



SAABE TIMES

A publication of the San Antonio Association of Building Engineers

February 2005

Mark Your Calendar—

JOIN US FOR OUR FEBRUARY LUNCHEON

The next General Membership Meeting of the San Antonio Association of Building Engineers is set for 11:30 am on Wednesday, February 16. This month's speaker is Special Agent Michael D. Wise from the local office of the FBI, speaking on "Terrorism Threats and Response for Building Engineers." Raised all over the world in a US military family, Agent Wise graduated from St. Mary's University with BA in psychology. He served in the US Army for 7 years in the military intelligence and military police branches. He has 21 years experience as an FBI Special Agent including assignments in Indianapolis, San Juan, Puerto Rico, along the U.S./ Mexico border in Del Rio, and for the last 5 years, in San Antonio. He is currently assigned as the leader of the crime scene investigations team for the FBI's San Antonio Division and as a Weapons of Mass Destruction Coordinator for the Joint Terrorism Task Force.

The meeting will be held in the first floor Travis/Bowie rooms, to the right of the entrance. There is plenty of parking at the back of the restaurant. **Please make sure to check in at the front desk when you arrive.**

Please RSVP to (210) 408-1699 by Tuesday, February 15. PLEASE RSVP so we can be sure to have enough meals on hand!

We hope to see you there! ❖

Celebrating Twenty Years of
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IREM Training Seminar

Elevator Inspections, Boiler Inspections and Texas Accessibility Standards

Sponsored by the Institute for Real Estate Mgmt (IREM)

- Friday, February 18, Doubletree Hotel (37 NE Loop 410)
- Cost: \$65
- 8:30–11:30am, snacks provided, but no meals
- Staff members from the Texas Dept. of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) provide an informative and practical seminar, covering issues related to elevator inspections and compliance with changing standards, boiler inspection requirements and standards, a comparison of Texas Accessibility Standards to ADA standards, and other important guidelines and inspection requirements.
- RSVP to IREM at 512-301-3311.

Education and Events

Cooling Technology Institute Annual Conference

- February 28–March 3, San Antonio
- Visit www.cti.org for more details.

HVAC Test Preparation Seminar

- Sponsored by Construction Seminars, endorsed by the Texas Air Conditioning Contractors Association
- March 11–13, Houston
- Cost: \$450
- Call 1-888-500-PASS or visit www.constructionseminars.com for more info.

2005 National Electrical Code

- Sponsored by National Technology Transfer, Inc.
- March 1–3, Dallas
- For more information, visit www.nttinc.com.

Contact Laura Bray (408-1699) if you know of other courses or events. ❖

A Message from the President

by Bob Beal

At our last luncheon, we had the pleasure of hosting Ray Martinez (Chief City Electrical Inspector), who informed us on some key changes to our city electrical code. The city is getting out of licensing business due to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation absorbing almost all electrical licenses, including the Maintenance Electrical License (MEL). If you have an MEL and want to keep it, you will soon have to take a state test. You will also need 8,000 hrs under another MEL or a master electrician. So that puts most of us out of that line. Also in two years the San Antonio Electrical Examining and Supervising Board is planning on dropping the MEL, the one license that most of hold. Due to the reaction at the last luncheon, SAABE put this under the microscope to see how or if this would affect us for better or for worse. The "Charlie" drafted a letter to Ray Martinez (see excerpts below) with some of our concerns, hoping to stir some interest with the Electrical Board. He also found some promising language in the state code that may be in our favor. Mike Halvorsen, Charlie Mikolajczyk, Jock Tilghman, and I attended the Examining Board's last monthly meeting. I have to say that we were treated very professionally and given a chance to address the board. Mike (SAABE 2nd Vice President) said a few words for SAABE and did a great job. The letter that Charlie composed seemed to be well accepted by the Electrical Board members. There is too much information about this to write in this newsletter; however, any of us are available to talk in detail about what we are

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planning to do next. Rest assured, we are sticking to this one. There will be public hearings on this issue on March 1 and March 10. All of you are welcome to attend these meetings to raise your concerns. Remember, we have to be organized. If you want to attend and participate, please contact one of us so we can fill you in on our mindset at this point.

Don't miss the 2004 Building Engineer of the Year Award at the March meeting. Our three finalists are listed on page 6.

(Excerpts from the letter sent by SAABE to the City Electrical Board. The entire letter can be found on the SAABE web site at www.saabe.org, or call Laura Bray, and she will fax you a copy.)

TO: Raymond Martinez, CEI
Chief Electrical Inspector
City of San Antonio

RE: Proposed Revisions to Chapter 10 (Electrical Code)

Dear Mr. Martinez:

Please review the concerns of the San Antonio Association of Building Engineers (SAABE) regarding the proposed amendments to Chapter 10 and the effects it will have on our industry. Also, please forward/address our concerns to the Electrical Examining & Supervising Board and the Chapter 10 Code Committee.

First, we would like to point out that SAABE, whose 175 members maintain large office buildings in San Antonio, greatly opposes the proposed changes, particularly in regards to the elimination of the Maintenance Technicians. Please review the following concerns.

The majority of our members hold a Maintenance Technician license. We have also and in "good faith" secured our Electrical Maintenance Permits. In our industry, the Maintenance Technician fits within our needs. For many of us, we did not wish to pursue the Maintenance Electrician

(Continued on page 4)

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Tech Talk #91: Don't Wait 'Til It's Too Late, Part 1 by The Charlie

You just saw it on the counter. Honestly, it was right there a second ago. Yet, in a flash, your wallet or purse is AWOL, and the hunt is on. So when do you call off the search and dial up the credit card companies to cancel your accounts?

In these days of burgeoning identity theft, industry insiders insist you pick up the phone instantly. If you're in public (as in, "I had it at Academy but not at Hooter's"), impose a 15-minute rule—just enough time to retrace your most recent steps. If you're at home, increase that limit to an hour.

But when the clock runs down, here's the drill:

Call the Credit Card Companies

Somewhere in your home (NOT in your wallet), you should keep a list of credit card account numbers and phone numbers to the issuing banks' customer service departments. At the least, take everything out of your wallet or purse and copy it. Unfortunately, few find the motivation until they're frantically searching for a billfold. Credit card companies have established easy-to-recall numbers like 1-800-VISA 911 or 1-800-MasterCard with this in mind. These customer service reps walk you through the process and notify the individual banks.

Expect to pass a security test at this gate! It could be that they'll ask your address, mother's maiden name, or details on a recent purchase you made. Remember—They're trying to protect you, not make you mad.

Tell the representative that you have lost your card, followed by the place, time, and amount of the last transaction you know you made. Although the ultimate decision rests solely with the issuer, this call doesn't automatically commit you to the disruption of switching account numbers; it is possible to merely flag the old number for unauthorized activity. With the competition out there today, many banks will work with the cardholder much more closely than in the past. Be aware this "flag" route means you may be delayed at the store the next time you use the found card, since the credit card company needs to verify it's really you rather than an impostor.

A good rule is that if you haven't found the card after a few hours of searching, cancel it. Better safe than sorry.

Don't Pay for Account-Closing Chores

If you take the cancellation route, both Visa and MasterCard can send replacement plastic into your hands anywhere in the world within 24 hours (so they say). In some cases, banks send the new cards to the airport where you are scheduled to land. Everything from your previous account (amounts due, incentive programs, interest rate deals) transfers to the new plate, although it's up to you to update merchants with recurring charges, such as your cable bill or health club dues.

The Federal Trade Commission reminds you to pick different Personal Identification Numbers and passwords for these new accounts, too.

Some companies offer to handle these account-closing chores for a fee, a temptation you should resist. I don't know about you, but I'd never feel comfortable handing all my credit information and personal details to some company. Who are these people? It's not worth the risk.

Notify DPS

Canceling credit cards takes approximately five minutes each; replacing your driver license requires more tenacity. Arrive there armed with back-up documentation to prove your existence: a passport, birth certificate, Social Security card, marriage license, etc. You were too intelligent to carry that Social Security card in your wallet, weren't you? The game gets uglier. It's not as if you can get a new government ID number in a snap. You usually need an extreme case or governmental support like the witness protection program to change your SSN. Yet if that number turns up in the wrong hands, a stranger has the key to your medical records, IRS payments, passport data, and more.

The FTC recommends you first call its hotline (877-IDTHEFT or 438-4338), followed by a call to the Social Security Administration at 800-772-1213.

File a Police Report

This step, too, requires another trip. But filing an official report adds validity to your story. It tells the world, "I really did lose the card; I'm not just having buyer's remorse over a \$900 purchase!" Definitely save a copy of the report as proof, should odd purchases begin cropping up in your account.

If you last saw your pocketbook in a public place, be succinctly specific with the details: "I walked into the President's Hall meeting room at the Wyndham Hotel, dropped my purse in a chair, and headed for the podium. There were 14 people in the room. When I returned approximately seven minutes later, my purse had disappeared.

CHARLIE'S LAW: Ever wonder why in the attempt to catch something minor falling off the table, something else of great importance gets knocked off as well?

NEXT MONTH: Part II: Credit Bureaus

JUSTA MAINTENANCE MAN ❖



President (continued from page 2)

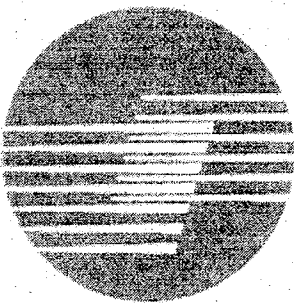
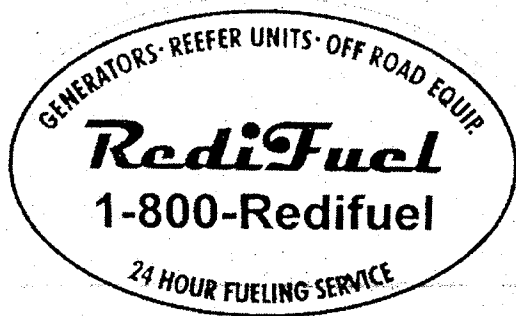
licensing due to the burden of congregating the 8,000 previous hours from the various shops we have worked in. This is due to the required Continuing Education Credits necessary to uphold the license. Please note that we have other certifications/licenses for the other trades, for which we already must maintain a specific amount of CEU's each year, and this would be adding to the existing criteria we already face. Additionally, for many of us, there are budget constraints on how many classes that can be taken each year so this also places an additional burden upon us.

Another issue is that a Journeyman/Maintenance Electrician (both need 8,000 hours under a master electrician,

so we consider them to be the same) is not particularly the best candidate as a Building or Chief Engineer due to the fact that their skills are mostly limited to one trade. We do not wish to belittle anyone, but we would like to point out that a large percentage of the carded Journeymen are at a loss between the line side and the load side connections in a Y Delta, Solid State, Reduced Voltage, etc., type of starter cabinet. The same applies inside a motor control center. The other issue is that Journeyman wages are \$19 per hour/\$39,520 per year. This is very difficult to justify in our salary budgets for a person with less responsibilities than that of a Chief or Building Engineer. Furthermore, we are perplexed as to where we are to find these electricians when the IBEW #60 is presently advertising the need of skilled electricians on local television?

As a Maintenance Manager, it is with first-hand experience that we can describe the difficulties of attempting to hire a Journeyman into our industry. It is extremely difficult to convince (or find) an electrician who will agree to plunging commodes and other demeaning duties that would be a part of their job responsibilities when there is no electrical work to be performed. There is also the issue that their knowledge/experience acquired over the past has had too much emphasis on the electrical trade and little or nothing into the other trades.

(Continued on page 5)



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President (continued from page 4)

We hope you can see the dilemma of placing a journeyman in our environment, which is basically what the effects the revisions of Chapter 10 will have on our industry in the future (i.e. no more issuance of new licenses, the elimination of the Maintenance Technician, Maintenance Electricians having the same prerequisites as the Journeyman, etc.).

It is also understood that these proposed changes are in part due to TDLR taking over the licensing and other duties in regards to the electrical industry. The Mechanical Contractors have been under TDLR's umbrella for years. This may also be a new experience for the San Antonio Electrical Department, but it is not for us. For instance, TDLR took over ASME's position in regards to Elevators in the 90's. We also have been through the take-over by TDLR in regards to ADA/ADAAG, which is now known locally as TAS (Texas Accessibility Standards). We are well versed with TDLR and with the transitions from civil issues to State Laws.

From an economic standpoint, if we were no longer able to change our own ballasts and will be required to contract an electrical company to perform this task, our budgets would be greatly affected. **EXAMPLE:** Using 2004 purchases as comparison, we purchased/replaced 134 ballasts last year at the building I maintain. In all instances, one (1) ballast was replaced per service call. Considering an electrical shop would typically charge 2-hours for this service call (trip time + actual labor), and that shop rates are average \$61.50/hour (\$48-\$75), **this one building would need to add a minimum of \$16,400 to the electrical repairs budget if it were to call an electrical shop for these repairs** (\$61.50 x 2 x 134). This is quite an impact!....

We hope you understand our commitments and determination of promoting/ensuring electrical safety and appreciate our involvement overseeing these installations and methods within our areas of influence.

We do however expect to be able to change ballasts, broken duplex receptacles, control fuses, and other minor items as deemed day-to-day maintenance issues. With this in mind, please note that *we do not, nor wish, to pull wire, bend*

conduit, or add circuits/fixtures...we contract these tasks to our electrical vendors. The best use of our talents is the troubleshooting and maintenance of existing equipment within our office buildings whether it is mechanical, electrical, plumbing, etc.

We would also appreciate the opportunity to discuss these issues with you, and the EE&SB/the Chapter 10 Code committee at the upcoming meetings.

If you have any comments or questions, please contact our organization. ❖

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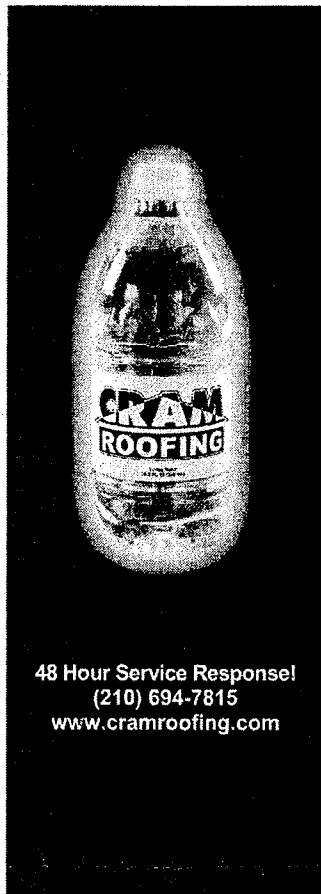


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If you know someone who'd like to join SAABE, have them visit our web site at www.saabe.org to obtain a membership application. ❖

2004 Building Engineer of the Year Finalists

Congratulations to the three finalists for this year's BEOTY Award:

- **Jock Tilghman, CBE-J**, Corporate Square (Transwestern)
- **Charlie Mikolajczyk, CBE-M**, The Forum Building (Endeavor Real Estate Group)
- **Tony Norton, Weston Centre** (Weston Properties)

The BEOTY committee reviewed the files of all nominees; the three finalists were the result of an anonymous committee vote. Committee members are now in the process of making site visits.

Mark your calendars now and plan to attend our March luncheon, where the 2004 BEOTY Award will be presented. Congratulations to all nominees and the three finalists! ❖

CBE Applications Online

You can now download an application for the Certified Building Engineer program on SAABE's web site at www.saabe.org

The Daily Chronicle

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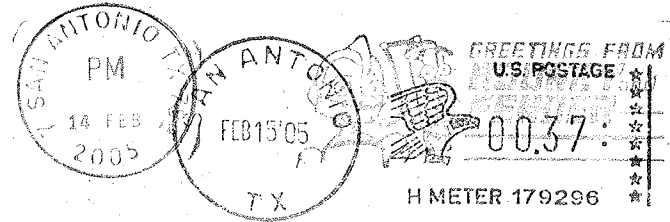
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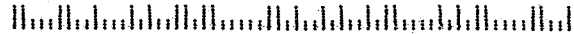
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**SAABE TIMES
 February Issue**

Final Thought:

"Early and provident fear is the mother of safety." — Edmund Burke

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Laura Bray Association Manager (laurabray@braycommunications.com)	408-1699

Membership Luncheon

February 16, 2005

Time: 11:30 a.m.

**Location: Alamo Cafe on 281
 FBI Special Agent Michael Wise
 "Terrorism Threats and Response for Building
 Engineers"**

**Upcoming Programs:
 Wednesday, March 16
 Alamo Cafe**

**2004 Building Engineer of the Year
 Mark Your Calendars Now!!**

The SAABE Times is edited by Laura Bray and printed monthly for the San Antonio Association of Building Engineers by:



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