



Building Safety News

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Idaho Division of Building Safety

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New regulations ensure quality of public works projects

By Ken Dey
News Editor

Public agencies and officials risk major fines and potential jail time if they award significant public works projects to unlicensed or improperly licensed contractors.

Recent changes to Idaho's public works contracting regulations allow the state to impose a \$5,000 administrative fine on public agencies that do not verify the licenses of contractors. The individual public officials who approve a contract without verifying licensing requirements are also subject to individual criminal penalties that include up to a \$5,000 fine and as much as one year in jail.



Regulations ensure that only qualified contractors work on public works projects like the new Prospect Elementary School now under construction in Meridian. (Photo by Ken Dey)

Jean Frenette, Public Works Contractor Licensing Program Manager for the Idaho Division of Building Safety, said many of Idaho's local elected officials were unaware they could face criminal charges for awarding a bid to an

unlicensed contractor.

Since the law went into effect July 1, 2005, Frenette has been traveling the state meeting with local officials to explain the different changes.

See Regulations on page 2

Quarterly newsletter will highlight DBS and its programs

This publication is the first issue of the Division of Building Safety's quarterly newsletter.

We hope to use this newsletter to inform the public and the construction industry about the Division and the programs it administers.

The Division is the



John A. McAllister
DBS
Administrator

home of six boards—Building Code, Electrical, HVAC, Manufactured Housing, Plumbing and Public Works Contractor Licensing. Details on board meetings and board issues will be covered in this newsletter.

Division proposed rules and draft Idaho law changes will also be covered. This coverage will include specific details

See Newsletter on Page 3

Delivering better service and keeping our customers informed is our goal

By Steve Keys

Deputy Administrator

On behalf of all the employees of the Division of Building Safety, I'd like to welcome you to the initial issue of the DBS News.

Our goal is to publish this newsletter on a quarterly basis in hopes of raising awareness of applicable codes, rules and policies among our customers and stakeholders. We will also make every effort to keep you apprised of new issues and proposals as they are developed by our boards and staff. Further, the division will try to make everyone aware of legislative efforts that may affect you.

Currently, we are aware of a growing effort by telecommunications contractors and organizations to develop a regulatory framework for their industry. It appears that the preferred structure may involve a new entity other than the existing electrical board and bureau organization within the division. We will continue to work with the group as they finalize their proposal to intro-

duce legislation in the 2007 session.

We are hearing rumblings concerning the establishment of new two year "residential" licenses for electrical, plumbing, and HVAC workers.

The division is also working on establishing a new satellite office in Idaho Falls co-located in the Idaho Department of Commerce and Labor office building currently under construction.

We hope the new office will improve access for customers in eastern Idaho. The division is also splitting the state into four regions for the purposes of plumbing, electrical, and HVAC inspection. We are establishing electrical and plumbing/HVAC area supervisors in each area. Please refer to future newsletters and visit dbs.idaho.gov for new information.

In closing, I'd like to thank everyone at the Division of Building Safety for their patience and consideration in putting up with me since I came on board last June. I'd like to specifically thank Dave Munroe for

the opportunity and especially John McAllister for his continued steadfast support of our change initiatives. I have been very impressed with the knowledge and competency levels of our employees and even more impressed with their dedication to serving you, our customers.

The division is very lucky to have dedicated board members serving on our six boards who give freely of their time and expertise in helping us to perform our regulatory duties. These industry experts do a great job of balancing regulatory necessity against the potentially negative impacts on industry that may result from decisions that are made.

We are working hard in analyzing all our processes, rules, statutes, and policies with an eye towards making whatever changes are necessary to deliver better customer service as efficiently as possible.

If you have suggestions or questions, please feel free to contact me at skeys@dbs.idaho.gov or call (208) 332-8986.

Regulations

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"We want to be proactive and let everyone know there has been a change," Frenette said, adding that those he has talked to have been very receptive to the changes. The requirements for contractor licensing take effect if the value of a project exceeds \$10,000. Any projects below that threshold don't require a public works contractor license.

Public works contractor licenses also have different levels that identify the maximum value of a project a contractor can bid on so public officials also need to verify that the level of the license corresponds with

the value of the project.

Public officials also need to be aware that any projects exceeding \$25,000 must go through a bidding process.

Projects that are valued from \$25,000 to \$100,000 require at least three written bids from contractors. Projects above \$100,000 require a formal bidding process that is open to all licensed contractors.

In addition to the new penalties for public officials and agencies, contractors are also subject to increased fines including an administrative fine of \$20,000 and a criminal penalty of up to \$5,000 and one year in jail.

A multi-faceted task force of local

public agencies, the state of Idaho, public works contractors, state regulators and design professionals developed the changes to the regulations that were approved by the Idaho Legislature.

How to find out more

To view changes to public works contracting regulations or to verify if a contractor is licensed visit the Idaho Division of Building Safety Web site at dbs.idaho.gov or call the Public Works Contractors Licensing Bureau at 208-334-4067. Questions can also be addressed to Jean Frenette at 208-332-8698 or via e-mail at jfrenette@dbs.idaho.gov

Being aware of common violations is the key to avoiding penalties

By Cathy Skidmore

Office Services Supervisor

The Legislature has given the Idaho Plumbing & Electrical Boards and the corresponding bureaus the ability to levy penalties against any individual or company that has violated administrative rules and/or statutes.

The vehicle by which we levy those penalties is the Notice of Violation. A notice is sent alerting the recipient as to which Idaho law has been broken.

Approximately once a month letters are then sent noting that either a warning has been issued or a civil penalty has been issued. The letter will also indicate how much the civil penalty is.

The most common violation that can lead to a penalty occurs when a job is not permitted or not permitted in a timely manner.

In both bureaus this can be determined if an inspection is called for and the bureau doesn't

receive the permit and payment in the time allotted by law. In both bureaus we may then double the permit fee and issue the Notice of Violation. If the double fee on the permit is paid, that does not negate the notice and any subsequent civil penalty that may be imposed.

For electrical permits the law requires that the permit and payment be received in the Meridian office within seven calendar days from the day work starts.

For plumbing permits the law requires that the permit and payment be received in the Meridian office before work has begun.

The second most common violations involve licensing and registration. Working as an unlicensed contractor, working without a license or registration, employing unlicensed individuals and failure to supervise apprentices (electrical only) are the

most common.

Because the safety and quality of every installation is dependent on the working knowledge of the person doing the work, the Idaho Division of Building Safety takes the licensing of individuals and companies and the supervision of employees very seriously.

Currently the HVAC Board and the division are working together to outline the process for implementing Notices of Violation and civil penalties for the HVAC Bureau as well.

However, the HVAC Bureau does have the same provision in regards to the doubling of the permit fees if you fail to acquire, post and send permit and required fees to the Meridian office before work has begun.

Further information in regards to the specific laws that Notices of Violation cover in the Plumbing & Electrical Bureaus can be found on the Internet at dbs.idaho.gov.

Newsletter

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on how everyone can submit comments on the proposals.

In my short tenure at the division there have been a number of instances where people impacted by a proposed rule were completely unaware of the rule until it was almost too late in the process to make changes.

Hopefully this newsletter will help us minimize such occurrences.

I would also like to encourage the readers of this newsletter to submit both complaints and compliments about Division of Building Safety operations.

We also welcome suggestions for improvements.

Please send those to PublicInput@dbs.idaho.gov. My primary goal at the Division is to do whatever possible to enhance customer service.

We will be doing that by streamlining processes, using the Internet as much as possible, continuing to stress staff training, and enhancing communications.

I have been the administrator for only a few months. I have interviewed almost 130 division employees and have been very impressed with their dedicated public service.

Unfortunately, the division has had some operating difficulties including a problematic computerized information system.

We are working on those

problems and I am confident we will resolve them fully.

I hope you find this newsletter helpful. If you have suggestions for newsletter improvements or would like to request coverage of other items, please send your feedback to Newsletter@dbs.idaho.gov. Thank you.

— John A. McAllister

Sign up for the newsletter

To subscribe to the newsletter or to have your name removed from the mailing list send an e-mail to MailingList@dbs.idaho.gov. The newsletter is also available on the Internet at dbs.idaho.gov/newsletter.

DBS Web site provides easy access to professional license information

By Leslie Rogers
DBS IT Support

The Division of Building Safety's Web site at dbs.idaho.gov provides easy access to license information.

The homepage of the Web site allows a visitor to select areas of interest from the left hand side of the page, such as the Building Bureau, Electrical Bureau, and Plumbing Bureau and more.

The bottom of the main page is divided into three sections: online, most requested and standards for.

In the "online" section, a visitor can look up active licenses, permits and plan reviews.

After selecting "active licenses," the user is taken to the department's online license public record information data entry screen where they can select the bureau, type, number, state, city, etc. for the selection criteria.

The screen allows the user to enter as much or as little information as needed.

After this information is entered and the start search command at the bottom of this page is activated a real time on-line data search is

started.

When the search is complete the license public record information screen appears. At that point a record can be selected by clicking on the license number or the icon to the left of the license number. A new license confirmation screen will appear with a print option.

When a user finishes printing and selects close they are returned to the license public record information screen.

If a user wants to print a listing (in adobe PDF format) they would select listing and open on the file download box question, and this will give a listing of the licenses that were selected. This PDF report can be printed, saved in a selection of formats including Excel or e-mailed.

In the next issue of the Division of Building Safety newsletter the topic of how to access online permits and plan reviews will be discussed.

Why is some bureaucrat telling you how to construct your building?

By Arlan Smith
Building Plans Examiner

The answer is simple. As a society we have decided that buildings should comply with a minimum standard for our safety and welfare. A building is seldom if ever used solely by the person who designed and built it.

Because of that, the decisions made in the design and construction of buildings affect many people. These people have no knowledge of how the building was designed or constructed, and most would not be able to judge the building's safety if they had that knowledge.

To ensure the safety of a building, the International Building Code was developed with the intent of establishing "the minimum requirements to safeguard the

public health, safety and general welfare through structural strength, means of egress facilities, stability, sanitation, adequate light and ventilation, energy conservation, and safety to life and property from fire and other hazards attributed to the built environment and to provide safety to fire fighters and emergency responders during emergency operations."

The Division of Building Safety reviews construction contract documents for state owned or occupied buildings, and public schools for building code compliance.

State buildings are not subject to the local government building code, so the division reviews these. The safety of public schools is important enough that our elected officials have added the division review in addition to the capable efforts of the local government.

New licensing changes are taking effect for the July renewal season

By Al Caine

Licensing Program Supervisor

Two important changes to licensing requirements will take effect for the upcoming July renewal season.

House Bill 548, which allows for an electrical contractor to be placed in an "inactive" status, passed the Idaho Legislature.

The bill allows for an electrical or specialty electrical contractor to renew or revive their license without providing proof of the \$300,000 liability insurance and Workers Compensation insurance requirements.

The license, however, will then be placed in an inactive status which means that no permits can be issued and no electrical contracting work can be performed.

Proof of insurance and a \$30 reinstatement fee are required to return the license to an active status.

Additionally, the requirements for apprentice renewals have changed to ensure that all apprentices are meeting the related training requirements.

IDAPA 07.01.03012.01 was revised two years ago and states:

- An apprentice who has completed the required number of instructional hours and has not passed the journeyman's examination within two years of completion of the required instructional training hours shall provide proof of continuation training in order to re-register as an apprentice. For the purposes of Section .012, continuation training is defined as registration in an approved fourth year apprenticeship class.
- An apprentice who has not advanced in apprenticeship training for a period

of two years shall provide proof of successful completion of continuation training in order to re-register as an apprentice. For the purposes of Section .012, continuation training is registration in an approved year of apprenticeship class for which the apprentice is eligible or a repeat of the most recent apprenticeship class attended.

In order to re-register as an apprentice in July you must meet one of the following:

- Provide a certificate of completion for the school year ending in 2006;
- Provide a certificate of completion for the school year ending in 2005; or
- Provide a receipt for enrollment in an apprenticeship class for the fall of 2006.

If you have any questions regarding these requirements, please contact the Electrical Bureau at (208) 334-2183.

2006 Legislature makes a number of changes to plumbing regulations

By Bob Rawlings

Plumbing Code Specialist

In this column, the Plumbing Bureau will look at what's new and other items of importance. Lets start with what happened at the 2006 Legislature:

Administrative Rule **07.02.03.011.01 – Fee Schedule Residential**, To include all single family dwellings, apartments, condominiums, townhouses, and/or multiple living units: Each living unit in an apartment, condominium, townhouse, or other multiple living unit shall require a residential permit fee for each living unit. Permit fee—\$30; plus an inspection fee of \$8 per fixture (excluding garbage disposals and dishwashers in new construction) in the plumbing system of the building or premises. Replacement of fixtures in residences requires a permit of \$30 plus \$8 per fixture. Separate permits are required for all residential sewer and water service line installations as per IDAPA 07.02.03.011.08, unless done by plumbing contractor at time of new installation. In that event, rate will be \$8 each.

07.02.03.011.08 – Fee Schedule Sewer and Water Permit Fees, Residential sewer and water service line fees shall apply to all new construction, installations, and replacements.

07.02.03.011.08a – Fee Schedule, Sewer and water permit fees for excavators or property owners shall be assessed at the same rate as residential or nonresidential based on the classification of the construction project.

07.02.03.011.08b – Fee schedule, Residential sewer and water service lines installation permit fees will be assessed at the rate of

\$38 each or \$50 for a combination of both if only one inspection is required and the work is done by the same individual.

07.02.06.011.05 – Section 508.2 Delete (Seismic Design Categories).

07.02.06.011.09 – Section 610.2 All new one and two family residences must have a pre-plumbed water softener loop. The kitchen sink must have one hot soft line and one cold soft line and one cold hard line. Exterior cold hose bibs intended for irrigation purposes must be piped with hard water.

07.02.06.011.20 – Section 801.4 Drains, Provisions must be made for the discharge of the water softener to terminate in an approved location. The drain line for a water softener must be three-fourths inch minimum. A washer box with a dual outlet is an approved location as long as it is on the same floor or one floor below the softener unit and the water softener drain line is a minimum three-fourths inch.

Several House bills will also have an impact on the plumbing industry or the bureau:

HB 554, removes obsolete language, corrects references to positions and code and allows for the appointment of deputy administrators.

HB 651, which would have established a "residential plumber" category without a specified experience requirement, was pulled by its sponsor and died in the session.

See Plumbing on Page 8

New and existing elevators and conveyances must be registered

By Robert Brewton

Industrial Safety Program Manager

Elevators and conveyances must be registered and inspected as a requirement of The Elevator Safety Code Act that went into effect on July 1, 2004. The Idaho Division of Building Safety is the agency tasked with identifying and registering new and existing elevators and conveyances.

The division is making a concentrated effort to locate, identify, register and inspect existing elevators and conveyances in the state. The code requires owners or their representatives to have new elevators and conveyances registered and pass an acceptance inspection before they are placed into operation.

Owners who are going to have elevators or conveyances as a part of their project need to not only register the unit and pay fees but also submit construction drawings, specifications, and shop drawings

for review and approval by the Division of Building Safety before construction begins.

After review and approval, a construction permit is sent to the owner providing two acceptance inspections. When the elevator is ready for inspection, a qualified elevator inspector from the division with the assistance of a skilled elevator mechanic will witness the acceptance inspection tests.

When a unit meets acceptance inspection requirements, a certificate to operate is issued. This certificate is issued for a 5 year period. Every five years a new inspection will be required to maintain a certificate to operate.

A difficult part of the program is locating and identifying existing elevators and conveyances in the state. Over the years elevators and lifting conveyances have been placed in service and many owners do not know the new code applies to them.

Existing elevator owners must

register, pay fees, and have a five year inspection test completed and receive a certificate to operate before the existing unit can continue in service.

There are, however, four exemptions from the Elevator Safety Code Act that don't require registration or inspections.

The exemptions include: A private single family residence; federally-owned facilities; units permanently removed from service and units used for construction.

The Division of Building Safety Industrial Safety Program is here to provide a service to owners of elevators and conveyances and help them comply with this law.

The division is available to consult on new and existing elevators and conveyances.

For more information visit dbs.idaho.gov where you can find information and download forms. Information is also available by contacting Robert Brewton at (208) 332-8967.

Avoid common code violations during residential mechanical inspections

By Russ Owen

HVAC Code Specialist

The HVAC Bureau of the Division of Building Safety would like to inform you of some common code violations found while performing residential mechanical inspections under the 2003 International Residential Code. Common violations include:

- **Gas Piping, Section G2419.4,** A sediment trap shall be installed down stream of the equipment shutoff valve as close to the inlet of the equipment as practical. The sediment trap shall be either a tee fitting with a capped nipple in the bottom opening of the run of the

tee or other approved device. Sediment traps should not be confused with drip legs. Drip legs are for wet gas conditions. Sediment traps are for dirt, pipe chips, joint compounds or any other foreign matter that could enter the piping prior to and during installation. Ranges, clothes dryers and outdoor grills do not require sediment traps.

- **Log Lighters, Section G2433.1,** Log lighters are manually operated burners used to start wood fires. They are required to be tested in accordance with CSA 8. To date CSA has not approved any for use with liquefied petroleum gas. At this time log lighters can only be permitted if they are supplied with natural gas and have the CSA 8 listing.

- **Decorative shrouds, Section R1002.2, R1004.3, M1804.2.2, and G2427.6.5.1,** All above code sections state that decorative shrouds shall not be installed at the terminations of fuel burning appliances except where such shrouds are "listed" for use with the specific venting systems and are installed in accordance with the manufacturers instructions.

Remember if you hire new HVAC Apprentices, they need to be registered with the bureau and have obtained their apprentice cards before they are out in the field working. The inspectors will be checking for the cards while on job sites performing inspections.

2005 Electrical Code now requires use of concrete-encased electrodes

By Jeff Fitzloff

Electrical Code Specialist

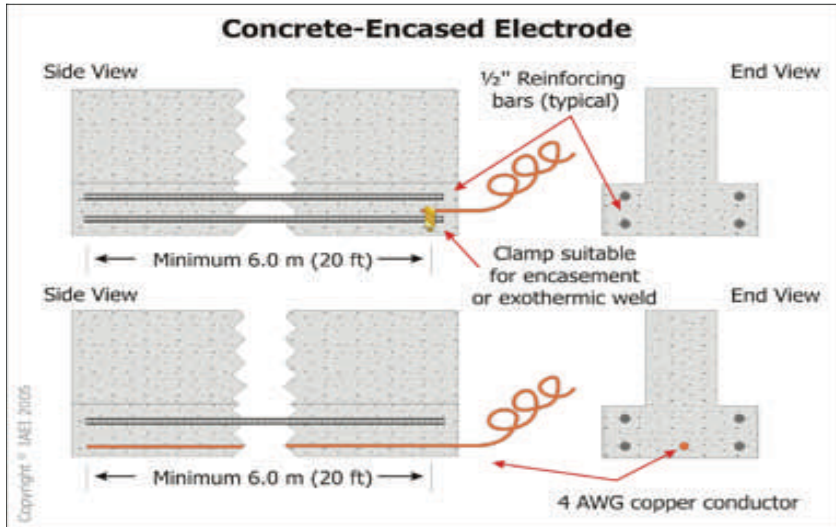
Most entities involved in the construction industry, either as electrical contractors, designers, engineers or inspectors, agree that it is important to inspection departments and jurisdictions to strive for the most consistency and uniformity possible when enforcing the requirements of the Code.

As an electrical code specialist the questions I receive are numerous and vary from call to call, I strive to be consistent by quoting directly from the National Electrical Code.

Recently, concrete incased grounding electrodes have been a hot topic. Also known as Ufer Grounds because the original concept and tests done on this system were done by H. G. Ufer in Arizona from 1942 until 1960.

The 2005 National Electrical Code has a change on these systems that will affect all of us involved. NEC 250.50 deals with the grounding electrodes. The change is that a concrete incased grounding electrode is now required.

This causes an interesting situation when there is no other electrical work ready to be inspected when the footings are poured.



The National Electrical Code now requires concrete incased grounding electrodes. (Slide is used with permission of the International Association of Electrical Inspectors)

Because this is part of the electrical system, licensed electrical personnel should be used to install the grounding electrodes and permit the job. It is very apparent that an inspection of a concrete incased grounding electrode needs to be carried out in a timely manner and that timing of such an inspection will be difficult at best.

The Electrical Bureau proposes that 20 feet of not less than half-inch bare reinforcing bar be installed in the concrete near the bottom of the footing and a stub

turned up at or near the service panel location.

In order to insure that at least 20 feet of reinforcing bar is in the footing, more than one reinforcing bar will need to be wire tied together. In the interest of consistency we are requesting documentation of this reinforcing bar be noted by building inspection staff on the job for the electrical inspector to verify.

If you have any questions call Jeff Fitzloff at (208) 332-8980 or e-mail, jfitzloff@dbs.idaho.gov.

Learn the steps to correctly secure raceways

All of chapter three-wiring and materials-of the electrical code addresses the installation of equipment and raceways.

The technical correlating committee has worked hard to shape these sections of the code. Because of their efforts, a tradesman now can look at any wiring

method and see that Article 3XX.30 deals with securing and supporting. The supporting part of these code articles refers to being supported from underneath, the securing is done with straps or staples.

Some installations are in places that there is no way to secure the wiring method. Some of

these are membrane roofs and under manufactured homes. In areas where there is no means to secure wiring methods, the Division of Building Safety, recommends a minimum of strapping the raceways to short pieces of 2X4 lumber to support and secure raceways in these areas.

-- Jeff Fitzloff





This newsletter is published quarterly by the Idaho Division of Building Safety and is mailed to all license holders in the state of Idaho.

For any comments or suggestions call (208) 334-3950 or write to:

The Idaho Division of Building Safety
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Plumbing

From Page 5

HB 553, which would have clarified the authority of the HVAC, Electrical and Plumbing Boards to approved related training curricula to be used, was pulled from consideration in the House Business Committee.

HB 645, amends the existing liquefied Petroleum gas law so that the Liquefied Petroleum Board has exclusive jurisdiction of outdoor piping between the storage tank and the second stage regulator.

HB 761aa, which would have required a \$10,000 surety bond along with liability and workers compensation insurance coverage for electrical, plumbing and HVAC contractors, cleared the House, but died in the Senate Commerce and Human Resources Committee.

Track Plumbing Board meeting dates and other items at dbs.idaho.gov/plumbing/index.html. Send in any questions and we will try to get them answered for you in the next newsletter.

Building Safety News Calendar of Events

June 9 — Plumbing Board Meeting in Meridian

June 13 — Manufactured Housing Board Meeting in Meridian

June 27 — HVAC Board Meeting in Meridian

June 30 — Plumbing Board Meeting in Meridian

July 1 — Deadline for Electrical Contractors License renewal

July 1 — Deadline for Electrical Apprentice registration

July 4 — Independence Day, DBS office closed

July 10 — Public Works Contractor Licensing Board Meeting in Meridian

August 8 — HVAC Board Meeting in Meridian

August 10 — Electrical Board Meeting in Post Falls. (location to be determined)

Note: unless otherwise indicated, all Meridian meetings are held at the Idaho Division of Building Safety, 1090 E. Watertower St., For any questions about calendar items call (208) 334-3950.

Mission Statement

Promoting health, safety and welfare by ensuring compliance with statewide building, energy conservation, public works, contractors, industrial and elevator safety, logging, electrical, plumbing & HVAC codes, standards and regulations.