

Volume 2, Issue 1
October, 2014



RENEWAL SEASON IS RIGHT
AROUND THE CORNER!!!

State of Alabama
Plumbers & Gas Fitters Examining Board

FALL 2014 RENEWAL ISSUE

NEW CITIZENSHIP VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

In order for the Board to comply with Alabama code section 34-14A-7 and Alabama Code section 31-13-7, we are required to verify citizenship of everyone who holds a registration or certification with the Board. This will be accomplished through the initial registration of apprentices. All other certified persons should complete the required documents and return them in 2014. Forms will be available at the Board office and can be printed from the Board website. Failure to complete this form will affect your ability to renew your 2015 certification.

We realize that most contractors have already met a requirement within their respective company. However, this is an additional requirement for all agencies, Boards, and commissions who issue licenses or certifications. Your understanding and cooperation is greatly appreciated.

NEW PRICES FOR 2015 RENEWALS

APPRENTICE

\$25.00 Annually & w/Registration

JOURNEYMAN PLUMBER

\$50.00

JOURNEYMAN GAS FITTER

\$50.00

JOURNEYMAN PLUMBER & GAS

\$100.00

MEDICAL GAS CARD

\$25.00

MASTER PLUMBER

\$150.00

MASTER GAS FITTER

\$150.00

MASTER PLUMBER & GAS

\$300.00

REPLACEMENT CARD

\$25.00

BOARD MEMBERS & OFFICE STAFF

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P. E. Pilgreen

John Bimbo

Phillip Guthrie

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David Wilcox, Executive Director

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III

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Supervisor

Kristin Ivy, ASA III/Compliance

Sheree Dunn, ASA II

Rena Billups, ASA II

Crystal Harrell, Account Clerk

Jake Harris, File Clerk

Plumbing Educational Activities

Written by Phillip R. Till

When employed by the board January 16, 2014 (part-time), the Executive Director and I discussed plumbing education across the State of Alabama, or I should say lack of plumbing education across the state. I taught plumbing at J. F. Ingram State Technical College for almost 30 years. During this time many changes came about in the plumbing industry such as ICC codes, new products we never thought we would use, and training new employees, just to name a few. I was also in the military for 20+ years. During this time I was a military instructor, and we taught basic combat skills, as well as many other classes to the troops. What the military does, and what we did, is pass it on, train the way we were trained, do what we have been taught to do. Over time it seems we have somewhat lost our way in training. We know there are many good plumbing companies that train their apprentices in the trade. I know that it is hard to run a business and keep up-to-date with everything. What we want to do at the Board is partner with this industry and assist in filling the gap between knowing how to do plumbing work and understanding why it is done this way. We would like to assist companies with the training of their apprentices in areas where they may need assistance.

Since January we have accomplished the start-up of an educational program that assists apprentice plumbers, as well as some journeyman, by training students in the following areas: blueprint reading, piping lay out, code overview, gas pipe sizing, plumbing law, plumbing math, code changes, venting, all chapters in the 2009 IPC, and other subjects as needed during our class times. We intend to meet the needs and assist industry in their endeavor to better the plumbing industry as a whole. Since January we have taught 14 classes: 5 in Birmingham, 4 in Tuscaloosa, 2 in Montevallo, 1 in Orange Beach, 1 at Ingram State Technical College, and 1 in Sylacauga. These code related classes have resulted in over 200 students being trained in the subjects listed above. We post the class schedule on the Plumbers & Gas Fitters Board web site. There is no cost for these classes. An Educational Advisory council has been established to further our mission on educational activities. During the infancy of this endeavor, we have accomplished many of our short term goals. With the assistance of industry, we intend to expand our educational program throughout the state. The need for plumbing and gas fitting training education is real in our state and we intend to do our part in educating plumbers & gas fitters.



BOARD DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Number of cases October 2013 - August 2014

Licensed Contractor Cases: 70

Unlicensed Contractor Cases: 58

Consumer Complaints Addressed: 33



Common Notices of Violation:

720-X-11-.01 (Responsibility of a master - No supervision on job site): 16

720-X-12-.01 (Responsibility of a master - Working uncertified individuals): 33

34-37-6-A (Working without current certification): 110

34-37-13 (Master performing work with no bond): 10

Please note these numbers are intended to provide an idea of what our compliance officers are finding when out routinely checking job sites or when a consumer complaint is received by the Board. The number of violations per each case file can be different for each case.

The Board is aggressively pursuing unlicensed contractor activity, as reflected in the number above. Since October 1, 2013, the Board has addressed 58 unlicensed individuals.

NEW WAY OF TESTING

The Board is offering all exams in a computer format. The exams will remain open book, but will be taken while sitting at a computer terminal. Test facilities will be located in Huntsville, Birmingham, Montgomery and Mobile and applicants will be able to test weekly. PSI Services, LLC, our new testing contractor, has test sites throughout the country and is also able to accommodate out-of-state contractors.

The process to register with the Board will remain unchanged. Applicant will receive instructions from PSI which will include a phone number to contact the testing contractor in order to schedule the exam. One of the best aspects of the new exam format is the immediate information on pass/fail results. Applicants will continue to receive their certificates from the Board after testing is completed but within a much shorter time span.

The exam continues to be based on the 2009 Edition of the International Codes. New testing material has been added. The new exams will include plumbing and pipefitting math for journeyman and master exams and questions pertaining to Alabama State Law and Board Rules for master exams.

We are excited to be able to offer this to our licenses because it will enable individuals to test locally and in a timely manner thereby passing on the savings to the contractor.

State Law and Board Rules can be accessed on the Board website.

As always, please feel free to contact the Board office with any questions or comments

We're
on
the
Web!!



STATE OF ALABAMA
PLUMBERS & GAS FITTERS
EXAMINING BOARD

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THANK YOU CERTIFIED CONTRACTORS

The Board appreciates the hard working licensed contractors who are determined to deliver quality services to Alabama's consumers. These contractors spend a lot of time and money to meet the requirements necessary to maintain their certifications while unscrupulous contractors attempt to take business from the certified contractor by lowering prices and doing substandard work.

The Board often receives calls from certified contractors who are discouraged by the continued presence of uncertified contractors working without obtaining the proper certification.

The Board's officers attempt to find as many of these uncertified contractors as possible, however, when you see or know of a possible uncertified contractor working in your area, please notify the Board in order for our officers to check on the validity of these contractors.