

2025 Board of Directors



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Message from

Mike Jenkins

INspi Vice-President

Hello, Fellow INspi Members!!

As 2025 has gotten off to a fast start, I'm sure you are all looking forward to another successful year! Let INspi assist you in your endeavors. We have put together a great tool to help you called "INspi PRO ACADEMY." You can view a series of learning videos at your desk! These excellent, high-quality training videos can assist you in answering questions and perhaps teach you a thing or two. I know we are all busy, and finding a little extra time can be challenging, but it is well worth your time to stay current on new developments in our industry that might give you the extra edge to outperform your competitors.

Your INspi Board is also working hard behind the scenes! We have approximately 60 active members and want to increase that number with your help! In 2025, as mentioned, we will offer you training videos throughout the year. With our focus on virtual training, there will be no 2025 Annual Conference. Instead, we will host the 2026 Annual Conference on June 25, 2026. Please mark your calendars for this date and watch for more information in the coming months. We are also looking for members to step up and help with this Conference!! Putting these on takes a lot of work, and new faces are always welcome!!!!

I hope you all have a great year and stay safe.

-Mike

Editor's Note: The training videos can be accessed through your membership portal on the INspi website. Once you sign in, select INspi Pro Academy, which is located on the left-hand side of the page.

New Members & More

We are delighted to welcome these two new members this past quarter. Both have shown tremendous support for INspi, and we look forward to working with you!

Amanda Brown

E-Chatter
Rock Hill, SC

David Norris

Bold Crow AI
Grove City, OH

INspi Pro Academy

Coming in May!

**NUANCES OF INDIVIDUAL DUE DILIGENCE
LOCATES, BACKGROUNDS, AND ASSETS & LIABILITIES**

Thank you to Dean and Karen Beers for their willingness to support INspi's new virtual training library with this second video coming in May! INspi is dedicated to making professional learning opportunities available to you, as a member, and we welcome the support of our colleagues to make that happen.



Would you like to be part of the “Featured Member” series? Many of you may not be aware of the wide range of skills that are represented by our members. In order for us to learn more about our colleagues, the newsletter has featured INspi members in the last several issues and we would like to add more to our library of “interviews.” If you would like to be a part of this series, please contact Jan Fye, INspi Executive Administrator, at admin@Indiana-investigators.com to discuss this opportunity.

Personal Safety in the Field

By George Gergis

There are inherent risks involved in working in the community in any position; however, working as an investigator presents some unique challenges. We should all have a guide to identify methods and techniques that help minimize risks from hazards that may be present during fieldwork.

No matter what type of investigation or what type of client we are working for, the investigator's main priorities should always be as follows:

- 1) Investigator Safety
- 2) Safety of Others
- 3) Safety of Property

Before considering any other goals or priorities for an individual assignment, the top three priorities, listed in order of importance, must guide the investigator's actions.

By accepting mutual responsibility to promote and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, we all contribute to the well-being of our personnel and, subsequently, to our organization and the public and clients we serve. Additionally, we have a professional and ethical obligation to maintain safety protocols.

Here are some basic protocols and tips for safety:

SAFETY IS NOT ALWAYS CONVENIENT:

- Be patient and practice good safety habits.
- Do NOT sacrifice safety for convenience.
- Stay alert and aware of your surroundings (4 A's)
 - Alertness
 - Awareness
 - Avoidance
 - Action

BE MINDFUL OF PERSONAL SPACE:

Be mindful of personal space and avoid entering or occupying personal, intimate, or social space that makes you feel awkward or uncomfortable.

- Public Space Distance: 8 feet or more
- Social Space Distance: 4 to 8 feet
- Personal Space Distance: 2 to 4 feet
- Intimate Space Distance: 3 feet or less

Use caution when approaching others' personal space and avoid entering it unless necessary.

Personal Safety in the Field (cont.)

PLAN AHEAD:

Proper planning prevents poor performance, and when it comes to safety, planning helps avoid potential hazards.

TIPS:

- Contact the witness/client or gather as much information as possible before field visits (address, phone number, full name, etc.).
- Attempt to verify if the information given is correct.
- If the address of your destination is in a location unfamiliar to you, try to find another person who may be familiar with the area to brief you regarding any known risks or possible hazards.
- Utilize crime statistic websites or phone apps to determine criminal activities in the area.
- Verify the address to determine if it is located in a known drug or high-crime area or a dangerous location.
- Review online mapping images and Street View images to become familiar with routes and get a sneak peek at the area.
- Plan your route. Be aware of potential “safe havens” such as police stations, fire stations, or business offices en route to and from your destination.
- Notify others at the office of your itinerary. Route slips, regular call-ins, and check-in/check-out procedures should be used so that it is known where you are throughout the day and when you have safely returned at the end of the day.
- If your route changes significantly during the day, for example, due to a canceled appointment, be sure to call in to report your change of schedule.
- Arrange the work schedule so new or questionable visits are made early in the day. You will be less likely to find loiterers congregating on street corners, and you will not get stuck in a potentially unsafe neighborhood after dark.
- If the meeting is scheduled at night, if possible, drive by during daylight hours and determine if there are any hazards, noting entries into the building, exits, animals, suspicious activities, vehicles, etc.
- Always carry a cell phone with you and ensure that the battery is fully charged and the phone is functioning correctly before leaving the office. (Be aware that there are some “dead” spots for cellular transmissions.)
- Have a cell phone tower app on your phone to direct you to the nearest area with a cellphone signal.

Personal Safety in the Field (cont.)

- Inform your supervisor or other investigator/partner of your location, schedule, and approximate duration of the visit. (Use text and GPS phone to allow your location to be monitored until the visit is completed.)
- Have a code word arranged to indicate potential harm so it may be communicated verbally or via text.
- When possible and the budget allows, field visits should be conducted with two investigators.
- Identify potential safe areas near the visit, such as public restaurants, police stations, fire stations, hospitals, etc.
- Consider a neutral meeting place if possible, especially if you are uncomfortable meeting at a particular person's home and/or if additional residents or visitors are anticipated to be present in the home
- Program your cell phone speed dial numbers so that your supervisor, other emergency contacts, or 9-1-1 can be dialed with the push of one button if needed.
- 9-1-1 dispatch cannot reliably identify your location when you are calling from a cell phone. You must be able to verbally provide the dispatcher with your location (street address or at least the names of the cross streets) so that they can send help to the correct place. **KNOW WHERE YOU ARE.**
- Make sure you have all necessary items with you when you enter the house, apartment, business, etc., so that you do not need to make multiple trips to your car.
- Secure valuables, bags, and packages in the trunk of a vehicle or keep them out of sight.
- Ask the contact regarding pets, children, and other potential visitors; request that pets be secured before entering or upon arrival.
- Lock or conceal your valuables in the trunk of your car before leaving the office. Take only items necessary to do your job. Select the forms, notebooks, and other essentials you will need each day and arrange them to fit in a briefcase or other carrying device.
- Familiarize yourself with your local law enforcement agency.
- Report all accidents/incidents to your supervisor.

Personal Safety in the Field (cont.)

DRESS ACCORDINGLY:

- Sturdy footwear is helpful for field investigators. Wear shoes that can make it easy to run, with anti-slip soles.
- Dress professionally and appropriately (nothing tight or revealing).
- Wear clothes that make it easy for you to move fast and are appropriate for the type of encounters that may arise in the fieldwork environment (muddy sites, vertical ladders, staircases, etc.).
- Avoid wearing expensive or flashy jewelry or any accessory that could be dangerous (dangling scarves, necklaces, etc.).
- Carry a noise-making device, such as a whistle.
- Always wear or carry your identification badge.
- Carry only needed cash, mobile phone, keys, identification, driver's license, business cards, and only one credit card if required.

When I first started apprenticing as an investigator, there was an old mentor who used to have an office near the exit door. When he saw me leaving for fieldwork, he would not miss the opportunity to share his wisdom by saying: "Remember, kid, there are a lot of bold investigators, and there are a lot of old investigators. However, there are not a lot of old bold investigators; be careful out there!" Today, I still hear his raspy old voice with the southern drawl each time I leave the office for fieldwork.



Tech Tips

Sometimes life is eye-ronic: Google's AI assistant Gemini can now "[see](#)" and use your camera in real time. Point it at your dying houseplant for tips on how to save it, or ask what is the water dripping from your car's engine. (I did that, and it was 100% right!) It costs \$20/month to use it. ChatGPT does the same for \$20/month, too.

Size matters: Use Excel often? Save big files in an .XLSB format instead of .XLS. The file size will shrink by up to 75%.

Use a burner phone number: Don't want to hand out your real number to every website? Use [Google Voice](#) instead. Sign in with your **Google account**, choose a free number (you'll need to link it to your real one) and you're all set. You can now call, text and receive messages through the Google Voice app or website.

So. Much. Data.

I was doing some research about Amazon and ran across a golden nugget I couldn't wait to share with you. We all know Amazon tracks everything including what you browse, buy, watch and even ask Alexa.

But here's the surprise: You can download all of it. I'll show you how.

So, what kind of info are we talking about?

Tons. It's literally every single thing that you've done with an Amazon product or site.

- **Your orders, addresses, payment options and subscriptions:** Every single purchase you've ever made, including where it was sent and how you paid. Even if you tried to hide stuff by archiving it, it's still there.
- **Search history:** Everything you've ever searched for, clicked on, or added to your cart, down to the exact time and IP address. Yep, even those embarrassing searches are saved.
- **Ad preferences:** This is what Amazon thinks you're into, what groups they put you in to show you ads, and any ads you've clicked.
- **Customer support:** All the call recordings, chats, and email transcripts. They even keep all the photos you've sent and any messages to third-party Marketplace Sellers.
- **Alexa and Echo:** Details about your device and everything you've ever said to Alexa (with the date and time), plus any skills you've enabled.
- **Kindle, Fire TV and Fire tablets:** All the tiny details about your devices, like your preferred font size and brightness on Kindle, plus when and what you searched for on Fire TV.

How do I get it?

[Hit the Privacy Central page](#). When you're logged in, you can choose one category of data or get 'em all at once as a ZIP file. Click the confirmation email you get, then ... don't hold your breath.

Amazon says they'll send over your info ASAP. "Usually, this should not take more than a month." If it's somehow even longer, they'll let ya know.

Can I remove all my data from Amazon?

No, not all of it. Amazon will forever keep your Fire, Echo, and other device data, customer service messages, order history, and account information. Even if you delete your Amazon account, they keep your details. But here are the steps to:

- [Remove Alexa recordings](#)
- [Turn off browsing and search history](#) (#4 on the list)
- [Disable ad tracking and preferences](#)

Thank you to Kim Komando for allowing us to share these tips. Subscribe to her newsletter at <https://www.komando.com/subscribe/>

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