



MEMORANDUM

To: South Carolina Building Officials & Interested Individuals
From: South Carolina Contractors' Licensing Board
Subject: State of South Carolina Commercial Contractor Licensing Information

Please share this memorandum and attachments with your staff and individuals that have a need or want to be familiar with this information. Building Officials may also forward this information to your business-licensing department for their review.

GENERAL AND MECHANICAL CONTRACTOR LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

If an entity or individual in this state is engaging in regulated general or mechanical commercial construction work in an amount exceeding \$5,000 which includes the total cost of construction for the project, a general or mechanical contractor license issued by the South Carolina Contractors' Licensing board is required. The total cost of construction is defined by the total cost of labor, profit and materials, regardless of who pays for the materials. A licensed general or mechanical contractor may engage in commercial and residential construction. If a contractor is solely engaging in residential construction, he must be licensed or registered by the South Carolina Residential Builders Commission and cannot perform regulated general or mechanical construction work in excess of \$5,000. A general or mechanical contractor performing residential work must comply with the Contractors' Licensing Board licensing law, not the Residential Builders Commission statutes. The statutes regulating general and mechanical contractors are found in General and Mechanical contracting statutes, Sections 40-11-5 through 40-11-430 of the 1976 South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended. The regulations are found in Sections 29-1 through 29-10. **Definitions for the different types of work regulated** are found in 40-11-410. Section 40-11-430 relates to issuing building permits. Section 40-11-360 relates to situations not requiring licensure. Building Official duties are found in section 40-11-350. Disciplinary actions are found in Section 40-11-110. Section 40-11-340 states an entity licensed under Section 40-11-410(1)(2) &(3) may act as the sole prime general contractor on a project if forty percent or more of the total cost of construction falls under one or more of the licensee's license or sub classifications. A properly licensed mechanical contracting entity must have fifty one percent of its license sub classification in a construction project to be listed as the sole prime contractor.

BURGLAR AND FIRE ALARM AND FIRE SPRINKLER LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

The Contractors' Licensing Board also regulates burglar alarm, fire alarm, and fire sprinkler contractors. A state license issued by the board is required for any work being performed on these types of systems, regardless of the cost. The statutes regulating burglar and fire alarm systems are found in Sections 40-79-5 through 40-79-320. The statutes regulating fire sprinkler systems are found in Sections 23-45-10 through 23-45-160. Fire sprinkler regulations are found in 29-70 through 29-110.

STYLE OF BUSINESS

A commercial contractor license may be issued to a sole proprietor, partnership, corporation, or any other style of business.

GENERAL AND MECHANICAL CONTRACTOR LICENSE

A general and mechanical contractor **license** is in the **form of a small wallet size card**. The wallet card lists the contractor's name and address, abbreviated license classifications and monetary group limitations per project. **This is the actual commercial contractor license**. The wallet card lists the date the license was issued and the date it expires.

GENERAL AND MECHANICAL COMPANY WALL CERTIFICATE

A **General or Mechanical Certificate** issued to a general or mechanical contractor business entity **is not a license**. This certificate only states that the entity is qualified to perform general or mechanical contracting work in this state and is generally used by the contractor to display on his office wall. This certificate does not list the contractor's license classification(s) or group limitations.

GENERAL AND MECHANICAL CONTRACTOR GENERAL INFORMATION

Copies of the contracting statutes regulated by the board, are available at the board's web site, www.llr.state.sc.us/POL/Contractors. Please refer to the Code of Laws and Regulations (Practice Acts). Licensee look-up of the name or license number of all general and mechanical contractors licensed with the board also is on the web site.

All general and mechanical contractors are issued a license classification based upon the type of regulated work in which the contractor is qualified and has received a license for a particular scope of regulated work. General and mechanical contractors are also issued a Group limitation for each separate project. This means the contractor is limited to a certain dollar value per project. This dollar value limitation is based upon the minimum net worth of the entity as established in Section 40-11-260.

It is unlawful for a licensed contractor to bid in any other name other than the exact name that appears on its contractor license card. If the contractor bids in another name, bids over the group monetary limitation, or outside the classification in which the contractor is licensed, the licensee is subject to disciplinary action under Sections 40-11-110 and/or 40-11-370. Section 110 also provides a list of possible violations of the contracting statutes.

Issuing a permit to an improperly licensed person may result in problems for the owner, contractor and the issuing authority. If an improperly licensed contractor is found on a project, the contractor may be issued a fine and required to leave the project and not return. This can cause problems for the contractor and the owner and can be very costly to both. The owner may be issued a fine for hiring an unlicensed contractor and may have to find another contractor to finish the remaining construction. In addition, the department has the authority to issue a fine to the permitting jurisdictions that issue permits to improperly licensed individuals. The department is starting to enforce this provision after an initial letter of warning and notice. See Section 40-11-420 for further clarification of issuing building permits.

1) Small Wallet Card (this is the licensee's actual license)

<p>G-000000 South Carolina Contractors' Licensing Board Certifies that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Doe Construction Co Inc P O Box 9999 Doesville SC 29999</p> <p>Issued: July 26, 2001 Expires: October 31, 2001</p> <p style="text-align: right;">_____ Administrator</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">South Carolina Contractors' Licensing Board</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Is licensed in the classification(s) of</p> <p>BD3 HY3 CT3 WL1 (GF)</p>
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2) Company Wall Certificate (not a license)

<p>SOUTH CAROLINA CONTRACTORS' LICENSING BOARD CERTIFICATE</p>	
<p>License Number: 000000</p>	
<p>This is to certify that: Doe Construction Co Inc PO Box 9999 Doesville SC 29999</p>	
<p>Having given satisfactory evidence of the necessary qualifications required by the laws of State of South Carolina and is duly qualified and entitled to practice</p>	
<p>GENERAL CONTRACTING</p>	
<p>For the classification(s) and limitation(s) listed on the Contractors' License Card.</p>	
<p>Place Seal Here</p>	<p>July 26, 2001 _____ Administrator</p>



MEMORANDUM

To: Interested Individuals

From: South Carolina Contractors' Licensing Board

Subject: State of South Carolina Commercial and Residential Contractor Licensing Information

SOUTH CAROLINA CONTRACTORS' LICENSING BOARD
110 Centerview Drive, Suite 201, PO Box 11329, Columbia S.C. 29211-1329
(803) 896-4686
Licensing's Fax (803) 896-4701
Compliance Fax (803) 896-4364
E-mail Address: www.llr.state.sc.us/POL/Contractors

BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

The purpose of the board is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public through the regulation of businesses and individuals who identify, assess and provide contracting work to individuals or other legal entities through the statutes and regulations governed by the board. The board responds to complaints concerning licensees and unlicensed contractors. These complaints often come from consumers and other contractors pertaining to work performed that may result in code violations, misconduct, gross negligence or incompetence. Actions or sanctions the board can take against licensees include: fines, reprimands, probation, license suspension or revocation. Contractual disputes and money matters are not addressed and should be resolved by independent arbitrators or heard within the judicial system.

CONTRACTORS REGULATED BY THE BOARD

The Contractors' Licensing Board is responsible for the issuance of licenses to burglar and fire alarm, fire sprinkler, and general and mechanical contractors. These contractors may engage in residential as well as commercial work.

PERFORMING CONTRACTING WORK

A subcontractor performing work for a general or mechanical contractor is not required to have a license if the work performed falls within the general or mechanical contractor's license classification(s). The licensed contractor hiring an unlicensed subcontractor must supervise and be responsible for the sub's work. Please refer to Section 40-11-270 for further clarification.

Section 40-11-340 states an entity licensed under Section 40-11-410(1)(2) &(3) may act as the sole prime general contractor on a project if forty percent or more of the total cost of construction falls under one or more of the licensee's license or sub classifications. A properly licensed mechanical contracting entity must have fifty one percent of its license sub classification in a construction project to be listed as the sole prime contractor.

Alarm and fire sprinkler contractors must have a license regardless of the cost of the project. Lawn sprinkler work is not regulated by the state and does not require a general or mechanical contractor license.

General, mechanical and alarm contractors must advertise and engage in regulated contracting work in the exact name that appears on the entities contractor license. Failure to do so may result in a \$500 citation.

GENERAL AND MECHANICAL MONETARY LICENSE GROUP LIMITATIONS PER PROJECT

Listed below are the different monetary license group limitations for general and mechanical contractors. The total dollar value per project may not exceed the contractor's group limitation for Groups # 1 through # 4. Group # 5 contractors are not limited to a dollar value per project. Group # 5 is unlimited in the amount of work that the contractor may perform.

In order to determine if a contractor is within its designated monetary group limitation, it must be determined that the total cost of construction for the work to be performed, which includes the total cost of labor, profit, and material, is within the licensee's Group limitation. This limitation is determined by the financial net worth of the **entity seeking licensure**. The net worth is determined by submitting a financial statement at the time of licensure or during license renewal. The licensee may never go below its required net worth. If the licensee goes below the required net worth for the Group limitation assigned to the license, the licensee must notify the department immediately. The licensee's group limitation will be reassigned to the proper Group limit based upon the submittal of a new financial statement. Please refer to Section 40-11-260 for explicit details.

License group limitations are listed on backside of the contractor's license wallet card along with the abbreviation of the classification(s) of work the contractor may perform.

Group Limitation Requirements

GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Group # 1 \$5,000 - \$30,000 per contract
Group # 2 No one contract to exceed \$100,000.00
Group # 3 No one contract to exceed \$350,000.00
Group # 4 No one contract to exceed \$750,000.00
Group # 5 Unlimited

MECHANICAL CONTRACTOR

Group # 1 \$5,000- \$17,500 per contract
Group # 2 No one contract to exceed \$30,000.00
Group # 3 No one contract to exceed \$50,000.00
Group # 4 No one contract to exceed \$125,000.00
Group # 5 Unlimited

Net Worth Requirements

GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Group # 1 \$6,000
Group # 2 \$20,000
Group # 3 \$70,000
Group # 4 \$150,000
Group # 5 \$250,000

MECHANICAL CONTRACTOR

Group # 1 \$3,500
Group # 2 \$6,000
Group # 3 \$10,000
Group # 4 \$25,000
Group # 5 \$100,000

Financial Responsibility Requirements for General and Mechanical Contractor

Initial Licensure:

Groups # 1 & 2 as a minimum, requires a self-prepared financial statement or financial statement prepared a CPA,

Groups # 3 & 4 requires a compiled financial statement prepared a CPA accompanied by a letter of opinion, balance sheet, and all required disclosures.

Group # 5 requires an audited financial statement prepared by a CPA accompanied by a letter of opinion, balance sheet, and all required disclosures.

Renewal of License:

Groups # 1 & 2 as a minimum, a self-prepared financial statement or financial statement prepared a CPA,

Groups # 3 & 4 as a minimum, a self-prepared financial statement or financial statement prepared a CPA,

Group # 5 requires an audited financial statement prepared by a CPA accompanied by a letter of opinion, balance sheet, and all required disclosures

CEASE AND DESIST ORDERS

It is unlawful for an owner, a construction manager, a prime contractor, or any other entity with contracting or hiring authority on any construction project to divide work into portions so as to avoid the requirements of the state contracting statutes. The department is authorized to issue a Cease and Desist Order (C & D) to anyone for contracting without a proper contractor license. If an individual or entity receiving a Cease and Desist Order fails to stop the contracting work after the issuance of a C & D, the matter may be referred to an Administrative Law Judge for a possible fine of up to \$10,000 and/or imprisonment.

EXAMINATION INFORMATION

The general, mechanical and alarm contractor application packages include the application, South Carolina Code of Laws Exam, and the PSI Candidate Information Bulletin (CIB). Psychological Services Inc, (PSI), is the board's examination service provider. The CIB lists each exam given for general, mechanical, burglar, or fire alarm applicants along with a reference book list, types of questions on the exam, and the registration form to schedule the exam(s). Any individual needing an exam registration or application form for general, mechanical, burglar or fire alarm licensure should contact PSI at 1-800-733-9267 and request the South Carolina commercial application package for the respective type of contractor license the candidate is seeking. If you need to talk to a real person, press star on the telephone keypad. Their Web site is www.psiexams.com. Exams may be administered any day, Monday through Saturday at 9:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m., depending on the volume of traffic at the five different test sites located in South Carolina and one in Charlotte, North Carolina. Candidates must be at the exam site thirty minutes prior these two examination start times. Anyone needing information for Fire Sprinkler Protection licensure, please contact the department's main number, 1-800-896-4686, and request a fire sprinkler application package.

In addition to the burglar alarm exam administered by PSI, the alarm statute requires an additional exam, NTS Level I Certification. This certification is administered through the South Carolina Alarm Association, 1-877-252-0580. Their Web site is www.scalarassociation.com. The association provides exams for in-state contractors. The National Burglar, & Fire Alarm Association provides certification for out-of-state contractors through association's National Training School. The association's telephone number is 1-301-585-1855, extension 301. The association's Web site is www.alarm.org. The burglar alarm applicant must complete this exam and submit documentation with his/her fire alarm application that the applicant has passed the NICET Level I exam in addition to PSI's technical alarm exam and S.C. Code of Laws exam.

In addition to the fire alarm exam administered by PSI, the alarm statute requires additional certification. This certification is administered through the National Institute for Certification Engineering Technologies. The certification is called the NICET Level II Certification. The fire alarm applicant must complete this certification and submit documentation with his/her fire alarm application that the applicant has passed the NICET Level II Certification in addition to PSI's exams. Any applicant desiring information for this certification, please call 1-888-476-4238. Their Web site is www.nicet.org.

After an applicant passes the required general, mechanical or alarm examinations and/or certifications, the applicant may send the license application to the department for processing. This process takes two to three weeks. Applicants are encouraged not to call the department for the status of their application since this delays the application process. If an applicant desires to know the status of the application, go the department's Web site www.llr.state.sc.us to determine if the license number has been issued. Go to "licensee look up" and select Contractors' Board; enter the applicant's name as it appears on the license application. If the license number has been issued, the license number and date of issue will appear on the license information screen. The applicant should receive the license within five days of being posted on the web site.

CONTRACTOR CLASSIFICATIONS

Definitions for the different classifications of work regulated are found in Section 40-11-410.

(A) A general contractor license is limited to four major classifications. They are building, highway, public utility, and specialty. Under these classifications, there are 26 sub-classifications.

(1) The building classification is the only major classification that has two different examinations, the limited and unlimited building exam.

(a) The general contractor limited building exam allows a contractor to apply for a contractor license to build structures from the ground up or perform renovation work and make additions to existing structures. New construction from the ground up and additions for these structures is **limited to three stories in height. Renovations to existing buildings do not have a height restriction.** If a contractor wants to engage in work in excess of three stories in height, the unlimited general contractor exam must be taken.

(b) The general contractor unlimited building exam allows a contractor to apply for a contractor license to build structures from the ground up or perform renovation work or make additions to existing structures, **regardless of the height.**

(B) A mechanical contractor's license has six major classifications. The mechanical classifications are plumbing, heating, electrical, lightning protection, air conditioning and packaged equipment.

COMMERCIAL INSPECTORS

A licensed general contractor, architect or engineer may perform commercial inspections for a building, highway, sewer, improvement, or reimprovement pursuant to Title, 40, Chapter 26 of the South Carolina Code of Laws using the license held by the aforementioned licensees. A commercial inspection means the rendering of a written or oral report for compensation of any sort as to the condition of the construction or improvements to a commercial structure.

GRANDFATHER INFORMATION

The grandfather clause was enacted after the requirements for licensure for general and mechanical contracting were reduced from \$30,000 to \$5,000 for general contracting and \$17,500 to \$5,000 for mechanical contracting. This was passed by the legislature to allow entities that were not required to have a license prior to the rewrite of the contracting statutes to continue to make a living. The grandfather license limits the contractor to the Group #1 limitation of \$30,000 per project for general contractor, and \$17,500 for mechanical contractors. The applicant must submit documentation that the business was lawfully engaging in regulated general or mechanical construction work between April 1, 1997 and April 1, 1999. Acceptable documentation may be: contracts, paid invoices or letters from the Chief Building Official of a municipal jurisdiction indicating the individual had a business that was lawfully performing regulated general or mechanical contracting work in an amount between \$5,000 and \$30,000 in an appropriate regulated classification. If the applicant is applying for the building classification, the applicant must have constructed buildings from the ground up. If proper documentation is submitted, the applicant will receive a Group # 1 general or mechanical contractor license. If the applicant desires a higher Group limitation, all examination requirements must be met. Please refer to Sections 40-11-390, 40-11-410 and Regulation 29-2. Residential work on a residential dwelling is not acceptable.

LICENSE APPLICATIONS

To obtain applications that can faxed to your fax machine, dial Fax on Demand at 1-888-269-7646 press 4 when the message begins and request the directory for document numbers; then request the document number for the application desired, or call PSI and ask for a South Carolina commercial package, or go the board's web site.

SOUTH CAROLINA RESIDENTIAL BUILDERS' COMMISSION

110 Centerview Drive, Suite 201, PO Box 11329, Columbia, S.C. 29211-1329

(803) 896-4696

Fax: (803) 896-4556

E-mail Address: www.llr.state.sc.us/POL/ResidentialBuilders

RESIDENTIAL INFORMATION

The South Carolina Residential Builders' Commission is solely responsible for issuing residential specialty contractor registrations, residential builder licenses, and home inspection licenses. To apply for the residential builder license, specialty registration or home inspection license, the applicant should contact the Residential Builders' Commission and request an application.

RESIDENTIAL LICENSE

If an individual wishes to engage in residential building from the ground up, the individual is required first to obtain a residential builders' license if the total cost of the construction exceeds \$5,000. The applicant must pass a residential builder's examination administered by the commission's examination service, Psychological Services, Inc. (PSI). The commission also requires a licensed residential builder to provide a surety bond in the amount of \$15,000 with the commission being the bondholder. There is no monetary limitation for residential work performed by the licensee.

RESIDENTIAL SPECIALTY REGISTRATION

Anyone engaging in residential specialty work over \$200 must complete a specialty registration form. The commission will allow an individual to choose up to three specialty registration classifications from a list of 12 specialty classifications. If the individual is engaging in more than three classifications, the commission requires the individual to apply for a residential builder license. The residential specialty registration also limits the individual to \$5,000 per residential project unless he/she secures a surety bond in the amount of \$5,000. The commission is the bondholder. There is no dollar limitation for the residential specialty work performed. The residential specialty registration is issued to an individual, not a business entity. A specialty contractor cannot build a residential structure or make an addition to a residential structure from the ground up.

HOME INSPECTOR LICENSE

Home inspectors must meet certain requirements as required by the South Carolina Home Builders' Commission to obtain a home inspector license. A licensed general contractor holding a building classification, residential building contractor, architect or engineer does not have a home inspector's license and may perform a home inspection using their respective license.

MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION

The South Carolina Municipal Association is responsible for issuing a certification to journeyman and masters in the fields of electrical, plumbing, and HVAC contracting work when the total cost of construction is under \$5,000. The association also issues a gas-piping certification. Some municipalities may require certification for this type of work that is less than \$5,000 and some may not.

SOUTH CAROLINA MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION

1411 Gervais Street, PO Box 12109, Columbia, S.C. 29211

(803) 799-9574

Fax: (803) 933-1299

E-mail Address: www.masc.state.sc.us

SUBMITTING BIDS

Any general or mechanical contractor that submits a bid and has a monetary license group limitation and exceeds his/her limitation is considered to be in violation of the contracting statutes. The licensee will have to withdraw from the project and cannot go back on that project as a licensed contractor or subcontractor. If a licensee is close to his/her group limitation prior to a bid and goes over the group limitation due to change orders such as upgrading fixtures, the licensee cannot perform these changes. The owner will have to hire another licensed contractor to complete the new changes. Should the licensee offer to perform the new change orders that place him/her over their group limitation, this action will place the licensee in violation of the contracting statutes for exceeding his/her license monetary group limitation. Should a licensee with a group limitation perform work on a regulated construction project and there were some change orders resulting from unforeseen circumstances such as environmental requirements that were overlooked or not considered, the licensee will be given the opportunity to upgrade his/her license prior to agreeing or engaging in the changes. This is acceptable as long as the changes were not evident or known when the bid was submitted or upon signing the construction contract. If a licensee is hiring sub contractors to perform regulated work, the licensee must ensure that the subs are properly licensed before hiring or submitting a bid from the sub. Some type of sanction will be levied against both contractors for improper licensure activity. Prior to submitting a bid or executing a regulated construction contract, it is incumbent of every licensed general, mechanical or alarm contractor in this state to ensure that sub contractors hired by the licensee have a proper contractor license.

CONSTRUCTION MANAGERS

In order to be a construction manager (CM) for general or mechanical construction projects, the CM must have a general contractor, mechanical contractor, architect, or engineer's license. The CM applicant must complete a construction manager registration form issued by the board and submit a financial statement for an appropriate license group monetary limitation equal to or greater than the dollar value of the project in which the CM is engaging. The financial statement must belong to the entity that is applying to be the CM. In the case of an architect or engineer, his/her professional license belongs to the individual. The architectural or engineering firm seeking registration as a CM may use one of their employee's professional licenses to qualify the firm as a CM. When a CM engages in the hiring of multiple prime contractors in the name of the owner, the construction manager is responsible to ensure that properly licensed contractors are hired for the project. If the CM hires unlicensed contractors, the CM may be charged with aiding and abetting unlicensed contractors. If a CM is performing work as a CM and also performs construction work on a project and is assuming responsibility for work performed by sub contractors, the board will treat the CM a contractor. Normally CM duties are to coordinate the work of contractors and the movement or delivery of supplies for a construction project by providing services to the owner by organizing the effort, developing the management plan, monitoring the participants' progress against the plan, and identifying actions to be taken in the event of deviance from the plan (Section 40-11-320 and Regulation 29-5).

ROOFING WORK

Commercial roofing work currently has two separate general contractor roofing classifications. The **general roofing classification** consists of asphalt shingles, clay and concrete tile, slate, wood shake shingles, and metal. The **specialty roofing classification** consists of all of the work under the general roofing classification and also covers roofing work for built up roofing, tar and gravel and membrane applications or any other type roofing system. General contractors with a building classification may self perform general roofing work under their building classification or may sub contract general roofing work to properly licensed roofing contractors. General contractors holding a building classification cannot engage in specialty roofing work. This work must be sub contracted to properly licensed specialty roofing contractors (Sections 40-11-410,(1),(4),(h),(i)).

CONDUCTING BUSINESS

A licensed general, mechanical, or alarm contractor may not conduct business under any name other than the exact name that appears on the entity's license (Sections 40-11-370(B) and (40-79-270)(A)). A licensed general contractor may bid on a regulated construction project as a sole prime contractor if the licensee has forty percent or more of the work as measured by the total cost of construction falls under one or more of the licensee's license classifications or sub classifications. A licensed mechanical contractor may bid on a regulated construction project if the licensee has fifty-one percent or more of the work as measured by the total cost of construction falls under one or more of the licensee's license sub classifications. If there is no general contractor that has forty per cent of the work on a project within his/her license classification, any properly licensed general contractor with a percentage of his/her license classification scope of work is in the project, all of these licensees may submit a bid or contract for the work (Section 45-11-340). Licenses may utilize the services of unlicensed sub contractors to perform work within the limitations of the licensee's group and license classification or sub classification. The licensee is fully responsible for the work performed by the unlicensed sub contractors (Section 40-11-270(C)).

TOTAL COST OF CONSTRUCTION

The total cost of a project, including all labor, profit and material is the determining factor as to whether or not a general or mechanical contractor license is required, regardless of who pays for the materials (Section 40-11-20(23)). If regulated work contains unregulated work, such as demolition, or erection of large signs, this unregulated work must be included in the total cost of the project. By statute, a general or mechanical contractor license is not required for commercial work in which the total cost of the project is \$5,000 or less. However a number of local jurisdictions will require a contractor's license regardless of the cost of construction. In addition, most local governments may also require a business license in order to engage in business within their jurisdiction. Contractors should contact local governmental jurisdictions to determine local contracting requirements. Regulated construction work is found within the definitions listed in the 1976 Code of Laws for South Carolina, as amended, Section 40-11-410.

COMPLIANCE

The board responds to complaints concerning licensees and unlicensed contractors. Consumers, local or state jurisdictions or other contractors may submit a complaint for regulated construction work or actions that are in violation of the contracting statutes. Complaints pertaining to regulated construction work may be related to code violations, failure to comply with manufacturer's recommendation for installation instructions, failure to comply with Residential Standard Guidelines for Construction as adopted by the board, or other violations of the contracting statutes. Unjustified nonpayment of monies owed to sub contractors or suppliers may also result in possible sanctions against a licensee. Contractual disputes and money matters are not addressed and should be resolved by independent arbitrators or heard within the judicial system. The board is currently issuing fines to general and mechanical contractors that are hiring unlicensed or improperly licensed contractors. This may also apply to the project owner, architect, engineer or a public jurisdiction (Sections 40-11-110(A) and 40-11-200).

Revised August 17, 2004



TO: Whom It May Concern
FROM: South Carolina Contractors' Licensing Board
SUBJECT: Contracting Work Not Requiring Licensure
DATE: August 17, 2004

EXEMPT WORK NOT REQUIRING A CONTRACTOR LICENSE

There are several classifications of work that are exempt from requiring a general or mechanical contractor license. Among these are: fencing, landscaping, clearing, grubbing, debris removal, hauling, irrigation, exterior recreational surfaces, golf course construction, signs or billboards, carpet, non-permanent scaffolding, demolition, fiberglass work, and kitchen equipment, and installation of commercial exhaust hoods. Fire suppression work related to exhaust hood work should be inspected by the appropriate local authority having jurisdiction.

Furnishing and installing most equipment and machinery, regardless of the cost, no longer requires a general or mechanical contractors' license. However, licensed contractors must be utilized for any electrical, steam, gas, oil or water connections (essential to the operation of the equipment or machinery), which exceed \$5,000.

Currently, a license is not required for commercial work dealing with stucco, aluminum or vinyl siding. If regulated repair work is performed on a structure in addition to the siding work and the cost of the regulated work exceeds \$5,000, the regulated work must be performed by an entity that has a general contractor license with a building classification.

THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF WORK NO LONGER REQUIRE A CONTRACTOR LICENSE

Effective January 1, 1991:

Air pollution, air handling, humidification, office, school, hospital, material handling, food service, laboratory, wood processing, refinery, prison, and jail equipment, elevators (regulated by the S.C. Department of Labor), generators, fire suppression systems (including chemicals), conveyors, turbines, underground fuel tanks and pumps, heat exchangers, pressure vessels, lockers or incinerators.

Effective April 1, 1999:

General contractor 'Heavy' and 'Communications & Instrumentation' classifications and all general contractor electrical work that is less than 50 volts.

Pile-driving was included in the scope of work that was found within the general contractor 'Heavy' classification and is no longer regulated, unless pile-driving work is performed within the general contractor 'Marine' classification.

The construction of steel communication towers requires a general contractor license with a general contractor 'Structural Framing' classification. See Section 40-11-360 for additional information concerning exemptions.

To obtain all Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulation information, the Web page is www.llr.state.sc.us.



South Carolina Contractors' Licensing Board

110 Centerview Drive, Synergy Office Park

Suite 102, Kingstree Building

Post Office Box 11329

Columbia, SC 29211-1329

803-896-4686

Department Contacts for Contractors' Licensing Board

You can contact the following on questions regarding the examination process for (1) general or mechanical commercial contractors, or (2) burglar and/or fire alarm or fire sprinkler contractors:

For general contractor licensing or examination questions:

TRACY GUNTER

803-896-4608

e-mail: guntert@llr.sc.gov

For mechanical contractor licensing or examination questions:

RHONDA JACKSON

803-896-4627

e-mail: jacksor@llr.sc.gov

For grandfather provision, license revisions, exam waivers approved with other states, construction manager registration, or examination questions:

CHANDA HAWK

803-896-4406

e-mail: hawkc@llr.sc.gov

For burglar and/or fire alarm or fire sprinkler application, licensing or examination questions:

PATTY MUCKELVANEY

803-896-4624

e-mail: muckelvp@llr.sc.gov

To report examination problems:

JOYCE THURBER

803-896-4634

e-mail: thurberj@llr.sc.gov

For compliance violations call:

JOYCE THURBER

803-896-4634

e-mail: thurberj@llr.sc.gov

For technical construction questions:

RON GALLOWAY, Administrator (or ask for the investigator on duty)

803-896-4686

e-mail: gallowar@llr.sc.gov



South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulation
South Carolina Contractors' Licensing Board

CURRENT CLASSIFICATION ABBREVIATIONS

As of January 1, 2002

GENERAL CONTRACTORS

Building	BD
Highway	HY (AP, CP, BR, GD, & HI)*
Asphalt Paving	AP
Concrete Paving	CP
Bridges	BR
Glass & Glazing	GG
Grading	GD
Highway Incidental	HI
Public Utility Electrical	1U or 2U**
Pipelines	PL
Water & Sewer Lines	WL
Water & Sewer Plants	WP
Boiler Installation	BL
Concrete	CT
Boring & Tunneling	BT
Marine	MR
Masonry	MS
Pre-engineered Metal Buildings	MB
Interior Renovation	IR
Railroad	RR
Specialty Roofing	SR
General Roofing	GR
Structural Framing	SF
Structural Shapes	SS
Swimming Pools	SP
Wood Frame Structures	WF

MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS

Air Conditioning	AC
Electrical	EL
Heating	HT
Lightning Protection	LP
Packaged Equipment	PK
Plumbing	PB
Process Piping	1P or 2P***
Refrigeration	RG

* The Highway classification “HY” is given to licensees who have passed all of the following exams: AP, CP, BR, GD & HI.

** 1U is the Public Utility Electrical classification for those licensed prior to 4/1/99; licenses issued after 4/1/99 will be given the classification as 2U and may not engage in stadium lighting.

*** Process Piping is designated as 1P prior to 4/1/99. Those licensed in Process Piping after 4/1/99 is designated as 2P and may not engage in boiler work.

To determine if a general or mechanical contractor is licensed, go to the board’s home web page, at the bottom of the page, select licensee lookup, select CONTRACTORS in the board list, enter the licensee’s business name, first or individual name or license number. Only active contractors will be shown with its license number, address, classification, monetary Group Limitation, and license expiration date.