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STATE EXAMINING BOARD OF PLUMBERS

UPDATES FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

By Mark Browne, Electrical and Plumbing Board Program Director

I wanted to take this opportunity to welcome our new Plumbing Inspector Supervisor, Kye Lehr, to the Plumbing Board. Kye has been with DORA since September 1, 2010. Kye has extensive experience in the plumbing industry, and the State of Colorado is lucky to have someone on board with his caliber. His prior job duties include working for the Pikes Peak Regional Building Department in Colorado Springs for 15 years where he was the Senior Plumbing/Mechanical Inspector. His duties translated perfectly with his new position with DORA in regards to reviewing plans for code compliance, running committee meetings with industry stakeholders, supervising inspectors, and running the permit system. Kye also has worked for the San Juan County Building Department in Aztec, New Mexico, focusing on many of the same job duties that were a part of his duties with Pikes Peak. His knowledge on plumbing issues and his skills on dealing with industry leaders will be a benefit not only to DORA, but to the plumbers of Colorado as well.

Under Kye Lehr's leadership and Chief Inspector Steve Conrad, the Plumbing Board has seen many positive changes and updates to make the program more efficient and less intrusive for consumers. As discussed in this newsletter, "expired permits" were discovered to be closing without any type of follow up procedure. Work was done with the Office of Information Technology to have a new category of "expired" put into the permit system resulting in automatic email notices going out to contractors and inspectors 30 days prior to permit expiration making the whole process more efficient for both parties. Kye Lehr and Chief Inspector Steve Conrad have also worked closely with the Plumbing Board and the industry to help find ways to make it easier to allow for alternate methods and materials for the plumbing industry. Due to their diligence on this matter an amendment was put in front of the Plumbing Board to allow for alternate materials and methods to be accepted by the Plumbing Board without going into rulemaking which allows for these materials to be implemented in Colorado without going through a lengthy bureaucratic process.

The Electrical and Plumbing Board programs also are aware of the slow economy and how it is affecting the plumbing industry as a whole. In order to work with the industry and showcase a positive working relationship, the Plumbing Board analyzed permit fees and a possible decrease in specific ones. On November 19, 2010 a fee decrease took place concerning water heater replacement fees, back flow preventer installation, and shower pan liners. These fees decreased from \$100.00 down to \$50.00 cutting the permit fees in half. The Plumbing Board continually strives to increase customer satisfaction while keeping with our mission of consumer protection.

UPDATES FROM THE PLUMBING SUPERVISOR

By Kye Lehr, Colorado State Plumbing Supervisor

Let me start with a brief introduction and invitation. I am very excited about my new opportunity to serve the plumbing industry for the State of Colorado as Plumbing Supervisor. This year marks my 36th in the plumbing industry, the first 18 in the field with the last 18 involved on the inspection and code side of the coin. I still remember my first day as an apprentice. It was me – a shovel – a big pile of sand and a ditch. Things have certainly improved for me since then. As much as I miss being outdoors and working with my hands I really enjoy delving into the codes for comprehension, opinion and writing. As an inspector and an administrator I always enjoy answering questions, providing code analysis and understanding to the next generation of plumbers and potential plumbing inspectors. I would like to extend an open invitation to everyone whether a first year apprentice or a seasoned master to contact me anytime you have questions regarding code issues or the plumbing industry.

Board Members

Thomas Fox

Chair
General Contractor

Steven J. Callahan

Master Plumber

Donald P. Crandell

Plumbing Contractor

Jorge Delgado

Ex Officio Member

Michael K. Trapp

Plumbing Contractor

Robin A. Vidimos

Public Member

Janice Snidow

Journeyman Plumber

Janine Snyder

Plumbing Inspector

Contact us:

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**Consumer protection
is our mission**

EXPIRED PERMITS

By Kye Lehr, Colorado State Plumbing Supervisor

It has been brought to the Board's attention that some contractors and homeowners have expired permits that were never completed for one reason or another. Some appear to be just forgotten about and never finished; some have disapproved inspections that may or may not have been corrected but were not recalled for inspection; and some have fees pending that were never paid.

Regardless of the reason, these permits require attention. I expect some of these structures are already occupied which will make it more difficult for an inspection to occur.

The fines for not correcting code violations within a reasonable time (30 days as determined by the Board) begin at \$450 and go up to \$2,000 per day for the third or higher offense.

To clear existing expired permits, we will be waiving the potential fines for failing to correct violations for the next ninety days from the date of this newsletter as a good faith attempt to give everyone a clean slate. Please check your records to see if you have old permits that may have become expired and contact your inspector to get them closed. Pending fees (reinspection fees, additional fees) must be paid prior to putting in an inspection request.

Currently, an email is sent to both the contractor and inspector 30 days prior to a permit expiring. This should allow for ample time to finish inspections or get a short extension on the permit. Permit extensions of up to six months may be granted through this office if requested prior to permit expiration.

If you are contracting only for the rough portion of a job or it looks like a lengthy delay will take place between a rough inspection and the fixture setting, ask your inspector to close the existing permit when rough inspections are complete so a trim permit may be issued when needed.

Again, please take time to check your records for any expired permits and address them in the next 90 days. Renewal of your contractor registration may be withheld until these expired permits are closed.

Here is a brief description of the actions that will be taken for expired permits.

- ◆ Expired permit with completed roughs and an additional finalized/closed trim permit by same contractor, different contractor or homeowner:
 - ◆ Action: Permits will be closed by DORA Staff, please provide any information that will assist staff in this process. (A trim permit will be required if one has not been issued.)
- ◆ Expired permit with completed roughs only.
 - ◆ Action: A trim permit must be purchased, request inspection.
- ◆ Expired permit with incomplete roughs:
 - ◆ Action: New permit must be purchased, request inspections.
- ◆ Expired permit with incomplete roughs having a disapproved inspection report:
 - ◆ Action: New permit must be purchased, correct disapproved inspection items, request inspections.
- ◆ Expired permit with incomplete roughs having a disapproved inspection report with pending fees (reinspection or additional):
 - ◆ Action: Pay pending fee, purchase new permit, correct disapproved inspection items, request new inspection.

HOW ARE RENEWAL FEES SET?

By law, the Board must operate strictly with funds collected from the persons it regulates, with no support from the State's General Fund. The Colorado Legislature determines the budget for the Board. Once the Legislature sets the budget, the money must be raised through fees. The good news is that these fees are evaluated each year. Therefore, they are modified depending on how much money is anticipated to be received through the registration and renewal processes and what the anticipated expenditures are expected to be. The primary obligation is to protect consumers and the operations of the Board are focused to ensure it can work diligently to do so.

HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR MAILING ADDRESS?

It is imperative that you keep your contact information updated with the Division. The Division mails renewal notices and other information to you at the last address furnished to us. Failure to receive a renewal notice does not relieve you of your obligation to timely renew.

Once you have logged into Registrations Online Services, check your mailing address and update it if it is not correct. If you received your renewal notice due to a forwarding order it is important that you change your address on file with us, since we cannot change the information based on the forwarding order.

NOTES FROM THE CHIEF INSPECTOR

By Stephen Conrad, State Chief Inspector

The Colorado State Examining Board of Plumbers adopted the following codes;

- A. Chapter 1, Sections 101.2, 102, 105, 107, Chapters 2-13; and Appendices B, D, E, F, G, of the International Plumbing Code ("IPC"), 2009 edition, promulgated by the International Code Council, 1st printing (January 2009).
- B. Chapter 1, Section R101, R102, Chapter 2, Chapters 24-32; and Appendices A-C of the International Residential Code ("IRC"), 2009 edition, promulgated by the International Code Council, 1st printing (January 2009).
- C. Chapter 1 Section 101, 102, 105, 107, Chapters 2-8 Appendices A-C of the International Fuel Gas Code ("IFGC"), 2009 edition, promulgated by the International Code Council, 1st printing (January, 2009).
- D. Standard 99C, Gas and Vacuum Systems, 2005 edition, promulgated by the National Fire Protection Association ("NFPA").

The Board was faced with the possibility of adopting a new code that will mandate a controversial requirement: specifically, the installation of residential fire suppression systems in all single family and larger residential buildings. There is a lot of misinformation being thrown about regarding the cost and potential problems involved with this requirement. I urge everyone to study the available facts and educate themselves before drawing any conclusions or propagating the myths regarding these systems. It is the Board's responsibility to establish the minimum code and standards for plumbing safety to protect the people of Colorado. Multi-purpose residential fire suppression systems offer a new and expanded business opportunity to the plumbing industry and these systems will provide real life safety and protection for years to come.

Remember, per the following statute, a plumbing contractor is responsible for registering and terminating registration of their apprentices.

C.R.S., Section 12-58-105 Plumber must have license –control and supervision

- (1) No person shall engage in or work at the business, trade, or calling of a residential, journeyman, or master plumber in this state until he has received a license from the division of registrations, upon written notice from the board or its authorized agent, or a temporary permit from the board or its authorized agent.
- (2) (a) All plumbing apprentices working for plumbing contractors pursuant to this article and all apprentices working under the supervision of any licensed plumber pursuant to section 12-58-117 shall, within thirty days after the date of initial employment, be registered with the board.
 (b) The employer of a plumbing apprentice shall be responsible for such apprentice's registration with the board.
 (c) No apprentice shall be registered until payment of a registration or registration renewal fee, as determined by the board, has been made.
- (3) No person, firm, partnership, corporation, or association shall operate as a plumbing contractor until such contractor has obtained registration from the board. The board shall register a plumbing contractor upon payment of the fee as provided in section 12-58-104 and presentation of evidence that the applicant has complied with the applicable workers' compensation and unemployment compensation laws of this state. In order to act as a plumbing contractor, the person, firm, partnership, corporation, association, or other organization must either be, or employ full-time, a master plumber, who shall be in charge of the supervision of all plumbing work performed by such contractor. A master plumber shall be responsible for no more than one plumbing contractor at a time. The master plumber shall be required to notify the board within fifteen days after his or her termination as a master plumber for that plumbing contractor. The master plumber is responsible for all plumbing work performed by the plumbing contractor. Failure to comply with a notification may lead to suspension or revocation of the master plumber license as provided in section 12-58-110.

STAY INFORMED!

The Division wants to keep you informed of upcoming renewal, legislation, events and other information that impacts your profession. In order to do this more efficiently we have implemented "DORA eUpdates" and we look forward to providing more of these in the future. These eUpdates are sent to the email address in our licensing system for each active licensee. To update or add your email address, log into [Registrations Online Services](#).

GRAY WATER SYSTEMS

By Kye Lehr, Colorado State Plumbing Supervisor

Gray-the new green. "Becoming Green" has of course worked its way into the plumbing industry via lower water use fixtures and faucets along with Gray Water Recycling Systems.

At first glance reusing gray water to keep your garden and grass greener seems like a money saving, environmental friendly, politically correct thing to do. Unfortunately, there are some serious roadblocks to deal with when going down the gray water path.

Code Requirements. Most plumbing jurisdictional authorities do not allow the use of gray water systems due to conflicts with State Health Department Regulations and Local Water Purveyors for the reasons stated below.

Health Department and Regulations. One roadblock is getting a system designed that can comply with criteria from the Department of Public Health and Environment. From 5 CCR 1003-6 State Board of Health Guidelines on Individual Sewage Disposal Systems.

Section IV.K. amended September 15, 2004, effective November 30, 2004

D. Additional Design Criteria (Other Facilities):

1. Gray water system: A gray water system shall meet at least all minimum design and construction standards for a *septic tank system* based on the amount and character of wastes for the fixtures and the number of persons to be served.

Right away **Section D(1)** tells you a gray water system must be designed as a mini septic system.

- 9(a)(1) That portion of the wastewater recycled for non-potable purposes such as flushing water closets or urinals must meet the treatment requirements of Article IX of these guidelines for effluent in which the possibility exists for occasional direct human contact.

IX. Treatment Systems Other Than Those Discharging Through a Soil Absorption or Sand Filter System and Non-discharging Systems.

C. The following minimum performance criteria shall be required for all systems pursuant to this Article IX:

1. If effluent discharge is made into the atmosphere or upon the ground surface in areas in which the possibility exists for occasional direct human contact with the effluent discharge, the effluent at the point of sampling shall meet each of the following standards:

There are many items in the standard that space won't allow for here, they are the minimum standards of testing for the effluent. It then goes on to given criteria for frequency of test sampling.

4. To determine compliance with the standards contained in this section IX samples shall be taken at least once per week but no more frequently than once per day.

D. Methods of Analysis - Sampling Points:

All effluent samples shall be analyzed according to the methods prescribed in the 18th Edition of "Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater" (American Public Health Association). The point of sampling shall be a location that is representative of final discharge from the system.

Water rights issues. As you can see from the above, health issues provide a big roadblock. The next issue to contend with is water rights. We don't buy water-we rent it. We are drinking the same water the dinosaurs did. Most municipalities east of the Missouri river own water rights to a fixed number of gallons of water that can be supplied to its users. As new developmental growth occurs it is necessary for the developer to provide water purveyors sufficient water to serve new areas. This can be done by purchasing unused water rights, usually from farmers, downstream of areas needing more water. Water purveyors and waste water treatment divisions work closely together monitoring the amount of water sold and the amount of water treated and returned to the river system for the other users downstream. Most water purveyors will not allow graywater reuse for irrigation as that is water that does not end up being treated and returned to the water source for future use.

You might think if you are served by a private well and septic system that the water rights issue would not affect your situation but well permits are calculated and issued with water rights in mind. A Colorado issued well permit states what the water from the well may be used for (i.e. domestic purposes, irrigation, agriculture, etc.). Most well permits issued are just for private domestic purposes. Unless irrigation use is noted on the well permit, gray water systems used to irrigate vegetation cannot be legally installed.

These are the same issues encountered in the collecting of rainwater for domestic use and irrigation.

PROOF OF LAWFUL PRESENCE

Effective January 1, 2007, all persons requesting original licensure, renewal of an active license or reinstatement of an expired license must verify lawful presence in the United States based on the passage of House Bill 06S-1009. This bill applies to all applicants and licensees in the Division of Registrations, with the exception of apprentices, interns, and businesses.

Licenses will not be issued or renewed without completing the Affidavit of Eligibility form.

The good news is that you can complete this affidavit online when you renew using Registrations Online Services!

You must possess at least one secure and verifiable document and include information about that document on the Affidavit itself (or provide the information during online renewal). The list of secure and verifiable documents is available to you when you renew online.

More information regarding this law is available on our website at

www.dora.state.co.us/registrations/Affidavit

WALL CERTIFICATES

The Division of Registrations is pleased to announce that it has outsourced the production of wall certificates to Wall Certificate Service (WCS) a division of Professional Credential Services, Inc. (PCS). The outsourcing of the certificates provides enhancements to the certificates that both new and existing licensees will find beneficial. Specifically, the certificate provided by WCS is a larger, professionally designed, better quality certificate than what the Division was able to provide. For more information regarding wall certificates, which license types are eligible, and how to obtain one, please visit our website at www.dora.state.co.us/registrations/wallcert. You will be able to order and pay the fee online. The fee for U.S. residents is \$25. There is an additional international shipping fee for international residents.

REGISTRATIONS ONLINE DOCUMENTS

If you would like to view a board action you may use the **Registrations Online Documents (ROD)**. ROD is a website that makes certain scanned documents related to board actions taken on licensees available to the public via the Internet. The document may be found on ROD if a licensee has been disciplined or if the board has taken some other non-disciplinary action against the licensee that restricts or limits the individual's license.

The following documents are available via ROD:

- All Stipulations, Final Agency Orders, and Suspensions that were in effect in February 2000 plus any that became effective since that date. Child Support Suspensions are not available online but may be obtained by contacting the appropriate board/program.
- Any document Revoking or agreeing to a Voluntary Relinquishment/Surrender of license or registration, Cease and Desist Orders and Letters of Admonition from January 1, 1999 to the present.
- All Injunctions.

[Click here](#) for more information about the types of documents provided by this online system and definitions of terms used within the disciplinary documents.

If you are interested in viewing these documents, please visit www.dora.state.co.us/registrations/ROD.

RENEW YOUR LICENSE ON TIME!

You may renew your license online using Registrations Online Services. Renewals are generally made available 6 to 8 weeks prior to the license expiration date. After that there is a 60-day grace period. That means you typically have a timeframe of 16 weeks within which to renew your license!

Any license not renewed prior to the end of the grace period will be considered expired. Once a license is in expired status, a reinstatement application must be completed and returned to our office with the appropriate fee listed on the form.

If you do not renew your license prior to the end of the grace period and continue to practice, you will be practicing on an expired license and may be subject to disciplinary action. The Division sees a number of situations every year of individuals who have failed to renew their license on time and practiced without a license. The reasons that are offered boil down to some common themes: I forgot; I moved and I forgot to notify the Board so I never got the renewal notice; I thought that my assistant/secretary/spouse/boyfriend, et cetera, handled it; it's the Board's fault because I *did* renew my license...or I *thought* I renewed my license. The result is that depending on how long it takes for the individual to "remember" to renew, the Division often takes disciplinary action against the individual because it is against the law to practice without an active license.

So, here's where we need your help. The steps are as easy as 1-2-3!

1. Go to the Division of Registrations website at www.dora.state.co.us/registrations and click on Registrations Online Services to renew your license.
2. Note the expiration date in your calendar to remind yourself of when it is time to renew your license the next time.
3. Make sure that the address listed on your record is accurate. If it is not, then update your address with the Division. Remember to update your address anytime that you move so that you do not miss out on any important notices from the Division.

Remember, it is each licensee's responsibility to renew his or her license on time. With our online system, you can handle all of this yourself, any time, day or night.