

# THE TEXAS CHAPTER

**Established: 1944**

Mr. Carol Weber asked President Schaller as early as the 1941 Annual Meeting for permission to form a chapter in San Antonio with Mr. Haenig as the President of the chapter.

With the help of Emil Haenig, an application was made on March 15, 1944, and the Board approved the application for formulating a Texas Chapter on April 27, 1944. Meetings were to be held quarterly in San Antonio. At their first meeting, along with electing officers, they appointed a committee to their local Health Board to look into sanitary laws of San Antonio. They also received material for the educational program offered by the Government to ex-servicemen concerning sanitary engineering. By July of that year, there were 36 members.

The chapter planned to have reports of officers and members and a discussion on public health and its relation to plumbing at their meetings. Their goal was to train members so that they would be prepared to speak about public health instead of just plumbing. After each meeting, the chapter would have refreshments to encourage members to get better acquainted.

A complete set of Yearbooks was presented to Dr. Lewis C. Robbins, City of San Antonio Health Director.

Before too long, we hoped to have a Texas newsletter.

During the 1946 Annual Meeting, a gun donated to our Society by William Sebera was raffled off and the \$315.00 was applied toward our Society's Polio Research Program.

By 1947, meetings were being held quarterly and the average attendance was 60% of its 186 active members.

A committee was formed that would work with the local Health Board and cooperate with them in matters pertaining to the sanitary laws of our city. They were also looking into getting material for the educational program offered by the government to ex-service men so the chapter could encourage the men to take the courses offered to them pertaining to sanitary engineering.

By 1949, the Texas chapter had 225 members throughout the entire state and hoped to increase this number and have more sub-chapters wherever advisable in the state. All the apprentice instructors in San Antonio were members and were talking about sanitation to their students. The Texas Chapter had two sub-chapters, The San Antonio District Chapter and the Houston District Chapter.

The Texas Chapter hosted the ASSE Annual Meeting which was held in San Antonio in 1950.

Because of the successful fund-raiser in 1952, the chapter reported that some of the \$2000.00 raised was spent to buy an electric auxiliary generator, the first of its kind in San Antonio, for the Santa Rosa Hospital Polio Ward and the remainder of the money was spent on Polio Cure and Disease Research. From our 1954 Polio Benefit proceeds, \$770.00 was appropriated for the purchase of plumbing fixtures and other clinical equipment for the Guadalupe Center which was a slum area clinic and rehabilitation center for underprivileged children.

The Auxiliary has been very civic minded and donated many hours to the community and also had been an active part of this chapter. In December, 1952 the Texas Chapter and Auxiliary held a toy and food shower for the Carmelite Nursery, a preschool orphanage. In January, 1953 the Texas Chapter and Auxiliary participated in the March of Dimes collection. In

June, they held their Annual Polio Benefit Ham Dinner and Carnival and 100% of the proceeds were donated to the Polio Cure and Disease Research. They contributed \$28.00 to the Eloise Japhet School for Crippled Children. Items were donated to the Gonzales Warm Spring Foundation. \$75.00 was donated to the Society's Polio Fund. The chapter also collected for the March of Dimes for the past few years.

The Texas Chapter was able to furnish material to be used at a public hearing in reference to traps in one of our cities in the state, and on several occasions, furnished speakers for civic clubs.

It was very important to spread the news of ASSE in Texas and other southern states because of the heat and lack of freezing weather to eliminate bacteria. Also, sewage disposal water could pose a problem. This chapter was working very closely with public health problems.

We felt that our chapter had a good program for letting people know about ASSE. In 1950 alone, we spoke to three Optimist Clubs in different sections of the country and showed our color films and gave demonstrations. We talked to the Lions Club on two occasions, and we had six speaking engagements with plumbing apprentices. We had a vocational guidance department that we worked with at the Texas School. We were working on water conservation, and we were also working closely with public health issues. Our chapter furnished beds for the tuberculosis children at Naply.

By 1954 chapter membership was at 67 and the Women's Auxiliary had 33 members.

From our 1954 Polio Benefit proceeds, \$770.00 had been appropriated for the purchase of plumbing fixtures, including several drinking fountains, and other clinical equipment for the Guadalupe Center, a slum area clinic and rehabilitation center for underprivileged children.

In 1955, the members worked at requiring all plumbing jobs in the state to be inspected by a state licensed plumbing inspector.

The Texas Chapter adopted the slogan "Each Member Bring A Member".

A lady plumber from Laredo, Texas, who had just passed the eight hour long Texas State Master Plumber Examination, was offered membership in the Texas Chapter in 1956.

At the 1956 May meeting, a resolution adopting the report of the Chapters's Code Committee was passed. This report was in the form of a petition asking the city of San Antonio officials to set up a Supervising Board for Plumbing. This Board would be responsible to the public for keeping the plumbing code and license law up to date and enforced. This group would hear appeals from the public and plumbers to make studies and tests and to be able to recommend to the city council necessary changes in materials, methods or procedures concerning the City Plumbing Code. Walter F. Zettner and E. A. Wegman were elected to represent the chapter on the board if and when a board was created by City Ordinance.

National President W. Wilbur White announced at the 1959 Annual Meeting that the Texas Chapter had become inactive.

The Texas Chapter was being rejuvenated, and in June of 1970, and International President James Shelton presented the Charter to the Texas Chapter. Membership was 20 at that time.

Most of 1971 was spent trying to reorganize. In April a meeting was held by Chapter President Graford Jennings to prepare for the annual state meeting. It was decided at this meeting that monthly meetings should

be held in each area in order that our members could be active all year instead of once a year. Monthly meetings were held in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Membership increased from 27 to 43 in 1972. The Texas Chapter offered lapel pins to each member who brought in new members.

By 1976, membership had increased to about 90 and the chapter was in the process of forming a Ladies Auxiliary.

The chapter normally held monthly meetings, but decided not to hold meetings for the three summer months.

The ASSE Annual Meeting was held in Dallas in 1978.

In 1982, our Vice President, Bill Hines participated in the Council of Scientific and Engineering Societies selection of two outstanding educators in the Dallas/Fort Worth area for recognition of their contribution to scientific and engineering skills and training for high school students. Bill Hines also represented the Texas Chapter at a dinner meeting at which the selectees were awarded plaques for their outstanding contributions.

After almost three years of being inactive, our chapter saw a turnaround in 1984. We held quarterly meetings and gained three new members.

1985 was a good year for our chapter. Our membership almost doubled, and we had good attendance at our bi-monthly meetings due to our educational programs.

The chapter did not have any meetings in 1989. Our chapter had 16 members even though only 10 members paid dues that year. After the Annual Meeting, with the help of six of the chapter members, Charlie Peebles began to rebuild the chapter.

The chapter, under the guidance of Chapter President Charlie Hall, offered a series of programs centered around "Prevention Rather Than Cure". We showed the ASSE slide presentation on Standards and Seals to our members and invited guests and at the Texas State Association of Plumbing Inspectors Annual Meeting and we gained a few new members as a result of our efforts.

In 1991, we had 24 Active members and 6 Sustaining members. Thanks to the efforts of Gerald Phariss, we had the most members since 1985.

Gerald Phariss mentioned in 1993 that they were trying to start another chapter in the Houston area.

In 1994, the State Board of Plumbing would be requiring that backflow testers be state certified by passing a written and actual test of three backflow devices. Also, before a plumber license can be renewed, that person must provide proof of at least six hours of continuing education from an approved school.

Attendance at our 1995 meetings had been poor. We recruited a few new members through the Cross Connection Certification Program.

In 1997, our chapter members participated in the review and development of plumbing standards throughout the year and were extremely active during this year's legislative session in regards to plumbing codes. The battle over the Uniform Plumbing Code and the International Plumbing Code had created many hard feelings throughout the State of Texas and we had members of our chapter on both sides of this issue.

The Texas Chapter started a monthly newsletter with the help of Russell Wyman.

Three members were certified as instructors of the Certified Backflow Assembly Testers Program which was being administered by the Texas Natural Resource and Conservation Commission, in part due to the credentials obtained through ASSE. The members who regularly attended our meetings felt that the growth of our chapter was dependent on our ability to promote the benefits of ASSE credentials.

The ASSE Annual Meeting was again held in San Antonio in 1998.

Chapter President James Carroll noted that the Texas Chapter has been inactive for some time.

## THE HEART OF TEXAS CHAPTER

Our chapter was a diverse group of members including representatives of the Austin Plumbing and Mechanical Contracting Industry, the Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners, UA Local Union #286, the City of Austin's Plumbing Inspection and Planning and Zoning Departments, the Plumbing Education Council of Texas and engineering and consulting professionals with strong ties to the plumbing and mechanical contracting industry.

We had 34 members in 1995. These individuals have been both interested and inspired to help our Society. Our chapter spent time with legislative issues and testified in numerous House and Senate Committees at the Capital on bills relating to the plumbing industry.

Our chapter was awarded the Dewey R. Dedrick, Jr. Chapter Award in 1995.

In 1996, some of our members took an active part in the City of Austin's deliberations surrounding the adoption of new plumbing and mechanical codes. We also took part in an organized movement to persuade Austin's Plumbing/Mechanical and Solar Board to recommend to the city council that the city abandon the 1991 Uniform Codes and adopt the new International Plumbing and Mechanical Codes. The chapter also worked closely with the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission during the commission's hearings on the adoption of new rules regulating the discharge and disposal of gray water. The chapter sponsored a presentation on water chemistry and solutions for lime scale and corrosion problems in plumbing and HVAC systems, including both transitional water supply and re-circulation systems.

Our chapter again participated in the industry-wide Christmas Party sponsored by MCA-Austin and the Austin Sheet Metal Association.

*The chapter became inactive in 2003.*