



# THE OBSERVER

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[www.cnyashi.com](http://www.cnyashi.com)



**Gregg Harwood**  
**2013 Award for Excellence Recipient**



**Congratulations go out to Al Cooper!**

*"Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it."  
~Maya Angelou*



# THE OBSERVER



We are always on the lookout for articles or items of interest. Anything which you feel would help educate our readership. Please feel free to forward to either Mike Chapman or

Tom Sherman. Also, if you should have any thoughts or ideas which you feel would make this a better publication, please let us know.

### CNY-ASHI Officers and Committee Chairs

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*CNY-ASHI Website/Newsletter– Tom Sherman*

*Membership/Mentoring/Chapter Photographer-Dave Gambocarto*

*Building Performance Institute Liaison– Ed Voytovich*

*NYSAHI Representative–Bob Sterner, Annie-Laurie Hunter*

*Chaplain– Will Morgan*

## *WHAT’S NEXT...*

### *MONTHLY CHAPTER MEETING*

**WHERE::** Tony’s Restaurant  
3004 Burnet Ave., Syracuse, NY 13206 (638-2930)

**WHEN:** Wednesday, April 10, 2013. 6:00 PM

## Effects from treated lumber additives



*Sent in by Annie-Laurie Hunter, from Ardent home Inspections. This is what we should be looking for very closely . We are right around the timeframe when the effects from the newer treated lumber additives are kicking in.*



## Seminar Recap

*By Tom Sherman~ Editor*

**A**nother seminar has come and gone, and this one was a good one! Many thanks go out to those who helped to make this a huge success! From to the presenters, to the registration folks, all the way to our chapter members who always make our out-of-chapter participants feel so welcome. I especially want to thank our attendees, as you are the ones that we do this for. Scott McClurg, from McClurg Associates completely nailed (pun intended) the deck presentation, bringing us up to speed with the newest requirements, and well as honing in on the effects that treated lumber additives have on metal fasteners. (We will be putting this presentation on the website shortly. Stay tuned!) Our own Bob Sterner, who provided an

eye-opening presentation on electrical sub panels. Bob is always willing to step in and assist.

Let's not forget our friend George Schambach, who can make watching paint dry an interesting topic, as he taught us what to look for when inspecting fuel tanks.

Not to mention yours truly, with the help of Peter Apgar, giving a slate roof presentation that was as much fun to prepare for as it was to teach. (Anyone want to buy a slate roof mock-up??)

If anybody ever wonders if the work involved in putting this annual event on is worth it, one only needs to listen to the feedback we get. This seminar was well represented by inspectors throughout the State. Coming from points as far west as Buffalo, as far east at the Schenectady area, and as far south at

the State of Pennsylvania. Let's not forget the large group that always makes their way north from the STAHI group in the Binghamton area. We appreciate not only your consistent support, but also the strong bonds and friendships that we have created and nurtured over the years. I would like to encourage our uninvolved chapter members to step up for next year's seminar. In fact, step up by providing a monthly education program. Yes, this is work and it takes time and commitment, though the rewards are many and I promise you, every class you prepare for will make you a better inspector.



Stay safe

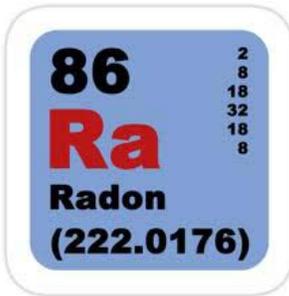




# Radon Testing

By Mike Chapman

**A**s home inspectors, we are sometimes hired to perform additional tests, such as pest inspections, mold testing, lead paint, septic dye tests, etc. Almost all of us do radon testing, and most of us are certified by New York State DOH ELAP. We follow the protocol, we do the calibrations, duplicates, cross-checks, background tests, and tolerate the audits. Sometimes I get readings at 3.8 or 3.9 pCi/l. Or sometimes at 4.1 or 4.2. "Is it OK? Should we do another test?" I hate that!!! I'd much rather get a reading of 37.6 pCi/l.....no question



I've been doing radon testing for fifteen years. Up until a few years ago, I would tell my clients purchasing homes in the Bayberry development in Liverpool, that they needn't concern themselves with radon, as readings above 4.0 were pretty much non-existent in that area. Then I had an insistent client who just wanted to be sure. What the heck, for a few bucks, he'd have some peace of mind. Low and behold the radon reading came out above 15.0 pCi/l. I was surprised. A few days later, I got a call from the neighbor of the property, wanted me to test his house....came in at 15.3. And then another neighbor, again...15.6....and so on. It turned out that I tested half a dozen houses on this street with high radon readings. Go figure!! High levels of radon can be anywhere!!

Here's another thing about radon... levels can change from year to year, and day to day. No kidding!!

I did a radon test on a property in the Lyncourt area of Syracuse in November 2009. The reading came in at 2.5 pCi/

l. Everybody's happy because it is less than 4.0. Buyer is happy, seller is happy, agents are happy because deal is not glitched up with high radon. I'm happy because I get paid. Three years and three months later, guy is selling the same house, new buyer wants a radon test. The home inspector/radon tester (not me) is a certified NYS DOH radon tester and a good friend of mine. The reading in February 2013 is 5.1 pCi/l, clearly above the 4.0 level. The seller (my client from three years ago) wants to know what the heck is going on. After all, he had a radon test done when he bought the house, and it was OK!! Questions are asked....How can one test show less than 4.0 and another more than 4.0? Were the radon monitors properly calibrated? Certified testers? Windows open?

I don't know. I offered to test again, and I used two monitors, side by side. The test was only a couple of days later, readings came out at 6.9 and 7.2. So we have radon readings of 2.5, then 5.1, then 7.1...Go figure!!

So....here's the thing....Radon is kind of a mystery. Radon exists everywhere. It is more prevalent in some areas than other areas. Radon levels can change from year to year and from day to day. Radon testing is not a finite science. There are so many variables we have no control over, and it's not just about windows open or windows closed. We test radon in a finite 48 hour period, however, the next 48 hours could be different.

In the foreseeable future, I suspect the ELAP testing methods will remain the same, and we, as certified radon testers, will continue to perform radon testing using the same protocol....and, yup, readings might be different next time. Go figure!!



CERTIFIED  
INSPECTOR

## Thoughts to ponder:

*"No man has a good enough memory to make a successful liar."*

Abraham Lincoln

*"The trouble with the rat race is that even if you win, you're still a rat."*

Lily Tomlin

*"Sometimes I think the surest sign that intelligent life exists elsewhere in the universe is that none of it has tried to contact us."*

Bill Watterson

*"The more laws and order are made prominent, the more thieves and robbers there will be"*

Lao-tzu





# Eyeballs



*Gives me the willies just looking at the photo. Submitted by Dave Gambocarto, these are pictures of a 6 foot long shed snake skin that he recently encountered during an inspection. Makes you wonder where the rest of this creature is.*



## Quality first!!



*This is a brand new home! Yet another reason why people should "waste their money" on Stage Inspections. Submitted by Dan Hager, Tyler Home Inspections.*

## CNY-ASHI LIBRARY

*The chapter library is filled with books, videos and an assortment of other excellent training and refresher information relating to our profession. Everything from setting up and running a home inspection business, to technical journals and training information is at your fingertips.*

*As a chapter member, you are allowed to access this information free of charge. Mike has just put an updated list of the contents on the TRAINING PAGE of the CNY ASHI Website. Check it out.*

*We are always on the lookout for additional items for this library. Also, if you are looking for specific information on items we have, please contact Mike at: [solutions@mikementerprises.com](mailto:solutions@mikementerprises.com)*

*Chapter Librarian, **Mike Mollura**~*

***Mike M Enterprises, LLC***

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**CENTRAL NEW YORK ASHI OBSERVER**

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Correspondence to the chapter or articles for consideration should be emailed to Tom Sherman, Absolute Home Inspection [tom@absolutehomeinspection.com](mailto:tom@absolutehomeinspection.com). Central New York ASHI reserves the right to reject any submitted articles. Central New York ASHI, it's officers, agents employees, editors and authors of contributed material assume no liability whatsoever with the published contents of this newsletter. Opinions of statements of authors or advertisers are their own and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Central New York ASHI, it's agents or editors. Any discussion or material is for general informational purposes only and does not imply that other opinions are not available or are not suitable.

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***Upcoming Calendar of Events***

- **March Meeting—**
  - **Where—Tony's Restaurant**
  - **When—April 10, 2013**  
**6:00 PM**

**Next Year's ASHI Conference**  
**NASHVILLE. Stay tuned for details!**

