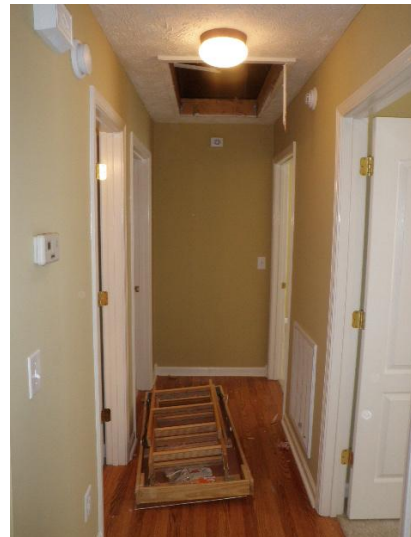
Photo submitted by:

Brent Scott, Premier Home Inspection LLC

****Faceplate screw on a service panel that "welded" to the main conductor in the panel. It sparked when I was backing it out.**



Before



After

Photos submitted by:

Brent Scott, Premier Home Inspection LLC

****Before/after of a pull down ladder and frame that fell out from under me after I climbed it.**



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Is your contact information up to date:

Have you moved, changed your address or changed any of your contact information (phone, email, website, etc.). If you have.....Please go to the NACHI website and update your profile. By updating your profile you will be keeping all of your information current and correct.

Member or Member's Family

***Let's all keep Joseph and his family in our thoughts and prayers.*

Hello Friends,

Once again I will not be able to attend. My sister passed this week and I will be out of state. Thank you for continuing to include me in the notifications. I really enjoyed my only meeting.

Thank you,
Joseph Draper

Continuing Education/Professional Membership

Have you found a website or resource you would like to share? Send it in.....

Where's the best place to purchase inspection equipment and software? Do you have a place to recommend? Send it in.....

As with any profession we can only get better by sharing ideas, experiences and knowledge. By belonging to an organization and participating it speaks loudly about an inspector. It shows that you care about your profession and seek to ensure that only well trained and knowledgeable inspectors are working in our area.

Did you know the following are approved and available through Inter-NACHI?

1. Plumbing Issues CE# 191-06 (8)
2. HVAC Issues CE# 192-06 (8)
3. Electrical 101 CE# 193-06 (8)

4. Structural Red Flags in Residential Construction CE# 194-06 (8)
5. NACHI's Online Structural Course CE# 097-07 (4)
6. Thermal Imaging and Building Science CE# 117-08 (16)
7. Safe Practices for the Home Inspector CE# 126- 08 (4)
8. Thermal Imaging & Building Science (CE Teleconference Course) CE# 128-08 (16)
9. On-Line "Green Building" CE# 130-08 (8)
10. On-Line Plumbing Course CE# 170-08 (8)
11. Law & Order CE# 173-08 (4)
12. Inspection Water Heater Tanks CE# 175-08 (4)
13. Inspecting Means of Egress CE# 176-08 (4)
14. Introduction to Infrared Thermography Online Video Course CE# 184-08 (5)
15. Inter-NACHI'S On-Line Roofing Course CE# 187-08 (4)
16. Inter-NACHI'S On-Line Electrical Course CE# 188-08 (4)
17. Inter-NACHI'S On-Line Log Home Inspection Course CE# 189-08 (8)
18. Inter NACHI'S On-Line Wood Destroying Organism Inspection Course 003-09 (12)
19. On-Line Radon Measurement Service Provider Course 005-09 (12)
20. On-Line----Inspecting Foundation Walls and Piers 006-09 (3)
21. On-Line 25 Standards Every Inspector Should Know 007-09 (5)
22. On-Line Moisture Intrusion Inspection Course 008-09 (8)
23. On-Line Mold Inspection Training Online Video Course 021-09 (12)
24. On-Line Advanced HVAC Training Course 023- 09 (21)
25. Deck Inspections Course 037-09 (2)
26. How to Inspect HVAC Systems 049-09 (12)
27. How to Perform Exterior Inspection 050-09 (16)
28. How to Inspect the Attic, Insulation, Ventilation and Interior 001-10 (14)
29. Ho How to Perform Energy Audits Course 030- 10 (24)
30. How to Inspect Pools & Spas 034-10 (8)
31. How to Inspect Septic Systems 006-10 (10)