BIANEW
BUILDING INSPECTORS ASSOCIATION
NORTHEAST WISCONSIN

BIANEW BUZZ

SPRING Volume

APRIL 2020

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Special Events & Recognitions:

- March-May Birthdays:
- Adam Malzahn, March 2
- Eric Thiel, March 23
- Tom Spierowski, April 8
- John Zarate, April 13
- Tryg Jensen, May 4
- League of Wisconsin Municipalities Building Inspectors Institute: April 15-17
- May Building Safety Month
- June Building On-site Code Training.

WHAT'S NEW BIANEW

Using an old sailors aphorism—"steady as she goes with fair winds and following seas"; it's been a good start to 2020 with only a few small squalls to fair. We are still looking for a new port to call, after three years at the Stone Toad Bar and Grill. We are looking at Holidays in Fox Crossing to be our next safe harbor as this can facilitate our large and growing crew.

We would like to wish Brian Walter a bon voyage as he heads out on his next journey after serving the City of Neenah for 35 years.

In January, we introduced a few new members including Elizabeth Holzwarth, who is the building inspector employed at the City of Waupaca. Welcome Elizabeth! Our hopes are to recruit several new members to our association including more design professionals and contractors.

January and February we had presentations that gave members a little more knowledge regarding HVAC design and code non-compliances and building control layers, along with a few hours of additional CEU credits. We would like to thank our diligent Information and Schooling Committee members, John Zarate and Pete Scheuerman for their continued sedulous work on providing great speakers for the association. It looks to be a good line-up for the spring association meetings including a 2-hour firestop training with Matt Hadsell from Hilti Corporation followed by a visit by DSPS Secretary, Dawn Crim. May will bring in engineered lumber design and failures presented by Ryan Jones. June is our 18th annual Building Inspector on-site training with DSPS staff and inspectors.

The 2020 Winter Code Updates came and went and proved to be a success with good programs and presenters. This year we had a good turnout for the UDC day surpassing last years attendance by about 20 people, with 182 in attendance. We saw more contractors this year compared to years prior, with 49 and 15 design professionals. It is our hope to promote even more for the future updates. The commercial training was up slightly from last years as well, albeit, with less design professionals. We are working on providing AIA ceu credits for design professionals, which have not been offered by DSPS in the past updates. We, the association our hoping for higher meeting turnouts this year. If you can attend, we offer good educational programs and it's a good way to get to know your peers. Moreover, it's a great opportunity to share your concerns, code-related questions or experiences with members. Please find the time to be a part of a good team and family.

DSPS NEWS

DSPS is taking steps to overhaul the plan review processes to shorten wait times for customers and to increase efficiency for staff. The goal is to improve customer service by reviewing plans more quickly. These steps are working! In plumbing alone, staff were able to remove more than 1,000 hours of scheduled reviews for plans that were incomplete or duplicate. This has enabled staff to offer earlier review to all other scheduled plumbing plans.

The department is also now requiring customers to submit complete plans earlier in order to continue holding their scheduled review slots. For any projects added to the schedule on or after February 24, 2020, the department must receive complete plans ten business days prior to the scheduled review. Any projects without complete plans will be removed from the schedule, and another project will be slotted into that timeframe. (Any projects already on the schedule prior to February 24, 2020, regardless of the scheduled date of review, will be subject to the previous policy requiring complete plans within two business days of review.)

Customers are encouraged to submit complete plans as soon as the project allows. Submissions and scheduling will continue. However, in order to schedule an appointment prior to April 13, 2020, please contact the relevant tech email box and be prepared to submit complete plans.

Duplicate appointments are prohibited. As staff will identify duplicate appointment requests, they will be removed from the schedule without notice. Frequent submitters of duplicate appointments are advised to immediately cancel all duplicate appointments. Frequent submitters of duplicate appointments may have their ability to schedule plans electronically temporarily suspended.

A Day In The Life Of a Building Inspector

How do you become a building inspector? I have had some people ask me this question, which makes me stop and think about this inquiry. I really never had this on my list of dreams and aspirations when I was starting my career path. It's a career you really don't necessarily earn a degree or learn from text books (code books obviously). It's a position or career that befell many of us, perhaps by happen-chance from coming up through the trades or some other fortuitous door opening up and walking on through. Whatever paved your way, you have found a career that you hopefully enjoy, albeit, hectic, dynamic and multifaceted.

We all share an affinity in this sometimes nuanced, but often multi-faceted profession, which is code compliance to life, health and safety in the building industry. Our broad title, "code official" seems so linear. On the contrary, this position or title is anything but that. It is a dynamic profession with many hats we tend to wear: Sometimes educator, part-time student, listener, communicator, arbitrator, phycologist, and yes code enforcer. With all the different codes in zoning, building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, and fire & safety, we are in a maelstrom of knowing, understanding, interpreting and enforcing all of these codes in a professional and virtuous manner.

Many of us honed our skills and knowledge earning a college; or vocational degree, or coming up through the trades to land into this profession. Thus the experience provides knowledge and the tools to this position.

My ideology has always been prodaimed in this simple acronym: "IICE is my philosophy: INSPECT, INFORM, COMPLY & EDUCATE. With an emphasis on educate. The more we can educate, the easier our jobs may be. Establishing and building a solid foundation of respect, rapport, and professionalism builds a solid, long lasting structure of integrity. The opposite can bring it all down. Knowing the codes are one thing, but carrying the tools of professionalism, integrity, kindness, courteousness and being helpful are essential to building a good code official. A few code of ethics that I believe in and try to follow:

1.Strive for good personal appearance. 2.Maintain a good frame of mind. 3. Be a good listener. 4. Employ your time efficiently and be prompt on inspections. 5. Phone or text if unavoidably delayed. 6. Identify yourself. 7. Deal with the person in authority (i.e. project manager, job superintendent, etc.). 8. Cite the proper code sections. If unsure, research and ask a supervisor or code professional. 9. Use an inspection checklist during inspections. 10. Always strive for uniformity and consistency in your decisions and inspections. 11. Be willing and open to explain the code and its intent. 12. Resolve differences without argument (compliance not conflict). 13. Give compliments and comments for good workmanship. 14. Always document your actions (save emails, photos, inspection notes, etc). 15. Refuse to accept any favors. 16.Avoid conflicts of interest. 17. Employ efficiency in your filing methods. 18. Be conscientious of legal actions when writing orders or corrections (proper citation). 19. Issue stop work orders and citations only when necessary. 20. Take pride in your work, confidence in your ability, and have fun.

May is Building Safety Month

Building Safety Month is an annual public awareness campaign, initiated in the United States, that is celebrated by jurisdictions during the month of May. The campaign aims to help individuals, families and businesses think about the safety of buildings in their communities, which is frequently taken for granted, and understand what it takes to create safe and sustainable structures. Now in its 40th year, the campaign reinforces the need for the adoption of modern, regularly-updated building codes, a strong and efficient system of code enforcement and well-trained, professional workforce to maintain the system.

All communities need building codes to protect their citizens from disasters like fires, weather-related events and structural collapse. The effective enforcement of modern building codes are society's best way of protecting homes, offices, schools, manufacturing facilities, stores and entertainment venues. Code officials ae committed on a daily basis to keeping the public safe.

The campaign is presented by the International Code Council and its 64,000 members worldwide along with a diverse partnership of professionals from the building construction, design and safety communities. Corporations, government agencies, professional associations, NGOs and more come together to support Building Safety Month because they understand the need for safe and sustainable structures where we live, work and learn.

Electrical Fires In Residential Construction

Since the time buildings and residential dwellings were equipped with electrical wiring, after the turn of the twentieth century, it changed the way people lived forever. It was a great added convenience, which, in away you could say made the buildings safer, eliminating the use of candles and oil lamps. But with the advent of electrical wiring also came with it another potential fire hazard. Electrical systems have come along way in 100 years and so has the codes associated with them to make our dwellings more safe from failures and fires. In the last twenty years many electrical fires were diminished with the introduction of arc fault protection devices which were introduced in Wisconsin with adoption of the 2008 NEC. Yet, since the addition of arc fault protection there still was an estimated 24,000 residential fires in the U.S. from 2014–2016. These fires caused an estimated 310 deaths, 850 injuries and 871 million in property loss as reported by National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). Here are a few interesting facts:

1. Residential building electrical fires resulted in over twice the dollar loss per fire than residential building nonelectrical fires did.
2. Residential building electrical fires occurred most often on one– and two-family dwellings (83 percent).
3. Residential building electrical fires occurred most often in the winter month of January (12 percent).
4. In only 17 percent of residential building electrical fires, the fire spread was limited to the object where the fire started.
5. Residential building fires most often started in bedrooms (15 percent) and attics or vacant crawl spaces (13 percent).
6. The leading specific items most often first ignited in residential building fires were electrical wire, cable insulation (31 percent) and structural member framing (18 percent).
7. The leading specific factors contributing to the ignition of electrical fires were other electrical failure, malfunction (43 percent), unspecified short circuit arc (23 percent), and short circuit arc from defective, worn insulation (11 percent).
8. Smoke alarms were present in 51 percent and automatic extinguishing systems (AES) were present in 3 percent of electrical fires that occurred in occupied residential buildings.

Although electrical fires declined by 22 percent from 2007—2016, electrical malfunction was one of the four leading causes of residential fires during each of these ten years. Again, the leading cause of these are electrical system failures, appliance defects, incorrectly installed wiring, misuse and poor maintenance of electrical appliances and overloaded circuits and extension cords. (Courtesy of IAEI March 2020).

Building More Energy Efficient with T-Studs

In the last thirty years we have witnessed buildings evolve and being built more energy efficient, with new building materials, products and elements. Sometimes the building codes are slow to recognize these and the code official will need to rely on product approvals.

One new product that's coming into the building arena and is being utilized, is the Tstud. A Minnesota company developed this new system, created by Brian Iverson. His new 2 x 6 and 2 x 8 Tstuds are garnering a lot of attention among builders, designers and building and science professionals.

The Tstud is a new engineered building product that uses two lumber members, an internal truss system comprised of wood staggered dowels and a closed-cell foam that fills the web cavity. The R-19 2 x 6 Tstud takes away any potential for thermal bridging in the wall cavity and raises the bar on several construction conflicts including: thermal breaks, structural strength, wind loads, sound transmission and fire/life safety.

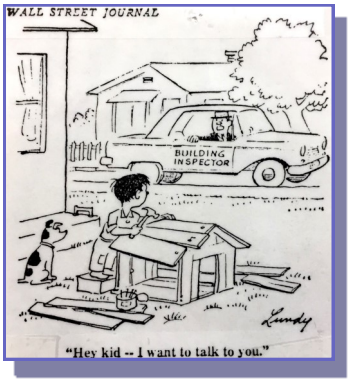
The R-19 Tstud is stronger than LSL or LVL stud-sized lumber in most applications up to 16 feet in height depending on wind and load conditions. Independent tests were performed on a Tstud system for a length of 10 feet, 24 " o.c., in straight down vertical compression to see how much a single stud could hold before failure of a similar #2 select 2 x 6, which held 4,300 lbs on average while the R-19 Tstud held 12,655 lbs. thus allowing wall heights up to 16 feet.

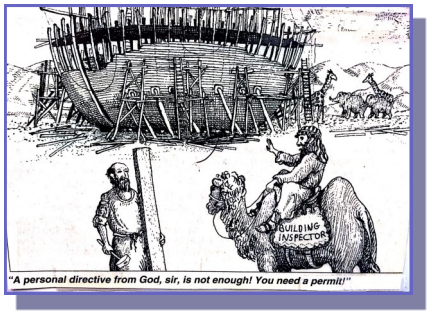
A built-in foam core gives the R-19 Tstud almost three times the insulation of a conventional wood 2 x 6 stud. The R-Value through a typical 2 x 6 wood stud is 6.88. Any wood member causes there to be a transfer of heat and cold from the exterior of the dwelling wall cavity, known as conduction. It provides a full R-19 thermal value and has a 99.23 percent complete thermal break through the stud. This can eliminate the need for continuous exterior rigid insulation to meet or exceed the 2015 energy code in all of the climate zones in North America.

To build a complete, continuous thermal wall system and air barrier system with continuous sheathing is essential in meeting new energy codes. The R-19 T stud wall assembly comprises all of the members needed to build and exterior and interior wall, including the top plates, bottom plates, sill plates under windows, all wall studs and cripples, and most headers used in construction up to an 8-foot opening which gives the walls system superior strength to withstand design wind loads.

Besides offering a complete thermal break through the wall assembly, the stud also offers an impressive ability to minimize the vibration of sound through a wall. The R-19 Tstud has been tested by USG to provide a sound transmission class rating of a +6, which is equivalent to a wall constructed with RC Channel being applied to both sides of a wall. This can be beneficial in sound transmission between rooms of hotels, motels, senior housing and in other commercial applications.

Code Enforcement Comics





Ask The Code Official:

1. The inspector left a rough-in inspection tag at the building site, in the dwelling with several code violations. The contractor called the inspector, asking what code sections were being called out because the inspector did not cite the code section on the tag. The inspector said you should know the code and it was not his job to go into detail. Does the contractor have a reasonable inquiry to ask what is the code section?

Answer: The contractor has the right to request the inspector to cite the code section and the inspector is required to properly cite the code non-compliance on the report. Per SPS 305.63 (5) Responsibilities. (a) A person who inspects one- and two-family dwellings as a certified inspector shall: 1. Maintain a record of the inspections made including the dates and the findings of the inspections. 2. Document any compliance deficiencies in the inspection report, and include the specific code reference or citation relative to the deficiency. 3. Provide a copy of the inspection report to the property owner or his or her agent. 4. Make inspection records available to the department upon request.

BIANEW

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Photos and Articles courtesy of Dennis Trygvie Jensen

BUILDING INSPECTORS ASSOCIATION

Compliance Not Conflict.

www.bianew.org

The Building Inspectors Association of Northeastern Wisconsin (BIANEW) is an organization of over 100 municipal Building Officials encompassing 21 counties. Members meet monthly to discuss code issues, learn about new building products and techniques, and promote building safety and uniformity of enforcement of state codes. A guest speaker is usually invited to speak to the group on a variety of topics related to the building industry. If interested you are invited to attend future meetings and you may also contact any of the officers listed on the home page for more information. BIANEW was formed in 1971 by a group of 16 municipal inspectors who saw the educational benefits of regular monthly meetings with their fellow inspectors. The first meeting was held June 15th, 1971 at the Shawano City Hall due to its centralized location and most monthly meetings are still held in Shawano. The Organization is headed up by a group of 4 elected officers who are dedicated to maintaining the high professional standards set by the original charter members.

Inspector Spotlight: Rob Cormier City of Green Bay

This issue we would like to shine the spot light on Green Bay Building Inspector, Rob Cormier. Rob grew up in Green Bay, his father was a firefighter and his Grandfather, Robert was millworker and also did carpentry and roofing. Rob found his first experience in the trades working with his grandfather and father learning, carpentry and roofing at a ripe old age of thirteen. All throughout high school, Rob honed his craft in construction gaining experience from these two monumental mentors.

After graduating from West High School in 1979, he joined the union after being hired at Copps warehouse. Working for over a year in a futureless job, Rob enrolled at UW Stevens Point where he learned how to chase a girl of his dreams for whom he eventually married in August of 1990. After a year at point, Rob ran out of money and returned to Green Bay where he enrolled at UWGB. Working part-time with a siding and roofing contractor, Joe Dery (Dery Exteriors) who also mentored Rob and became another influential person in his life. Rob recalled, " Joe trusted me in all the nuances of his business, from field work, sales and marketing. I learned a lot from him and I also saw him confront an overzealous building inspector with a solid right hook" (Rob's first witnessed experience and indelible image of an inspector learning to fly).

After a year at UWGB, Rob enrolled in Architectural Technology at NWTC in 1983. To pay for his education, he worked part-time at UPS, another union job. In 1985 Rob earned his associate degree and the future was wide open with a pocket full of dreams and a hungry mind, he found a job at Hoida Lumber as a designer in their engineering and component department. He worked for Hoida Lumber for five years until he was laid-off. After reading an article about a local company that manufactured and sold log homes, Rob was intrigued and saw an opportunity. Rob met the owner of Wisconsin Log Homes and sold himself into the position as a designer and draftsman, for which he became very adept at it. Prior to working there, Rob was looking in the Sunday job adds and saw an opening for a building inspector position at Green Bay. This was another intriguing opportunity so Rob applied, interviewed, but did not get the job, but it set a path that eventfully he followed. It was when his employment had ended after two years at Wisconsin Log Homes that he again saw a job opening for an inspector at Green Bay. Rob went in with a different attitude and a hunger for the opportunity; and on March 2, 1992 he found a new direction and career.

By this time he had married the girl he had chased all those years back and was looking to buy a house and start a family, for which this job gave him stability. Although, he was wondering if he could be a code enforcer, having remembered his stigma about inspectors. Rob recalled "One thing that helped get the job was when I was at NWTC the instructor, Oliver Herrick made us buy code books and learn the building codes, which actually benefited me when I worked for Hoida Lumber and Wisconsin Log Homes."

Once employed as a building inspector, Rob was still concerned about the enforcement aspect, but he remembered what his Grandfather George had told him, "Rob you're honest; you're hard-working; you have a good moral compass and good ethics. If you don't change that and you stay true to yourself, you will do just fine." So with these words of wisdom from his grandfather, Rob set off with the mindset to de-stigmatize the reputation that building inspector's are the enemy. Rob recalled, "When I got the job, I decided that I'm not going to be that guy - that they say, 'Here comes that F**###ing building inspector'. I want to be the guy that they say, all right, here comes Rob who will answer my questions, give me some guidance, or who I can call anytime with code questions or problems That was my concern when I started at thirty years of age; can I be that guy? Because, all my past experiences with inspectors was always negative. I didn't want to be that guy. In this business you can compromise yourself, but if you are honest, helpful and human it doesn't take long before that becomes a buzzword and you're known as a good inspector. And I'm very proud of the fact that in 29 years that the buzzword is still, 'Hey, we can talk to Rob—he'll help us—he's not a bottleneck and he's honest; and that's the satisfaction I get in this position."

Rob is going on his 29th year with the city and has no plans to retire just yet, nor do we want to see this venerable sage slip into lethargy of retirement. Rob has been married to Peggy for 29 years and has a daughter, Patria Elizabeth 27. She has provided Rob and Peggy with two grandchildren, Olive, 2 and Liam 8. Son, Robert Fabian is 24 years old and is a carpenter. Rob enjoys family time, hunting, fishing, playing guitar, woodworking and riding his motorcycle (43 years riding).