



The Office of Secretary of State

Karen C. Handel
SECRETARY OF STATE

Randall D. Vaughn
DIRECTOR
PROFESSIONAL LICENSING BOARDS

July 2, 2008

Dear County Officials:

This letter is as a friendly reminder that various professions within the building industry are required by state law to be licensed. These professions include electricians, plumbers, conditioned air contractors, low voltage contractors, utility contractors, and certain residential and general contractors. It is important that you and your staff understand and comply with state laws and board rules regarding licensure. Our website contains the state laws, board rules, applications, and other helpful information that will assist you. The website address is www.sos.ga.gov/plb/.

We also want to highlight several issues that have been brought to our attention in recent weeks:


- Please be aware that bids or proposals for projects that require a licensed professional should NOT be accepted from unlicensed persons. For example, bids for utility contracting projects must be from a licensed utility contractor and that licensed contractor must be the prime on the project. It is not permissible for an unlicensed individual / firm to subcontract with a licensed utility contractor. Allowing someone to circumvent the licensing process may be viewed as a violation of the law. The validity of a license can be checked on our website.
- When issuing permits for work in the building industry, please be sure that the individual / firm receiving the permit holds a valid license. Again, licensure status can be checked on our website.
- Effective July 1, 2008, contractors are required to have a valid state license for most residential and commercial projects. The four classes of licenses for contractors are:
 - **Residential-Basic Contractor:** Those who perform contract work relative to detached one-family and two-family residences and one-family townhouses not over three stories in height.
 - **Residential-Light Commercial Contractor:** Those who perform contract work or activity related to multi-family and multi-use light commercial buildings and structures.

- **General Contractor – Limited Tier:** Those who perform contractor services in commercial construction, including private, public, and institutional and industrial contracting. These contractors have an established limit on contracts up to \$500,000.00.
 - **General Contractor:** Those who perform unlimited contractor services in commercial construction, including private, public, institutional and industrial contracting.
- Effective July 1, 2008, local government building officials are responsible for determining a contractor's license status **BEFORE** issuing a building permit. You can check the status of a contractor on our website www.sos.ga.gov/plb/. If an unlicensed contractor who falls within the licensure requirements seeks a permit, please inform that individual of the requirement to be licensed and refer them to our website for information regarding the licensure requirements and process. Permits should NOT be issued to any individual or company that is required by law to be licensed.
 - Please be aware that, under the state contracting law, building officials are not required to determine licensure status for issuing a certificate of occupancy for projects where a building permit was issued prior to July 1, 2008. Regarding other items local officials should rely on direction and advice from their local, city or county attorney.

Our website also contains up-to-date information on licensees for all of the professions that are regulated by the Professional Licensing Boards Division of the Secretary of State's office. Professional licenses may be verified on line at www.sos.ga.gov/myverification/.

We hope this information is helpful to you. If you need additional information or have questions regarding any of the state Professional Licensing Boards, please visit our website or call (478) 207-2440.

Sincerely,


Randall D. Vaughn
Division Director
Professional Licensing Boards Division