

ACIA UPDATE



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

My name is Melvin "Mel" Weidner, and this Bio is to express my appreciation for the American Construction Inspectors Association (ACIA) and their Registered Construction Inspector (RCI) program. Also, to the many members and associates that I've had the privilege to meet and work with over the past 20 plus years, deserving a debt of gratitude that I'm at a loss to express. I've often said that the ACIA "Family" is near and dear to my heart.

I was first introduced to ACIA around twenty years ago while I was a construction superintendent and was primarily building schools. I started attending the monthly ACIA "Sac-Sierra" chapter meetings in Sacramento. During that first year, I never missed a

monthly meeting, and took advantage of all the education, mini seminars, presentations and topic speakers. Finally, at one of the meetings, Dennis Dooley did a members Roll Call and noticed that I had been there for over a year getting a free education and wasn't a member - my free ride soon ended. During the next meeting Dennis pulled out a pen and strongly suggested that I write a check and pay my member dues. I have been grateful to him and the association ever since. Looking back and trying to rid myself of the guilt for that first free year I have since purchased three lifetime memberships to the association, one for myself and two for family members.

Over the course of the past few decades, I've managed and inspected projects for countless agencies, with project budgets ranging in cost from a few hundred thousand to over a billion dollars. I attribute those opportunities and successes in great part to my ACIA association and RCI program.

During my career I've received multiple certifications and licenses including DSA, ASTM's "Non-Destructive Testing Standards" Credentialing, Infrared and more. The ACIA's Registered Construction Inspector's program offers Continuing Education Unit benefits as well as Certifications recognized Statewide and Nationally. I hold several of these - Division II-Building, Division IV-Public Works, Fire Door, Concrete and several more. During a job interview process I get to emphasize our Continuing Education programs and often shine above organizations outside of ACIA. When I interview Inspectors, I always ask what they're doing to stay current through continued education. ACIA and our RCI registered members always seem to be a step ahead of the competition. Our Association has nominated me into the College of Fellows Inspector's Association (F)ACIA, a distinguished



honor for which I am grateful for and proud of. Many in our Fire Station community are also proud of the (F)ACIA title and have permanently embossed that into the bronze dedication plaques on three of their fire stations that I've helped manage and inspect the construction/remodel of. I am proud to be named on these plaques along with my first responder friends and associates that I've had the privilege to work with in the creation of their new facilities(s).



Mel Weidner, FACIA, RCI
ACIA National Board Member
American Construction Inspector's Association, RCI

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CONSTRUCTION FAILS

We're not safety inspectors, but it's obvious that beer cans are not OSHA approved rebar caps! Always be aware of safety hazards onsite and speak up if a situation does not look safe, or in control.



CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

The Northern California chapter meets on the fourth Thursday of every month at a new restaurant now - Black Bear Diner in Auburn, CA. Our new meeting time is 5:30 pm and our meetings last about one hour. For more chapter meeting dates and times, visit ACIA.com. Our next meeting will be held on 4/27!

Address:

13365 Lincoln Way, Auburn, CA 95603



Checking the proper spacing of rebar from soil, especially in deep footings and piers can be difficult. SOLUTION: Get an 8 ft. telescoping grade pole and a short metal ruler from your local big box store. Cut three inches off of the ruler, and epoxy (JB Weld works good) the piece to the lower section of the grade pole so the top edge of the ruler is 3 inches up from the bottom of the pole, and flush with one side of the pole. Now all you have to do is extend the pole as much as you need to reach the bottom of the footing or pier and if the ruler fits under, it's good. Turn it sideways (3-inch ruler length) to check the distance from the rebar to the side of the excavation.

INSPECTOR TIPS



ACIA UPDATE



AS HARRY SEES IT

Prologue - The late Harry Moore was a dedicated lifetime member of the ACIA from 1956 until his death in April 2008. He held Division II-Building and Division III-Mechanical RCI certifications which he kept current until his death. During his tenure, Harry wrote many articles of interest for The Inspector Magazine, as well as a book on Schoolhouse Inspecting. Prior to his death, Harry graciously assigned all rights to his writings to the ACIA. In honor of that generous donation; we will be reprising some of Harry's insightful articles in upcoming issues of ACIA UPDATE. His writings remain topical and timely in these times of economic uncertainty. These are excerpts from Harry's book *The Techniques And Psychology Of Construction Inspection*.

Working Parts of a Project

Now that we've covered a few basics, let's get down to the working parts of a project. Assuming our job office is in place and complete with phone and all necessary codes, reference books, and creature comforts, what's next?

First, rescan the drawings from beginning to end – every page! Don't spend a whole lot of time on each page, just enough to be familiar how they are set up, so you know where to look when questions arise. Being totally familiar with all sections of the drawings, including change orders, is extremely important. Knowing where to look is most important. Next, read – and reread – the specifications. No matter how many you have read in the past (even from a familiar Architect), each set can be a little different. Again, you must know where to look up any question that may arise in your own mind as well as others. As I alluded to earlier, being totally familiar with the plans and specifications is the best way you can protect the Architect's intentions and the owner's investment.

This is, as I also said earlier, why I ask the Superintendent to read with his lead people their section of the specifications, so they comply the first time around. Just because some old timer has done work the same way for forty years, doesn't necessarily mean it will meet the requirements of a school or hospital when it comes to seismic design.

Many tradesmen believe designers shoot the mouse with a 12-gauge shot gun when it comes to safety requirements. However, over the years of earthquake damage assessment, I believe there is no such thing as an earthquake proof structure, only an earthquake resistant one. I'll believe the designer who calls for the extra nail or bolted connection. The child that attends school by law, has a right to expect a safe classroom where items won't fall or trap anyone, or glass won't fly like shrapnel and cut a child or teacher.

Hospitals are a very special place and deserve every safety measure we can afford them. The person lying in bed with broken bones or hooked up to life-saving equipment, can't get up and walk out to protect themselves. So we as inspectors owe them, and those caring for them, all the safety features required by law and a good set of plans and specification. Who knows, we could be one of those requiring help sometime ourselves.

This is chapter 6 of Harry's book – we wanted to start here because it segues into Harry's experience working the Northridge Earthquake in 1994. His accounting of the experience is fascinating and will span the next several issues of ACIA UPDATE – stay tuned.