

AZBO News



Arizona Building Officials

December 2025

Message from the Chair

Fellow AZBO Members,

First, as the year comes to a close, I want to extend my sincere appreciation to our AZBO Board members for their dedication, professionalism, and continued commitment to this organization. I also wish to thank the volunteers who make up all of our committees including our Education Chair for their continued efforts in enhancing our educational offerings to our membership. Many thanks to our Executive Coordinator who works very hard throughout the year.

We had a very successful Fall Institute in October thanks to our volunteers, Education Committee and Chair, and our Executive Coordinator's efforts to provide great education and smooth registration experience. Our success is also due to all of you who attend and/or send your staff. Our hope is to continue to enhance our educational offerings and the board and education committee are looking at ways to do that. Of course, your input on what your education needs are is very important so please reach out to me or any of our board members with your thoughts. Our Education team is currently working on the Spring Institute which will be held in Prescott.

The AZBO Board met earlier this month and adopted the coming year's budget and we are in the process of finalizing a contract for our ABM. It will be in Prescott this year **June 23-25** due to venue availability in July. We understand that this ABM will occur in this fiscal year budget for many of you and hopefully you will still be able to attend. We are looking forward to offering a great training class. Please **Save the Date**.

As always, I invite you to get involved in AZBO. I believe we are a member organization and will only be successful if we serve our membership needs. Work and personal schedules are so busy so even if you cannot share your time I encourage all to reach out to me, your chapter leaders or any of our committee and board members to share how we can make AZBO the best. we can be for our membership.

I wish you and your loved ones a joyful holiday season filled with peace, good health, and meaningful time together. May the new year bring renewed energy, success in your work, and continued collaboration as we serve our communities across Arizona.

Thank you for all that you do. Warmest holiday wishes and best regards for a safe and prosperous New Year.

Barbara Rice, AZBO Chair

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In Other News

From **Mark Sipes**, PE, SE, CBO, Maricopa County

Fraudulent Use of Professional Registrant Seals

Earlier this year, the Arizona Board of Technical Registration (BTR) sent a letter to Maricopa County's building department advising us that there is increasing activity in the fraudulent use of seals. I am sure letters were sent to other building departments as well. There have been two separate incidents in Maricopa County whereby engineers contacted our department letting us know that permitted plans were sealed without their knowledge. There were other instances where staff noticed calcs and plans that bore the seals of licensed engineers had addresses that differed from the site of the permit application. When this happens, we try to contact the engineer to verify the valid use. If these are not valid, then we stop our review process and return the plans and calcs with a note indicating that the engineer confirmed they had no knowledge of the project.

The two things that jurisdictions can/should do:

Reach out to a registrant if you believe their seal was fraudulently used. Explain what aspect of the project makes you suspect the engineer did not seal it. In one case we had at the County, the sealed calcs had the address for a property in another county.

Explain to the registrant that your contacting them does not open a complaint with the BTR. Staff can and should work with the BTR investigators in providing evidence when asked.

Introducing Jennifer Patroni, The SEAoA State Board President.

The SEAoA has a webpage that a person may use to find a structural engineer for minor residential or commercial work. The webpage is located at www.seaoa.org



We as jurisdictions cannot recommend engineers, but we can refer applicants to resources. Our staff at Maricopa County find this to be a valuable resource when an applicant asks for structural assistance.

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From **Carl Montgomery**, CBO, City of Surprise
Building Safety Team Updates

Robert Ortiz joined the City of Surprise as a Building Inspector I. Robert brings 16 years of experience in the concrete and plumbing trades, including roles as installer, foreman, and supervisor. His broad trade background makes him a great addition to the inspection team.

Ryan Hildebrandt also joins as a Building Inspector I. With six years of experience in residential construction management, Ryan has overseen numerous new home and remodel projects. His professionalism, customer service, and attention to detail will serve him well in his new role.

Tyler Thoms was recently promoted to Building Inspector II. Tyler continues to demonstrate strong technical knowledge, earning two additional ICC certifications since joining the City. His background as an electrician and foreman, paired with his dedication to quality inspections, has made him a key member of the team.

From **Shicheng Tao**, CBO, City of Chandler

Chandler has conducted a survey that includes a fire plan review assignment. In our Development Services Department, the Senior Building Plans Examiners, as part of their roles as combination plans examiners, handle A/M/P/E/S reviews along with fire plan reviews, which include fire sprinkler and fire alarm plans. These fire plan review responsibilities do not fall under the Fire Department. Furthermore, Chandler does not have a designated fire plan reviewer focused solely on fire plan reviews.

From my understanding, some jurisdictions in the valley assign fire plan reviews to their Fire Department, while others have a designated fire plan reviewer on their team.

To streamline our building plan review process and services, I reached out to code officials from neighboring jurisdictions. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the following individuals for their participation in our survey: **Mike Baxley, Dennis Chase, Cheryl Mullis, Erik Zavala, John Sheffer, Ben Carr, Michael Clack, Matthew Miles, and Djordje Pavlovic**. Their insights are invaluable to us, and we truly appreciate the time and effort they dedicated to sharing their perspectives. Once again, thank you for being a key part of our survey. Your contributions are highly valued!

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From **Saneeya Mir**, Public Information Office, City of Phoenix

City of Phoenix Welcomes Mike Baxley as Planning & Development Assistant Director

The City of Phoenix Planning & Development Department is pleased to welcome Mike Baxley as the new Assistant Director overseeing the Plan Review division. Mike brings more than 20 years of public service experience with nearly all of it spent as a building official for jurisdictions, including Tempe and Cave Creek.

Mike is well known throughout Arizona's building code community, having served as Chairman of the MAG Building Codes Committee, President of AZBO, President of the Central Arizona ICC Chapter, and currently, Vice President for the ICC's Region XI. He also stays involved with AZBO as the director of the annual golf tournament.

In his new role with the City of Phoenix, Mike will lead the residential, commercial, site, civil, and fire plan review teams. His priorities include process improvement, maintaining high customer service standards, and helping guide the commercial teams through the upcoming rollout of SHAPE PHX, the city's modernized online permitting and plan review system.

Outside of work, Mike volunteers with Scouting USA's Grand Canyon Council and enjoys spending time with his family. He spends much of his free time outdoors, and enjoys both hunting and fishing. The City of Phoenix is excited to welcome Mike to the Planning & Development Department's leadership team.

From **Gloria Bean**, Permit Technician Supervisor, Pinal County

We do have some recent employee certifications and promotions.

Julie Burton, Senior Plans Examiner, obtained her Plans Examiner and Residential Inspector Certifications

Michael Buron, Inspector, obtained his Residential Inspector Certification

Chris Villaverde is the new Pinal County Building Official.

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From **Toral Patel**, Plans Examiner Supervisor, Maricopa County

Celebrating **Jason Shick's** Achievement: 8 ICC Certifications in One Year 🎉

We are proud to recognize Jason Shick for an outstanding professional achievement this year: earning eight ICC certifications. This accomplishment reflects not only his technical expertise but also his dedication to advancing building safety and compliance standards.

Achieving multiple ICC certifications within a single year is a significant accomplishment. Each certification requires rigorous study, mastery of complex codes, and a commitment to excellence. Jason's achievement demonstrates perseverance and a commitment to continuous learning. His success not only enhances his own career but also contributes to the strength and credibility of our organization.

Please join us in congratulating Jason on this remarkable milestone and celebrating the positive impact his achievement brings to our team.



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May the spirit of the holidays stay with you all year!
~Patti

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