

IAQ RADIO

Show Number: 721

**Lisa Rogers, Jeremy Beagle
Eric Shapiro & Sarah Fanger**

Industry Update: A Round Table Conversation with IAQA's Leadership

Good Day and welcome to IAQ Radio+ episode 721 blog; this week we welcomed Lisa Rogers, Jeremy Beagle, Eric Shapiro and Sarah Fanger.

A lot is happening with the Indoor Air Quality Association and it was time for an update. IAQradio hosts RadioJoe and the Z-Man were joined by IAQ's President, 1st VP, Treasurer and Executive Director to fill us in. Interested people wanted to know: What is the current status of the organization? What are the plans for the associations 'education initiatives? What will happen with the chapters? How are plans for the convention in March coming along? The group joined us from Pete Consigli's Winter Break 2024 event in Bonita Springs, FL.

Guest Bios:

Lisa Rogers has served as President of Mycometer Inc. the US subsidiary of a Danish based firm since 2007. She is the current President of the Indoor Air Quality Association and has served on numerous prestigious committees including as an invited participant on a NATO Science Advisory Committee developing international guidelines for indoor air quality issues.

Jeremy Beagle, CIH is Senior Principal Scientist at SDII Global Inc. He has been performing causation assessments and expert witness testimony pertaining to water damage, fungal growth, and other indoor environmental concerns in the built environment for almost 20 years. Mr. Beagle is a Board-Certified Industrial Hygienist, a Council Certified Moisture Control Consultant and Council Certified Microbial Consultant. He is the current First Vice President of the Indoor Air Quality Association.

Eric Shapiro, CIEC, CMC, CMRS has over 28 years of experience in the field of Mold and IAQ. He started out as an air-duct cleaner, which led to mold remediation and assessment projects. Eric currently runs his company, Indoor Air Quality Services, which is based in Florida and IAQS NJ, which is based in NJ. He is the current treasurer of IAQA.

Sarah Fanger worked in non-profit associations as a meeting and event planner for over a decade, and earned the Certified Association Executive designation. In 2009 she pivoted into disaster restoration, opening and running her own independent business. In 2017 she shifted paths moving into a consulting and testing role, where she specialized in investigations for mold, moisture, and other indoor environmental hazards. Sarah is the current Executive Director of IAQA.

Questions for IAQA

Membership was sent a memo late last year that IAQA was filing for bankruptcy and leaving their management company.

“On September 22, 2023, IAQA Board of Directors (BOD) petitioned the Federal Bankruptcy Court for protection under Chapter 11 bankruptcy with reorganization. Financial implications associated with membership retention during and after the Covid 19 pandemic, as well as issues that have come to light with our management company Association Headquarters (AH), have contributed to this decision. Since the beginning of May 2023, the BOD has been working diligently to develop a plan to remain solvent, pay off remaining debt to AH and continue operations as normal. It became clear that this path was not viable without negatively impacting our ability to provide services to the membership, as well as dramatically increasing member fees and services. This was not an option! Bankruptcy was the last option considered by the BOD, but it became apparent, along with legal consultation, that it was the only option to allow IAQA to move forward, reorganize and focus on the future. Now that the documents are filed, IAQA will submit a business plan to the court for approval and attempt to recover all necessary information and data belonging to IAQA. Given the protections offered by the bankruptcy reorganization, we can see the light at the end of the tunnel. The business plan starts with bringing management in-house where we will have more cost control and transparency. We know this is a lot to digest and uncharted territory. The Board wants you to be assured that this organization will be stronger and closer to our members in the future. Our goals and commitments have not changed, our members are our priority. This is an opportunity for membership to come together and put their fingerprints on the path forward and the future of IAQA. This is a renewal at the grassroots level. Help us build and create the IAQA you want.”

The letter mentioned recovering all necessary information and data. Have you recovered your information and data? What about the website?

Lisa- The slow and incomplete receipt of the association’s data and information from a former service provider has hampered some association functions. The website is being rebuilt from the ground up.

What is going on currently?

Lisa- We are knee deep in reorganization which involves among other things: putting the organization back together, extinguishing fires, redefining our mission, etc. In the past we haven’t done as much as we would have liked to: engage, support and reinvest in our members; this is something we plan to change.

Jeremy- How has the bankruptcy affected members? The message that IAQA is back has been sent. The morale among members I spoke with is surprisingly good, we even have had inactive members reach out to volunteer and help.

Eric-This is an opportune time to make the strategic decision to bring organizational control back inhouse. As treasurer he is confident that the association is financially turning around.

Lisa- It's important everyone knows the importance of dues as the financial foundation of a nonprofit organization. IAQA is open for business, leadership is planning. New administration is busy carrying out board directives, collecting dues, scheduling events, etc. IAQA is trying to enforce court rulings that important data be returned.

Sarah, what made you willing to take on the ED position in spite of the recent events at IAQA? Sarah- It was surprising to some, that she jumped into the fire to assist the IAQA. As an active IAQA member with significant prior association executive experience; she is confident that her skills and experience uniquely qualify her for the executive director position.

Lisa: Both chapters and education are important priorities. The board is working on both online and in person education. The board isn't sure what the final products will look like, they'll know more during the next quarter. Chapter relations will be brought closer so that headquarters can provide more administrative assistance. The Board and Executive Director are unanimous that bringing management in-house was the right decision. IAQA no longer relies upon shared part-time administration staff. The full-time in-house admin staff is dedicated and invested.

Jeremy- IAQA went through a stagnant period. We have an unbelievably cohesive board and executive committee. IAQA has a grassroots opportunity to reorganize and rebuild.

Z-Man- In a changing world, it's not unusual or unique for nonprofit organizations to go through ups and downs and need to change to meet marketplace demands. It's not unusual for organizational tensions to occur between the board and the administrators.

Eric- The board gets along and functions extremely well, without tension or politics. It's a pleasure to work with this team. Board members volunteer their time without compensation.

Sarah- It's true, during this trying time; there have been no issues. There is a mutual understanding among stakeholders and division of responsibilities; the board leads and the executive implements.

Eric- Treasurer Eric is comfortable with the financial position and finances which are improved. Dues are coming in, IAQA is in an improved financial position. Sarah has a handle on it, no waste has been discovered after the fact.

Lisa- Going through the process required difficult decisions made neither quickly nor lightly. The board has been in unanimous agreement without controversy.

Lisa- IAQA's interest in Indoor Environmental Quality is available as a public resource.

Jeremy, has IAQA experienced diminished interest in MOLD? Jeremy: Not in Florida where mold is more of a problem. There is growing awareness of the role of mycotoxins in IEQ. IAQA membership includes consultants, academics and contractors. IAQA remained open minded during COVID when there was a big push towards cleanliness and infection control. Wildfires is another area of growing public and member interest.

Lisa- Perceives opportunities for IAQA to grow and lead:

- Instrumentation
- Effects of climate change
- Collaboration and sharing
- Influencing the Governmental legislative platform

IAQA is considering making better use of the website by posting information and documents in a standardized manner.

Eric- Sees the industry changing at the consumer level. After forced disassociation due to Covid lockdowns and mandates, people are engaging differently with a new focus on healthier lifestyles, healthier food and improved wellness. The role of social media has significantly grown.

Lisa: In regard to chapter communications, we are engaged in deep conversations with some chapters and plan more focus on chapters moving forward.

Sarah- Lisa is spearheading chapter communications right now while I am focusing on the March conference.

Jeremy- We are focused on getting information to the chapters and getting the chapter task force back together and moving forward.

IAQA's roots are in the development of courses, training providers and providing continuing education credits for our members, so what is the future for certification courses?

Lisa- Agrees that education and training are in IAQA's roots and the first step in moving forward is to obtain our data.

Eric- Chapters are integral to revamping IAQA's education,

Will IAQA adopt standards from other groups such as COPD and allergy foundation?

We are focused on working on our organization and getting our members what they need.

Sarah, bless you for taking over the conference! Please provide the available information on it. Sarah- The convention dates are March 24-26, we have a fabulous venue, the Sawgrass Marriott. This will be a more intimate conference where we plan to engage with and listen to our members through a series of Town Hall events. More information on the upcoming conference will be available very soon!

Why should exhibitors sign up?

Sarah- Only 30 exhibit booth spaces are available this year compared to the 53 spaces available last year. IAQA very much values relationships with exhibitor partners. This year's annual meeting promises to be more intimate. IAQA needs input from exhibitors as to how the exhibition experience can be improved. The exhibitor prospectus will be distributed soon.

Lisa: The exhibition is an opportunity for attendees to see new products, engage with vendors and comparison shop. The original event location was deemed inappropriate; we regret that IAQA needed to switch gears. Sarah and her team pulled off a miracle, obtaining an event location on short notice at a venue with gorgeous PGA golf course.

Who will be presenting and speaking at the event? Sarah: We decided not to have a traditional keynote speaker. This event is about education as well as communicating with our members in a series of town hall meetings. Speakers include: John Lapotaire, Carl Grimes and Todd Usher.

RoundUp

When was the IAQA formed? Lisa- Current IAQA president and historian Lisa, has been a member since the organization's inception in 1995.

Z-Man- Opined that IAQA should consider creating an Ambassador Program and presentation materials under which IAQA members can spread the word about the value of IAQ and the IAQA using the Eight Principles of a Healthy Home.

<https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/HH/documents/8-Principles-Healthy-Home.pdf>

Lisa: IAQA is back and will be strong. The conference will be a reunion. IAQA has opportunities for members to volunteer and get involved.

Jeremy: Professional Competence is the theme of Winter Break. We are identifying methods of accountability as to what Indoor Environmentalists ought to know and do.

Sarah: She never before had the privilege and opportunity to be with an organization at such a pivotal and exciting time. Sarah plans to help bring it!
SarahFanger@IAQA.org.

Restoration Global Watchdog Pete Consigli- ***Will IAQA continue to collaborate with other groups, and if so, will Jay Stake continue to be the point person?*** Jay Stake is great, his sporting his IAQA suit at events is unforgettable.

Lisa: Yes Pete, Jay Stake will continue representing IAQA in that role.

Z-Man signing off