

OCEA Register



Upcoming Events:

- 2/28 & 3/1—Spring Conf.in Norman
- March—Basic Code Class specific date not set yet
- Fall Conf. in late Sept. or early Oct.
- 10/29-10/31—AACE Conf. in OKC hosted by OCEA

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18th Annual Spring Educational Conference

Join us in Norman on February 28th & March 1st for the Spring Conference. Held at Sooner Legends Inn & Suites. We have some great classes this year.

- ◆ Case Development
- ◆ Community Outreach: Communication Collaboration and Education with LPS Field Services
- ◆ Effective Communication
- ◆ Norman PD Canine Unit on Drug Search Procedures
- ◆ Dealing with Bedbugs
- ◆ Crisis Intervention Officers partnering with Code Enforcement

We are so excited to host this again and share our time with the rest of the OCEA Member-

ship. The conferences always prove to be a wonderful opportunity to network with other cities and gain valuable info and knowledge that we can take back to our own cities and hopefully make our jobs just a little easier and more efficient.

Of course we will have some awesome food at this conference as always. For those that enjoy Bingo—the lounge will have Bingo on Wednesday night. OCEA will open a Hospitality Suite Wed/Thurs. night. In the Barry Switzer Suite.



Sooner Legends Inn & Suites
Norman, OK

**DON'T FORGET TO
BRING DOOR PRIZES!!**

AACE—American Association of Code Enforcement

In November, 2012—some of us attended the AACE Conference in St. Charles, Missouri. There were about 160 in attendance. We had a good time networking with other Code Officers from across the nation as well as with the AACE Officer's. It was very exciting being present for the announcement that the 2013 Conference will be held in OKC on October 29-31 at the Renaissance Hotel & Conf. Center in Bricktown.

Terry, Marsha, Barbara, David and Janita are on the AACE Conference Planning Committee and we are excited about some of the classes that will be offered. There will be one-day or multi-day passes you can register for. We hope that as many "Okies" as possible will attend all or part of the conference. Stay tuned for more info & check the AACE website—www.aace1.org for detailed info.



From your President—Donnie Moore, City of Ada

Hope the holidays went well for everyone. Grass and weed issues are slow in Ada with the lack of rain and extreme drought that has embraced the state. However, trash/junk, inoperable vehicles and illegal signs are alive and well. Like everyone else we continue to battle a select few folks that no matter where they move in town, the complaint calls follow them. Keep up the good work and as always if OCEA can help in any manner let us know. We are here for your SERVICE.. Looking forward to seeing everyone in Norman at the end of this month.

From your 1st VP—Marsha Sirmon, City of Edmond



I began with the City of Edmond in 1999 and was promoted to Code Enforcement Officer in 2006. I joined OCEA and attended the Basic Code Class and Property Maintenance Class at that time. I was elected and served as 3rd Vice President in 2011 – 2012, 1st Vice President 2012 - 2013, and I am super excited to take the oath of office as the President of OCEA, at the Spring Conference in Norman. I was selected in 2011 to serve on the Oklahoma Uniform Building Code Commission review Committee, to review and offer opinion regarding the 2009 IPMC.

I have been fortunate to be a member of AACE (American Association of Code Enforcement) since 2009, and have been able to attend 3 AACE Conferences, most recently in St. Charles, Mo. OCEA hosting the 2013 AACE Conference is one of the most exciting things that I could possibly ask for. I am honored to be in a position to represent your Association and hope to do you proud. Your board is gearing up to get the plans in motion and we will certainly want to know what you think and would like to see at this conference.

From your 2nd VP—Russell Gray, City of Broken Arrow



Welcome to all OCEA members and code officers in Oklahoma. As the Second Vice-President for OCEA, I wanted to take a few moments to greet you and to tell you a little about myself. I started in the profession of code enforcement in 1998 for the City of Tulsa. It was there that my main focus was the enforcement of the property maintenance, health, safety and zoning codes, along with developing training materials for staff code officers. In 2005 I obtained a position with the City of Broken Arrow, where I currently manage a code staff of three officers, along with 8 administrative staff who handle code enforcement, permits, licenses, and many other areas of municipal service.

My hope for OCEA is to continually improve our training and education, so as to provide more knowledge and tools to each code officer. As professionals, we should always strive to improve ourselves, which results in improving our profession. To that end, I would encourage each of you to attend both the spring and fall conferences, next year's ACCE conference in Oklahoma City, and to assist as much as possible in OCEA.

From your 3rd VP—David Timmons, City of Stroud

I am the Director of Neighborhood Enhancement (Code Enforcement Officer) for the City of Stroud. I was initially hired, in 2007 to fill an Administrative Asst. position with 'other duties to be determined as required.' One of those 'other duties' quickly became my primary duty, Code Enforcement. My other duties revolve around the Airport, Administrative Assistant, Building Inspections and Floodplain Management (I am a Certified Floodplain Manager).

In my six years in Code, I have worked through the love/hate relationship with all that the position requires. I like being a Code Enforcement Officer as the community is supportive of the active cleanup program, and visitors to Stroud have made positive comments about how the community looks much better. When a guest can see the physical difference in the community, the program is working. I see Code Enforcement as the basis of Economic Development and Quality of Life improvement. A clean, well maintained community attracts new residents and businesses. No company wants to locate its headquarters or house its employees in an urban blight.

I am currently the 3rd Vice President of OCEA and I believe that while OCEA provides national -level, quality training for Code Officers; its greatest strength is the friendly encouragement, sound advice and uplifting support of its experienced members.



From your Treasurer—Dana Greer, City of Frederick

I have been code officer for the City of Frederick since 1987. Certified by OCEA in 1999, I, like other code officers in most small towns, wear several hats— not only code officer duties but issuing building permits, licenses for electricians, plumbers, mechanical as well as permits for same, issuing beer and liquor licenses, working demolitions and applying for and overseeing beautification grants. I have served as Treasurer for OCEA since early 2000. OCEA has been instrumental in getting needed legislation passed as well as getting municipalities to understand not only the safety and health issues but the economic value of good code enforcement. I am proud to be a part of OCEA.



From your Sgt-at-Arms—Mark Bryant, City of Waurika

I hail from the great state of Texas! The only state that can legally fly their state flag at the same height as the United States due to the fact Texas was a Republic before statehood, a little trivia tidbit for all you trivia buffs out there. I have a Bachelor of Science from the University of Texas system. I have held a lot of different jobs throughout the years including but not limited to insurance sales, DirectTV call center supervisor, oil and gas landman, and I am currently the City Clerk, Municipal Court Clerk, and Code Enforcement officer for the City of Waurika, Oklahoma.

I am currently serving my 2nd year as Sergeant at Arms on the Board of OCEA. While I enter my 4th year as a code officer I can honestly say that I am definitely still learning. During my first year I know that I called Terry Humphrey several times to ask questions and he was always willing to help, but after getting to know a lot more people in OCEA it seems that all are more than generous with their time and willingness to help. I am more than willing to pay this forward to anybody new in code enforcement. The only stupid question is one not asked, please feel free to call or e-mail. While I will not be running for a third year on the board of officers, I plan on actively supporting the OCEA to the best of my abilities. Through my membership with the OCEA, I have gained a great network of friends and colleagues, and look forward to seeing everyone in Norman, OK for the Spring Conference!!!



From your Secretary—Janita Hatley, City of Norman

I have been with the City of Norman since January, 1992—as a Clerk Typist, then Permit Clerk with Bldg. Permits and then a Code Compliance Inspector beginning in July, 1995. I attended my first OCEA conference in October 1995. I've held various positions in OCEA, 2nd VP, 1st VP, President and I have been the Secretary for several years now.

I have to say that I really enjoy my job as a Code Compliance Inspector. I like working with the citizens (most of them) and the flexibility of the job (time in office vs. time in the field) and I am blessed to have a great group of co-workers. I am also very passionate about OCEA and I really enjoy my work with this group. I have to admit that after being in the different positions on the Board, I feel most comfortable as the Secretary.

With OCEA hosting the national AACE conference this October, I feel we can really show everyone how great OCEA is and what a good team we make. I encourage each of you to try to attend, at least one day of the conference. I look forward to seeing you in a few weeks here in Norman. As always—don't hesitate to call or email me anytime!!



2012 AACE Banquet



St. Louis Arch (we went there)



2012 AACE Banquet



1st day of Basic Code Class at MNTC



David Timmons accepting 'Code Officer of Year' award



Mark, Donnie & Barb at OCEA Board Meeting—December 2012

SEEING THE CLEARING IN THE FOREST by Andy Templeton

I returned to code enforcement in the City of Sand Springs last summer after a five-year hiatus. It only took me a short time to feel right at home. I affixed my first tow notice to a broken down pickup truck within five minutes.

My predecessor had left the town in fundamentally good shape, but the grass that had been mowed in May was already beginning to reach again for the August sky. With the housing market still in the doldrums, it wasn't hard to find new customers. There's something about wading through a sea of sand burrs in 110-degree heat to post a property that warms the passions for this work.

I had spent about a dozen years in code enforcement prior to doing other things for the City. Things felt different this time around. As many of you know, I teach portions of the basic code class. I decided to see if the stuff really works. Guess what, it does! I realized I had learned a lot during my code enforcement absence – not only from teaching but from learning. Getting to meet code folks from towns big and small, hearing their problems, and appreciating how they do things really rubbed off on me. I have been the better for it.

The other thing I realized was the need for communities to grow in their code enforcement efforts if they want to remain vibrant and relevant. When I first started in 1995, there were plenty of junk cars, trashed out lots, houses falling in on themselves and high grass to go around. A lot of that stuff was now gone, and our community was at a crossroads.

Like many Oklahoma communities, Sand Springs was built around industries that sprang up at statehood. Housing for industrial workers followed suit, and it was not designed for the ages. Its transition to revolving door rental property exacerbated the blight.

The City fathers desired an emphasis on dilapidation abatements. This would not be an easy task. We had gotten rid of the easy pickings over the last few decades. It was now time to look at substandard homes or weary eyesores that has sat vacant for years. I quickly figured out such work is a long term process. I've identified several dozen candidates for dilapidation and have formalized the process for about 25 of them. I have only abated one house so far. It had been an eyesore for decades.

But there are ample bright spots. Once folks realized the City was serious about dilapidation, several eyesores vanished voluntarily from the landscape. Still others are in the process of being restored – a closely regulated process to assure the end product is a safe and attractive part of our community for years to come.

It has also begun to quietly awaken the community's consciousness to what can be. My most recent initiative has been to clear out the yard cars so we can see what our housing stock truly looks like. When this was attempted several years ago, it met with vast resistance. Now, there's barely been a whimper as citizens have begun to expect more from themselves and their neighbors.

I'm a long way from declaring victory over public nuisances. However, I'm gradually beginning to see the clearing in the forest. Many of you are sharing that experience through your training and networking in OCEA. We are all the better for it.



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OCEA Offers Understanding and Perspective to Code Issues

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.

CLASS INFO:

We successfully completed a Property Maintenance Class just last week with 39 students. It was a full class and we are thrilled with the outcome. Terry Humphrey worked closely with Roy Fyffe from AAEC on the curriculum to make sure that our material matched the current AAEC material. The class was on the 2009 International Property Maintenance Code. It has been several years since OCEA put on a Property Maintenance class. We are thankful for everyone being so patient & understanding while we updated the material. Marsha Sirmon (1st VP) and Russell Gray (2nd VP) assisted Terry in teaching this class.



If you need to take the Basic Code Class, be sure and keep an eye on our website for the date (should be sometime in March) and also call and get your name on the waiting list.

Tidbits from Janita:

This is my first newsletter to ever create so be forgiving if I have made any errors. I plan to keep this up and send newsletters out pretty often—so be sure and send me interesting stories from the Code Enforcement world or any “Thank-You” or misc. announcements you wish to include. If you can, please submit photo’s to go along with your stories/articles.

I appreciate the info that everyone sent to me for this newsletter. Kelvin will make the newsletters available on our website.

Sonya Ferguson with Valley Brook won the free ticket to Spring Conf. from our drawing we held at the Fall Conf. from sending in her registration on time.

Big Thank you to Kelvin Winter (City of Norman) for his hard work on updating our OCEA website, which he is continuing to work on & he has also volunteered to be the webmaster for AAEC—which is proving to be quite a hectic task.

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.