

# CAHI MONTHLY NEWS



## President's Corner

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday and is looking forward to a prosperous new year. Hopefully the housing market will improve over the next year so the inspection industry will pick up!

Just a reminder don't forget to sign up for our annual law seminar on Tuesday January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012 starting at 4:30 pm. We decided to extend the seminar discount of \$79.00 until Friday January 6<sup>th</sup> at midnight. Don't wait till the last minute and miss out on this savings. The seminar is open to all (members, non-members, inspectors, interns, trades people, etc).

Before the seminar begins you should have enough time to browse around and speak with several vendors about their products and services. It's kind of like a mini home show with many more benefits. While enjoying your dinner, refreshments and live entertainment you get a chance to socialize with fellow inspectors in a relaxed setting. Nowhere else can you receive what CAHI has to offer!

Finally, the board is reviewing several website designer's proposals and hopefully our new website will be up and running over the next several months. We have many exciting and informative upcoming seminars and bus trips in the works for the new year. They should be listed on our website soon. On behalf of the board, we want to wish our members and their families a happy new year. Hope to see everyone at the law seminar!

Scott Monforte, President

Dec 2011/Jan 2012 Volume 3, Issue 12

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Meeting Dates	
Dec	NO MEETING HAPPY HOLIDAYS
Jan 10	Law Seminar Kent Mawhinney
Feb 23	Leak Detection Alison Buckley
<b>Regular Meeting Location:</b> (otherwise noted) <b>Holiday Inn</b> 201 Washington Ave. North Haven, CT. (203) 239-6700	

# „Whoops Poor Santa!!“

This must be the ultimate Christmas yard decoration...

The folks who own the property always have eye-catching displays celebrating various holidays through the year... this year for Jületide they have certainly outdone themselves!

Merry Christmas





# Replacing a Bulkhead Door

Proper flashing and a solid base of pressure-treated lumber and cellular PVC promise long life

by Emanuel Silva



## Existing Conditions

I occasionally get asked to replace basement access doors. Usually the doors are in pretty bad shape (A), and more often than not, the bulkhead itself is in need of repair. On the job shown here, for example, the concrete and stone base was beginning to crumble, and the top surface was cracked and uneven (B). When I first looked at the job, the gutter downspout terminated between the house and the bulkhead, to the left of the doors; it had been dumping water in the corner for years, saturating the masonry. By the time I returned to start work, the homeowner had taken care of this, directing the downspout to the right of the bulkhead and away from the house.



With conditions like these, I can't just pull off the old doors and install new ones. I want a flat, watertight surface to work from, so I make a base from pressure-treated lumber and trim it with cellular PVC. This gives me a secure attachment point and raises the unit a few inches off the concrete, which helps prevent rust and gives better protection against water intrusion.

## A Solid Base of Pressure-Treated Wood

### Layout

I typically install Gordon Cellar Doors ([gordoncellardoor.com](http://gordoncellardoor.com)). The first thing I do is spread out the parts in a well-lit area to make sure every piece is accounted for. (If anything's missing, I don't start the job until I have it.) Then I preassemble the steel base so that I have the exact measurements I need for my pressure-treated frame (A).



A

Sides

To avoid having to remove more than one course of the house's vinyl siding, I kept the wood base as low as possible at the top, marking the height on a treated 2x6 (B), then cutting the tapered side pieces using a plywood rip guide (C). After checking the fit on the bulkhead, I glued together two of these tapered pieces to make each 3-inch-wide side piece (D, E). For exterior woodwork, I use a DAP exterior adhesive and coated deck screws (F), which have more holding power than nails and don't split the wood when installed.



B



C



D



E



F

Bottom

I ripped the bottom pieces to match the angle of the sides (A), again using two pieces to get a wider frame. I glued and screwed them together (B), as I did with the sides, then cut the laminated piece to length (C). I applied Woodlife Coppercoat preservative to all the pieces to help prevent the wood from rotting (D), and the frame was ready to assemble.



A



B



C



D

### Assembly

I predrilled holes for long timber screws, then applied adhesive (A) and screwed the tapered sides to the bottom piece (B). A cleat tacked across the sides kept the frame from racking as I positioned it (C). After shimming the bottom with strips of PVC so that it rested flat, I predrilled holes through the wood into the concrete and secured the frame with Tapcon screws (D). Given the poor condition of the concrete, this seemed safer than using powder-actuated fasteners.



A



B



C



D

## Rotproof PVC Cap

### Assembling the Cap

These days I always use cellular PVC for exterior trim projects - primarily Kleer ([kleerlumber.com](http://kleerlumber.com)), as that's the brand my lumberyard stocks. I always use pocket screws as well as PVC glue for fast, strong joints. I mount a Kreg bench clamp to my portable worktable and use a Kreg Mini jig to drill the holes (A). I made the cap out of 3/4-inch stock, gluing and screwing the top together (B, C), then adding a tapered vertical skirt underneath to match the tapered pressure-treated wood frame. I cut the tapered sides with my track saw (D), then glued and screwed them to the top (E, F).



A



B



C



D



E



F

### Attaching the Cap

After testing the fit, I applied thick beads of Phenoseal adhesive caulk to both the PVC cap (A) and the wood frame (B). I posi-

tioned the cap, squared it up (C), and screwed it to the frame (D). Prepositioning the screws in their holes makes the installation go fast.



A



B



C



D

When screwing through PVC this way, I always predrill tapered countersunk holes, then glue in plugs that I cut on site from scrap PVC. The plug-cutter and countersinks I use are made by Fuller ([wlfuller.com](http://wlfuller.com)). I trim the tops of the plugs off with my Tajima 18-point flush-cutting saw, sand the surface, and end up with a perfectly concealed screw.

I frequently see rot around the sill on unflashed bulkhead doors; applying a rubber flashing under the existing housewrap before installing the unit is critical. Before sliding the cap into place, I always apply a thick bead of Phenoseal to the top edge of the cap where it meets the house, then secure it with pocket screws against the membrane, leaving a watertight joint (E).



E

### Installing the Access Cover

Before installing the door unit, I always do a dry fit, just in case. There were no problems with this one, so after running a thick bead of caulking along the sides and top of the metal frame (A), I set it in place. I don't caulk the bottom in case any water needs to drain out.



A

When you adjust these units for square, it's important to have both doors on so that you end up with an equal space between them. After getting the unit in position, I predrilled holes into the cap, then followed with stainless steel screws (B). I've found that other kinds of screws always rust, leaving stains on the metal and concrete.



**B**

Next I cleaned off the caulk squeeze-out between the metal unit and the cap, then added a strip of 3/4-inch PVC across the top, against the wall. I installed an aluminum cap flashing over the PVC strip, sealing it to the rubber membrane on the wall before reinstalling the vinyl siding.

Finally, I parged the existing curb (C). First I removed loose mortar and repacked the larger gaps, then I brushed on Weldbond ([weldbond.com](http://weldbond.com)), a bonding agent that seals the porous concrete and helps the new mortar adhere. I immediately followed with the new mortar. To close up the gaps between the curb and the PVC trim, I used a tube of Quikrete mortar caulk; I applied this to both the inside and the outside of the frame and cap.



**C**

This project took me about two days, including the time to remortar the curb. Depending on the amount of extra repair work involved, bulkhead replacements typically sell for \$1,500 to \$2,500.

December 2011

## DPH: It's Not Too Late to Get Vaccinated for the Flu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Connecticut Department of Public Health

December 5, 2011

Contact: William Gerrish

(860) 509-7270

Hartford – This holiday season, the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) encourages residents to share good tidings and not the flu by getting vaccinated. The announcement comes as the state recognizes National Influenza Vaccination Week, which runs from December 4-11.

“Now that we’re in December, some people may think that it’s too late to get vaccinated for the flu,” said DPH Commissioner Dr. Jewel Mullen. “In Connecticut, we typically see the flu season peak between late December and early March, making now a great time to get vaccinated.”

This year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention encourage all people over the age of six months old to be vaccinated. Vaccines are encouraged for everyone, but especially for high-risk groups, including children from 6 months to 18 years of age, women who will be pregnant during the flu season, people at least 50 years old, anyone with certain chronic medical conditions and people who live in nursing homes or long-term care facilities. Health care and emergency medical services personnel should also be vaccinated against the flu to protect themselves and their patients from infection.

State health officials say that Connecticut is currently experiencing low influenza activity in the state. “Even though we’re still seeing low levels of flu activity in Connecticut, we expect to see an increase in activity as the season progresses. By getting vaccinated now, you can protect yourself and your loved ones from the flu when the flu season is at its peak,” stated Dr. Mullen.

Every year in the United States, on average, 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications, and between 3,300 and 48,000 people die from the flu. Persons with influenza usually experience a rapid onset of fever, chills, headache, and muscle ache followed by a runny nose, sore throat and cough, which is often severe and lasts for many days. Most persons with influenza recover within two to seven days.

Children under the age of nine years old may need to receive two doses of the flu vaccine to be fully protected from the flu. Parents whose children have received their first dose of the vaccine should contact their health care provider or clinic where they were vaccinated to see if a second dose is required.

When children who live in impoverished and crowded communities get influenza, they are at increased risk for getting seriously ill and being hospitalized with the flu. It is very important that parents of children in these areas have their children vaccinated for the flu to prevent serious, or even life-threatening, illness. Vaccines are available at no charge for children who are uninsured through the Vaccines for Children Program. For information on the Vaccines for Children program, please call the Department of Public Health Immunizations Program at (860) 509-7929.

In addition to receiving the flu vaccine, there are other steps you can take to avoid the flu this year and stay healthy:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick, too.
- Stay home when you are sick. If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Seek care early. See your healthcare provider immediately if you develop flu symptoms; antiviral medications can help if taken early in the illness.

To find a flu vaccine clinic and to learn more about seasonal influenza, visit the CT Flu Watch web site at [www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch](http://www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch) and click on “Find a Clinic” in the left hand column. You can also call the Department of Public Health Immunizations Program at (860) 509-7929 for information on flu clinics in your area or check with your health care provider to see if they have the vaccine available.

## **DPH Urges CT Residents to Test Homes for Radon**

### ***Testing for Radon Gas is Simple and Inexpensive***

**Hartford** —The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) is urging Connecticut residents to test their homes for radon gas, the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers. Health officials estimate that radon is responsible for more than 21,000 lung cancer deaths each year in the United States.

Radon, a naturally-occurring radioactive gas formed from the natural decay of uranium, is found in rock, soil and water. While radon in outdoor air poses a relatively low threat to human health, radon can enter homes from the surrounding soil and become a health hazard inside buildings.

“Radon is present at elevated levels in about one of every five homes in Connecticut,” stated DPH Commissioner Dr. Jewel Mullen. “However, because you can’t see or smell radon, people are often unaware that there might be a silent killer in their home.”

All Connecticut homes should be tested for radon and action should be taken to reduce high levels. Testing homes for radon is simple and inexpensive. Radon test kits can be ordered online from National Radon Program Services at <http://sosradon.org/test-kits>. Kits can also be purchased from the American Lung Association of New England by calling 1-800 LUNG USA.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recommends that homes with radon levels at 4.0 pCi/L or higher should be fixed. Radon exposure at any level poses some health risk. Homeowners should consider reducing radon levels that are greater than 2.0 pCi/L.

Radon problems can be corrected by qualified radon contractors, with costs typically ranging between \$1,200 and \$1,500. A homeowner should hire a qualified radon mitigation (reduction) contractor to decrease airborne radon levels.

To learn more about radon including a list of qualified radon mitigation contractors, visit the DPH Radon Program web site at [www.ct.gov/dph/radon](http://www.ct.gov/dph/radon) or call (860) 509-7367.

*The Connecticut Department of Public Health is the state’s leader in public health policy and advocacy with a mission to protect and promote the health and safety of the people of our state. To contact the department, please visit its website at [www.ct.gov/dph](http://www.ct.gov/dph) or call (860) 509-7270.*

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*Articles published in CAHI Monthly are the sole opinion of the author. CAHI does not endorse or state a position for or against the content of said articles.*

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<b>Director</b>	<b>Stanley Bajerski</b> , Milford 203-257-1694	Pete Petrino	<p><i>The Licensing Board meetings are held at 9:30 am Dept of Consumer Protection 165 Capitol Avenue. Hartford The public is always welcome.</i></p>	
<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Dan Kristiansen</b> , Shelton 203-257-0912	Dwight Uffer		
<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Margaret Conable</b> , New Haven 203-415-5700	<p>They have served as our primary leaders and in other capacities since 1992.</p> <p>Please thank them for their service when you have a chance.</p>		
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Published by: JBDR & Associates, LLC

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