

OCEA Register



October 2021

Upcoming Events:

- Oct. 20-22, 2021—
AACE Conf.
- Nov. 17-19, 2021—
Basic Code Class
- Feb. 16-18, 2022—
Basic Code Class

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2022 Spring Educational Conference



Conference Location: NCED Hotel &
Conference Center

Thurs. March 31/Fri. April 1, 2022

2801 E. Highway 9, Norman, OK

Make plans to attend the 26th Annual OCEA Spring Conference next year in Norman.

Do you know of someone deserving of Code Officer of the Year? Plan to nominate someone when you receive the Conference Announcement with the nomination forms.

Be on the look-out for scholarship opportunities for the conference from OMAG and from OCEA.

Are you interested in running for an office on the OCEA Board of Directors? We will have the election at the conference and will share the candidates prior to the event for you to review prior to voting. 1st VP/President Elect, 2nd VP, 3rd VP and Sgt-at-Arms will be available. Ask Janita for more info.

AACE—American Association of Code Enforcement

- ◆ AACE is doing several national check-ins to ensure we are providing our members the best possible service. We learn so much from these check-ins and have enjoyed networking during this current pandemic.

Below is the scheduled time and login information: <https://zoom.us/j/91034724465>

Thursday, December 9th, 2pm-3pm—Central Standard Time

Make plans to call in and participate!



From your President—Felix Nance, City of Hominy

Fall is in the Air!

The recent hot and dry weather has slowed the growth of grass, but I encourage each of you to look closely around your area to make sure there aren't "hidden" pockets that need Code Enforcement attention. We have been extremely lucky thus far in Oklahoma, and haven't seen any really big fires as have hit out west in the U.S. The diligent attention by Code Enforcement can help keep the fire danger at a minimum for our communities. All that being said, we must stir in the climate change issue to our thinking. The warmer and dryer summers we are experiencing simply mirror the conditions across the rest of the country. Our efforts to minimize trash, grass and weeds in our local communities, working hand in hand with our local fire departments are also part of our mission to promote the Health, Safety and Welfare of our citizens.

Another area to consider is the aftermath of storms and damage assessment. Who better than your local code enforcement officers to help with damage assessment following an event. We are in the field, day after day, and sometimes night, so we know the area. I encourage you to link up with your local emergency manager and offer your assistance, as needed. Don't wait for the event to happen, reach out early.

That reaching out, being of service, makes you a valuable team member to support your community in times of need. The contacts you make today can have a big impact tomorrow!

As I write this today, we are just a week from the American Association of Code Enforcement National Conference in Glendale, Arizona. While it is true that you may not be able to attend in person, don't forget that a part of your OCEA membership includes membership in AACE. This provides a wonderful opportunity for both education events and networking. Our next Basic Code Class will follow the AACE conference in late November. If you know of someone new to the profession, encourage them to get signed up for class.

Until next time, support your local High School Football program!

From your 1st VP—Maverick Fritsche, City of Okmulgee

Happy Fall,

Although it hasn't felt like autumn just yet, the calendar tells us it is in fact here. I know all of you are hustling and bustling through the peak of mowing season and trying to keep up with all that the public keeps throwing your way. I hope you all are managing it well, and I look forward to seeing and talking to all of you soon!



Amid the chaos of summer, we have managed to get all of our 2022 classes scheduled. You will have three opportunities to attend a Basic Code certification class next year – Feb. 16-18, Aug. 10-12, and a final class Nov. 2-4. You will also have an opportunity to attend our Property Maintenance class April 7-8. Remember all of the classes are being held at the wonderful Moore-Norman Technology Center.

We are also working on legislation with a few senators and representatives that would make it a felony to assault a Code Officer in the State of Oklahoma. This legislation will be introduced soon, so please, be on the lookout for e-mail blasts from OCEA or OML regarding this bill. Please, please, please reach out to your representatives and senators to get them on board with this legislation when it becomes available. Also please help the organization in keeping an eye on any other legislation that may try to undermine or hurt our profession. You all are our "eyes and ears," and we cannot do it without your help.

Our OCEA board is here to serve and represent all of you. Feel free to contact any of us if you have questions or need assistance. Our contact information is on the OCEA website.

Thank you for all you do to keep your communities safe and beautiful.
Shawn "Maverick" Fritsche
OCEA 1st Vice President

From your 2nd VP—Travis Guess, City of Prague

Colleagues,
Chokma, Chinchokma This is Chickasaw for Hello, how are you? Summer is pretty much over, which means the grass is slowing down as well, unless we get a good rain. So now to Car Season and Dilapidated Building Season.

As your 2nd VP with the charge over education I have been looking at some new and exciting courses for our organization. Many of you have expressed a want for more Situational Awareness as well as Code Officer Safety Training and I am working on that as we speak. In addition I'm looking forward to assisting in teaching the upcoming Property Maintenance Code Class which gets you familiar with the basic premise of that particular Code. And if you have any suggestions or something that you would like the organization to provide with regards to a particular type of education please feel free to contact me. I have had calls from several code enforcement officers wanting to come to my community and conduct a ride along with me and I'm really looking forward to that time with those officers. Camaraderie is essential to help each other meet our personal goals. Our organization is growing and as your Board Member I also believe we are moving in the right direction. Striving for excellence and professionalism is imperative in order for us to meet the challenges that face our profession as well as our organization.

I truly hope that everyone has a blessed holiday season that is approaching. Again I appreciate the opportunity to serve the members of this outstanding organization and what I consider to be the greatest profession and on the face of the earth.

Best regards, your Second VP, Travis D. Guess



From your Treasurer—Andy Templeton, City of Sand Springs

As your OCEA treasurer, I'm pleased to report we are sustaining ourselves as an organization very well. As of mid-September, we had more than \$80,900 in our bank account. Bear in mind our funds are fluid as events such as classes, conferences, outreach programs and administrative expenses occur.

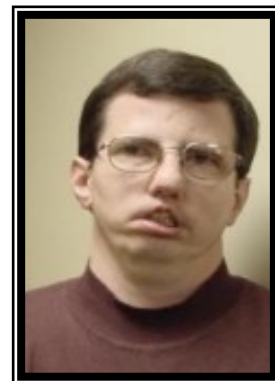
Within that account balance, the OCEA Board has voted to encumber funds for the 2022 Community Improvement Grant program. As I'm sure others will share with you, it is bigger and better than ever. Of most importance, it is pre-funded so we can remain true to our commitments.

Our work in code enforcement remains exceptionally difficult amid the pandemic, the lifting of eviction moratoriums, divisive attitudes by citizens of all stripes, and most significantly, mental illness. I've had a couple of encounters with the latter recently that bear sharing.

The first was a mentally ill gentleman who reportedly had violent tendencies. He came to our attention after a minor electrical fire in his home. The situation worsened as he allowed grass to grow and trash to accumulate in his yard. He also spray-painted a lengthy and uncomfortable message to his neighbors on his garage door. I had to serve an abatement notice on the property and also had to assure the electricity was still turned off. Fortunately, the abatement notice spurred the man's family to get involved in the process. He is receiving the treatment he needs, and they oversaw a major cleanup without us getting directly involved.

The other involved a lady who had high grass in the yard of her residence. Despite repeated assurances that it was going to be mowed, it never happened. Our contractor was mobilized with a City employee monitoring the situations. Things got out of hand rather quickly, and we had to summon a notable police presence. I must commend our police officers for displaying eternal patience in searching for a solution that allowed her to stay in her home while we finished our work.

When you come to work each morning, remind yourself of how important it is to pay attention to everything going on around you. Don't hesitate to reach out for additional resources to protect yourself and others. It's all about going home at the end of the day.



From your Secretary—Janita Hatley, City of Norman



Greetings fellow OCEA members,

OCEA was represented well at the recent OML conference. Andy and Travis presented an informative and well attended session and we also had a booth in the exhibit hall where we made several contacts with City Mayor/Managers, etc. There were several that said they are looking to start a Code Enforcement program in their smaller communities and were eager to learn all they could about OCEA and how we could help them.

I'm excited to hear reports from our President, Felix and our Code Officer of the Year, Candy Simms from Walters after they return from the AACE Conference. I'll have to share some photos and reports in the next newsletter. Next year the AACE Conference will be in Atlanta, GA and in 2023 it will be in Orlando, FL. Make plans to budget for this and attend an AACE Conference when you can. I promise, you will enjoy it and will walk away with new and improved ideas for your code programs.

We have been posting jobs on our OCEA website lately. Don't forget to share your job openings with me and we can get them posted and I can share on our Facebook page or in an email blast.

Do you have suggestions for our newsletter? Do you have conference session ideas? Please call or email me and let's chat.

From your Pres. Emeritus—Ivan Smith, City of Edmond

Greetings Colleagues,

I hope that you all are doing well, and things are starting to slowdown just a little. We have been crazy busy this season. I'm sure it's been the same for most of you. Usually by the time the State Fair gets here it is all but over, however we are still in un-usually busy times.

Slowly but surely though things are starting to get back to normal. O.C.E.A. with the help of the More Norman Technology Center has been able to continue to provide training for those newbies that for some reason decided they wanted to be "colleagues". We are still offering the International Property Maintenance class as well. Be sure to check www.oceassociation.com for up-coming opportunities if you haven't been to that. Members of your board represented our organization at the annual Oklahoma Municipal League conference that was held in person this year. We certainly can't forget that the American Association of Code Enforcement national conference in Arizona is right around the corner.

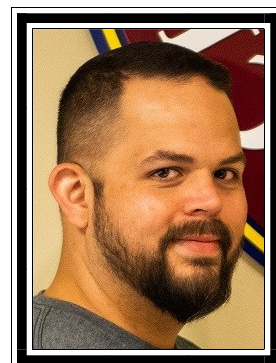
All that I am trying to say is we are in a marathon and not a sprint. Slow and steady, stay the course. We are going to get through all of the crazy it's just going to take some time. Until the next time that we can all meet in person stay safe, stay healthy and most importantly stay engaged.



Doug Moore—3rd VP—City of Watonga



Brian Henry—Sgt-at-Arms— City of Perry





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ENFORCEMENT
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Founded in 1994, the Oklahoma Code Enforcement Association is dedicated to the study and advancement of Code Enforcement activities at the local, county and state levels. Its membership represents both large cities and small towns that have an interest in enhancing neighborhood and community health, safety, welfare and aesthetics.

Like us on Facebook



Community Improvement Grant Program—2022

Make plans to apply for an OCEA Community Improvement Grant next year. We will send out the applications just after January 1st. This year we will be offering up to 10 grants with a maximum grant amount of \$1000.

If you received a Grant for 2021 and have still not submitted documentation to Andy for reimbursement, you will need to do so before December 2021.



Tidbits from Janita:

Please send me photos, funny or interesting stories from some case that you've worked, or a Before/After from a case that you've worked and I will add them to the newsletter. Our members would really enjoy seeing things from fellow OCEA members across the State.

You can email your newsletter submissions to me at Janita.hatley@normanok.gov and you can call me at (405)623-8009 or in my office at (405) 366-5318.

Thankful for our Partners/Friends



AACE
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF CODE ENFORCEMENT