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## Message From the Board Chair



Good cheer to all as we start off a new year. The Board hopes CSLB licensees are still in a merry mood from the last year's rebound in construction and home improvement spending. According to an [Associated General Contractors of America](#) analysis, California topped all other states with 41,000 construction-related

jobs created from November 2014 to November 2015, a 5.9 percent increase from the previous year.

There's every reason to expect 2015's positive trend will continue in 2016. With the economic recovery in full swing, CSLB expects to be busier than ever living up to its industry oversight and consumer protection responsibilities.

We're grateful to have the support of the Legislature and the Governor in addressing several needed changes in contracting law for the upcoming year.

The most far-reaching of the new laws involve CSLB's home improvement salesperson (HIS) registrations. The number of persons applying to become HIS, particularly in the fast-growing solar industry, has jumped in recent years and in turn put pressure on CSLB's HIS registration process.

Recognizing that application delays hurt salespersons and the contractors who hire them, CSLB sponsored legislation for a change in the law to permit a single HIS registration even when representing multiple contractors. More details on the changes are described in a separate story in this issue.

CSLB supported two other pieces of



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legislation that became law on January 1, 2016. By now, hopefully, all licensees have received notice about the new contractor bond amount of \$15,000 and double-checked their coverage before doing business in 2016. While no one likes paying a few more dollars for a bond, the Board felt that a new bond limit was justified for the increased consumer protection it will provide.

At the same time, the law lifted the requirement that new licensees have \$2,500 of working capital before starting their contracting business – a section of contractor law that CSLB believed was outdated and no longer needed.

On the enforcement front, another new law grants CSLB representatives the authority to issue citations if they encounter cases of workers' compensation (WC) insurance fraud. Previously, only peace officers and district attorney's offices could take action against alleged offenders.

That gives CSLB a more direct and effective way to deal with WC violations when uncovered. It's part of a larger CSLB strategy to identify contractors who purposely evade their responsibility to get WC insurance for their workers and themselves if necessary.

CSLB suspects that many WC exemptions are being claimed by licensees who do have employees, and by doing so are exposing themselves, workers, and clients to serious legal jeopardy if an accident happens on the job.

Again, CSLB realizes this is another bottom-line expense, but one that is absolutely necessary and has to be factored into the cost of doing business. Another story in this issue describes CSLB's efforts to bring more contractors into workers' comp compliance.

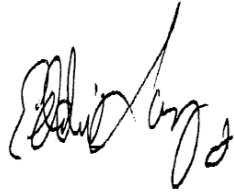
You also may be pleased to hear that the Board, at its last meeting, gave CSLB's **Statewide Investigative Fraud Team** (SWIFT) the go-ahead to conduct more sting operations in 2016. Statistics have shown that stings are a particular effective enforcement tool against unlicensed contracting and the underground economy. With that data in hand, Board members were glad to give our investigators more help to pursue unlicensed operators.

Just as you do with your business, CSLB is always looking to improve its operations and make its services more accessible to licensees and consumers. You can offer your input on our website, or voice your opinion at Board meetings held quarterly at locations around the state.

*"We're grateful to have the support of the Legislature and the Governor in addressing several needed changes in contracting law for the upcoming year."*

I hope you and your family will enjoy and safe and prosperous 2016.

Respectfully,



**Ed Lang**  
CSLB Board Chair



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## Faster, Easier HIS Registrations is Goal of New Law

CSLB's registration process for home improvement salespersons (HIS) has undergone a major, and hopefully beneficial, change. Beginning January 1, 2016, those applying with CSLB to become registered salespersons, as well as existing HIS, need only register once with CSLB whether they want to represent one, or multiple, licensed contractors.

It's hoped that the new single-registration system will simplify and quicken the registration process in response to the rapid growth in the number of HIS applications, particularly for employees who work in the solar industry. CSLB received more than 1,000 HIS applications per month in fiscal year 2014-15, which represents more than an 80 percent jump compared to the average for the previous three years.

Senate Bill 561, authored by **Sen. Bill Monning** (D-Carmel) and sponsored by CSLB, also makes other changes to the HIS registration process.



The new law requires licensees to notify CSLB in writing prior to employing an already registered HIS, and to notify CSLB in writing when employment of a registered HIS ends. These new forms are available on the CSLB [website](#).

Licensees should also be aware that a HIS is defined in **Business and Professions (B&P) Code section 7152** as a person who is employed by a licensed contractor to solicit, sell, negotiate, or

execute contracts for home improvements, for the sale, installation or

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Contractors Sought as CSLB Industry Experts in Sacramento, Fresno Areas	The HIS registration requirement does not apply to those who only sell goods or negotiate contracts at a licensee's fixed business establishment, where the goods or services are exhibited, or persons who contact prospective buyers for the exclusive purpose of scheduling appointments for a registered HIS.
2016 Contractors License Law & Reference Book Arrives Soon	As part of the implementation process, CSLB has notified more than 14,000 currently registered HIS of the changes. Letters have also been sent to licensees who employ registered salespersons.
CSLB Clarifies Scope of C-39 Work Allowed on Reroofing Insulation	CSLB encourages all HIS registrants, as well as licensees who employ salespersons, to review and verify HIS details via CSLB's online <a href="#">Instant License Check</a> , and take steps immediately to correct any inaccurate or outdated information by filling out a <a href="#">form</a> and sending it to CSLB.
Dig Notification Can Avoid Pipeline Strike Accidents	Licensees should also be aware that that a home improvement contractor who employs an unregistered salesperson is subject to discipline by CSLB ( <a href="#">B&amp;P Code section 7154</a> ).
Earthquake Brace + Bolt Program Provides Contractors with New Work for the New Year	Licensees or registrants with questions about the new law, or who want to learn more about the HIS process are encouraged to visit the <a href="#">applicant</a> section of the CSLB website, or call CSLB's Licensing Information Center at 800.321.CSLB (2752).
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## Higher Contractor's Bond Now Required of All Licensees

The amount of the contractor' bond needed to keep your license active was raised to \$15,000 on January 1, 2016. All licensees should have made sure before now that their bond companies have posted the higher amount for them, or that a cash deposit is in place.

Contractors who didn't meet the deadline risk having their license suspended.

Recently passed legislation ([Senate Bill 467](#)) raised the contractor bond required of all licensees from \$12,500 to \$15,000 at the start of the new year. The legislation also eliminated the requirement that contractor applicants prove they have \$2,500 in working capital as a condition of obtaining a CSLB license.

California law ([Business and Professions Code section 7071.6](#)) requires all contractors to have either a contractor's bond or cash deposit filed with CSLB. The bond or cash deposit is filed for the benefit of consumers who may be damaged as a result of defective construction or other license law violations, and for the benefit of employees who have not been paid wages that are due them.

The bond of qualifying individuals remains unchanged at \$12,500.

A list of surety companies with blanket endorsements in place with CSLB is available [here](#).

## CSLB Previews 2016 Legislative, Long-Term Goals

A preview of CSLB's legislative goals for 2016 was unveiled for construction industry stakeholders at a meeting November 19 at

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CSLB headquarters. The preliminary lineup of CSLB's legislative proposals for the coming year, and longer-term goals, was presented for information and discussion.

CSLB Chief of Legislation Laura Zuniga told those attending that CSLB would pursue legislation that will allow the board to:

- Raise certain fees, if necessary, to reflect higher CSLB costs;
- Provide additional disclosure on solar contracts;
- Make changes to the contractor test scheduling process that some applicants believe is too restrictive;
- Clarify laws involving public works contracts; and
- Eliminate loopholes in the citation process.

Looking down the road, Zuniga said CSLB wants to simplify home improvement contract language that's now perceived to be cumbersome and confusing for contractors and consumers alike, as well as reorganize Contractors State License Law so it can be more easily understood.



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## CSLB Keeping Eye Out for Shady Characters in Solar Field



Solar power

continues to be one of the California construction industry's brightest stories – and one of CSLB's biggest source of complaints from consumers.

CSLB reminds licensees who do solar work that they must follow contracting law and regulations during all facets of a project, whether it's negotiating price, explaining financing options, performing installations, and obtaining the required construction permits.

To clarify, only contractors holding **"A" General Engineering**, **"B" General Building**, or **C-46 Solar** licenses can perform solar construction and installation. Contractors with a **C-4 Boiler, Hot-Water Heating and Steam Fitting**; **C-10 Electrical**; **C-36 Plumbing** or **C-53 Swimming Pool** license can only do solar work within their classification as defined by CSLB regulations. Licensees in other trades with questions about the solar work permissible under their classification can call CSLB toll-free at 800.321.2752.

Solar construction has boomed in California with the advent of new

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financing options and quickly evolving technology that has lowered the price of solar systems. As a result, many more companies and solar practitioners are taking advantage of opportunities in the industry.

CSLB statistics reflect the rapid growth in solar. The number of active C-46 Solar contractor licenses issued by CSLB has more than doubled in six years, from 445 in January 2009 to 1,083 as of December 2015.

Along with the jump in contractor numbers, applications by persons seeking to become home improvement salespersons (HIS), mostly in the solar industry, have surged. (*See related story in this issue on CSLB's new, streamlined HIS registration system.*)

But that growth also has been accompanied by a rise in consumer complaints to CSLB about unscrupulous practices when dealing with solar contractors and salespersons. Misleading power generation claims, cost savings that don't match what had been promised, and hard-sell, deceptive financing are the leading cause of solar complaints filed with CSLB.

Specifically, solar companies, contractors, and salespersons need to follow the law, and industry best practices, in these areas:

**Financing and contract/lease terms** – CSLB is receiving more complaints about financing contracts, especially those involving leases and power purchase agreements. The differences between customer-owned, leased, and power purchase agreements need to be clearly explained, as well as terms of purchase contracts and equipment leases so consumers understand their financing options and contract commitments.

Through the complaint process, CSLB is finding that some leases are weighed down with onerous terms that are not fully explained or are minimized when a contract is signed. Some of those "fine print" conditions include payments that start low but contain annual escalators, long payback commitments, or surprise costs, such as roof surcharges or equipment upgrades. Lease contracts also need to spell out repair and maintenance responsibilities for the power system, as well as what happens in the case of a home sale.

**It's important not to oversell the capabilities, or cost-savings, of solar systems** – Licensees need to make sure their solar projects produce the amount of power they claim, taking into account the variables of design, equipment, installation, site location, and weather/cloud patterns.

More contractors and solar companies need to be realistic with customers, and not overpromise energy/money savings.

**Companies acting in the capacity of a contractor** – CSLB has investigated several reports of consumers who have signed leases with companies that dispatch a licensed contractor to install a system, but are not licensed themselves. CSLB holds that leasing companies are acting in the capacity of a licensed contractor in such transactions, and must hold a California contractor license in the proper classification, even if a

licensed contractor performs the work. A licensee who works on behalf of non-licensee on such projects also faces disciplinary action from CSLB.

On a related licensing note, companies based outside California must possess a valid and trade-appropriate CSLB license for solar projects in the state.

**Solar sales and financing personnel must register as home improvement salespersons with CSLB** – A trained and CSLB-registered sales staff is much less likely to mislead or misinform potential customers about the benefits of installing a solar system.

**Don't sell customers more of a system than they need** – It's important to match the size of a solar system to the residence or business, and power needs of the occupants. Overbuilt systems elevate the contract price, but may not be more efficient. In addition, utility companies generally will only pay for excess power from homes with properly sized solar systems.

**Report solar work, license abuses to CSLB** – CSLB encourages contractors licensed to perform solar work to report those who work out of class, are unlicensed, submit bids that significantly undercut their competition, or whose products or workmanship are substandard. The industry as a whole will benefit if its own members help police it.

**Don't shortcut the permit process** – Anyone who performs solar work needs to submit design plans that comply with particular city, county, and/or utility standards, obtain the required building permits, and follow through with a safe, quality installation. Contractors who cut corners typically find their shortcomings exposed during the permit or inspection process.

Solar contractors need to familiarize themselves with the permit requirements of the individual cities, counties, and utility departments, particularly if they're working in a new territory.

**Stay current with new laws and regulations affecting the industry** – Two developments gave the solar industry in California a big boost at the end of the year. In December, the [California Public Utilities Commission](#) (CPUC) proposed to adopt a successor program to the existing net energy metering agreement that pays California consumers for returning unused solar power to utilities.

A week later, the U.S. Congress voted to extend the solar investment tax credit at the current 30 percent rate through 2019, after which it will fall to 26 percent in 2020, 22 percent in 2021 and 10 percent in 2022. An additional commence-construction clause will extend the credit to any project in development before 2024.

The two developments are expected to keep the sun shining on the fortunes of the California solar industry for the near future, if not longer. That's good news – as long as companies, contractors and registered salespersons treat consumers fairly. CSLB is keeping a close watch on

suspected abuses.



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## **RMOs-for-Hire Better Know What They're Getting Into**

CSLB has zeroed in on licensees who rent their services as Responsible Managing Officers (RMOs) for companies over which they have little or no control. Due to the work of a special CSLB task force that targets suspected RMO abuses, those who act as little more than paid license qualifier for companies are being identified and disciplined for violating state contractor law.

Contractors who serve as **qualifiers for a company's construction operations must exercise direct control and supervision, and, by law, maintain at least a 20 percent ownership stake in each firm for which the person acts as a qualifier. [Business and Professions Code \(BPC\) section 7068.1](#)** authorizes CSLB to discipline the licensed entity when the qualifier is not actively involved in the construction activities of the license they are representing. In addition to administrative penalties, the individual falsely serving as a qualifier on the license can be charged with a misdemeanor and be sentenced to serve up to six months in jail, and required to pay a fine of up to \$5,000, or both.

CSLB's effort to uncover straw men RMOs has yielded big dividends. There have been a total of 304 complaints filed against those suspected of misusing their qualifier status (many still under investigation), 31 accusations filed to revoke or suspend a license, 12 citations issued for violations of contractor law, 11 criminal cases filed by local district attorney's offices, and \$215,000 in restitution ordered for wronged consumers.

CSLB has strong words of caution for those who would enter these arrangements: If you act as an RMO and do not have active and financial involvement in the construction and business operations, you risk CSLB administrative penalties against your license(s) as well as criminal prosecution, regardless of whether you're aware of substandard work being performed by unqualified individuals.

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The task force also is watching for exam waiver requests from applicants suspected of only seeking to rent their name for a fee. CSLB also will seek to revoke qualifier status previously granted to anyone whose actions demonstrate they do not have an ownership stake or are not active decision makers listed on a license.

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A review of [BPC section 7065](#) will provide further explanation of examination waiver laws.

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## **Contractor Referral Services Are Legal – Within Limits**

The increased use of contractor "referral" companies – and whether some are violating the law – is drawing attention from CSLB. Contractor referral services offer to connect potential customers with a contractor.

But CSLB is finding that at least some of these referral businesses neither possess contractor licenses, nor do they employ registered home improvement salespersons (HIS). It's important to remember, for licensees who use these services, that a referral service cannot solicit or negotiate contracts on behalf of a contractor or offer to undertake to, or purport to have the capacity to undertake himself or through others a construction project (see [Business and Professions Code \[BPC\] section 7026](#), definition of "contractor").

There is nothing unlawful about connecting a consumer to services they seek. A referral company **MAY** serve as a warehouse for licensed contractors. The important distinction is the representations that a referral company makes to the public through its website, advertising, or employees – such businesses must not lead a consumer to believe they have the capacity to perform construction work themselves or through others.

Tactics to be avoided by referral services include directly contacting prospective customers on behalf of a contractor ([BPC section 7154](#) – The referral company employee would be required to be registered for the contractor represented), and/or taking responsibility for completion of a construction project ([BPC section 7028](#) – Acting in the capacity of a contractor without a license).

Violations of BPC section 7154 and BPC section 7028 can result in misdemeanor criminal charges.

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## Workers' Comp Exemptions Will Get Extra Scrutiny From CSLB

CSLB will be taking a much closer look at licensees who file exemptions from having to purchase workers' compensation (WC) insurance, particularly those working in trades likely to need a partner or employees.

At its December meeting, the Board agreed to a strategy to bring more contractors into compliance with California law on WC insurance. More than 50 percent of all licensees have filed WC exemptions with CSLB, a rate suspected to be too high considering the nature of the contracting work done.

**Business and Professions Code section 7125** requires contractors to purchase a WC policy and submit proof to CSLB when an active license is issued, an inactive one reactivated, or at the time of renewal, unless the licensee does not employ anyone subject to California WC or files a certificate of self-insurance with CSLB. (All C-39 Roofing contractors, however, must carry WC insurance even if they work on their own.)

To identify contractors who may be improperly claiming a WC exemption, and encourage them to purchase WC policies for employees, CSLB's Enforcement division will:

- Perform an analysis and reach out to contractors registered with the state **Department of Industrial Relations** who bid on public works projects. CSLB staff will perform random checks of those contractors, and send letters to those claiming WC exemptions about the need to provide insurance if they employ workers.
- Review a sampling of the overall consumer complaints that CSLB receives for contractor WC compliance.
- Conduct random checks of licensees in classifications most likely to need employee labor, but who hold WC exemptions. Staff will look at those with **C-46 Solar, C-36 Plumbing, C-20 Warm-Air Heating, Ventilation and Air-Conditioning, C-10 Electrical, C-**

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**8 Concrete**, and **"A" General Engineering** licensees who have declared they have no employees.

- Review permit activity in partnering counties to determine if contractors pulling permits for large projects have WC insurance.
- Coordinate with other state agencies to further identify WC violators. Representatives from CSLB, state **Department of Insurance**, and **Division of Labor Standards** will discuss ways to raise WC compliance among contractors.

Contractors who falsely claim WC exemptions are taking a great risk to save a little money. WC violators not only face CSLB disciplinary action, but they expose themselves and their clients to liability if uninsured workers get hurt on the job.



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*To fulfill its consumer protection mission, CSLB's Enforcement division — with the help of partnering state agencies and local law enforcement — works hard to hold accountable those contractors who harm the public through illegal business practices.*

## Revokee Unwilling to Stop Illegal Contracting Ordered to Jail

Licensee revokee Dean Dominguez of the San Francisco Bay Area has had a history of run-ins with CSLB for criminal violations of contracting law, a pattern that will bring more time in custody for him.

Dominguez had his license revoked in 2002 for multiple contracting violations. In 2006, he was convicted of contracting without a license and felony diversion of construction funds, and sentenced to two years in state prison. After additional contracting violations in 2010, Dominguez was sentenced to 180 days in county jail, five years' court probation, a fine, restitution of funds, and a prohibition on future criminal conduct.

Dominguez was unable to live up the terms of the plea agreement. In May 2014, he entered into a contract with a Morgan Hill homeowner for a \$55,500 residential remodeling project. Over a three-month period, the homeowner paid Dominguez \$40,000, but saw minimal progress made and few materials purchased. The homeowner complained to CSLB,

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and the resulting investigation substantiated multiple criminal violations by Dominguez yet again.

In December 2015, the Santa Clara District Attorney's Office negotiated a plea agreement, with Dominguez pleading guilty to contracting without a license and felony diversion of funds. Under the plea agreement, he will serve one year in jail, be on probation for three years, and pay restitution to the homeowner.

## Unlicensed Contractor Sentenced for Riverside Rip-Offs

Riverside County has a low tolerance for consumer fraud, as unlicensed contractor Misele "Mitch" Tupou discovered.

In 2014, CSLB received multiple complaints against Tupou, who was offering "bonded and insured" concrete work, landscaping, and other residential improvements in several Riverside County communities. Consumers complained that Tupou would offer low estimates, then demand excessive deposits and payments. Tupou performed substandard and defective work, his clients alleged, and abandoned projects before completion.

Contrary to his advertising, Tupou was not bonded, insured, or licensed. CSLB investigated the allegations against Tupou, and the complaints of six county residents were consolidated into a single case by the Riverside County District Attorney's Office, which has long been a partner with CSLB in pursuing rogue licensed and unlicensed contractors. On September 17, 2015, Tupou pleaded guilty to felony grand theft and contracting without a license.

Under the terms of the plea agreement, Tupou will serve 270 days in jail, be on formal probation for 36 months, and pay victim restitution of \$27,709.



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## **Contractors Sought as CSLB Industry Experts in Sacramento, Fresno Areas**

CSLB is looking for veteran **C-12 Earthwork and Paving**, and **C-23 Ornamental Metal** contractors in the Sacramento area, and **C-8 Concrete** contractors in the Fresno area to join its Industry Expert Program (IEP), a group of trade professionals who assist CSLB in investigating consumer complaints.

Industry experts (IEs) serve as independent consultants to CSLB, and are compensated for their time.

IEs have a unique opportunity to help ensure that construction safety and industry standards are being met. An IE inspects assigned projects, and prepares unbiased, professional reports to help protect the public from unscrupulous or incompetent licensed and unlicensed contractors. An IE also may be called upon to testify in arbitration and/or administrative hearings.

IEs must be licensed and in good standing with five years of experience as the license qualifier, and have no legal actions against them within the past seven years to qualify for the program.

To participate as an IE or for more information, review CSLB's **Industry Expert publication**, or send an [email](#). An [application](#) to join the IE program can be printed, filled out and mailed to CSLB's Sacramento headquarters.

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## **New Cal/OSHA Safety Publication for Construction Industry Available**

An updated version of "**Pocket Guide for**



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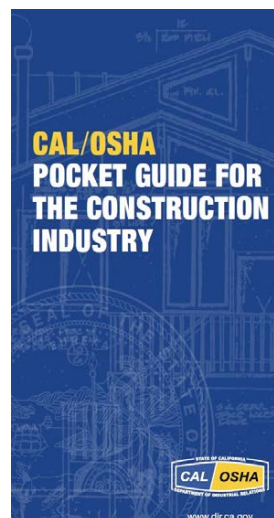
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**the Construction Industry,"** the foremost safety authority for California construction, has been released by the state Department of Industrial Relations and Cal/OSHA. The publication allows construction supervisors, employers, and workers to quickly reference safety requirements and updated regulations for various topics, including heavy equipment, airborne contaminants, blasting, fall protection, and multi-employer worksites. Cal/OSHA's mission is to protect workers from health and safety hazards in almost all workplace settings. Cal/OSHA's **Consultation Services Branch** provides free and voluntary assistance to employers and employee organizations to improve their health and safety programs; call 800.963.9424 for assistance.



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## Sac State Construction Management Students Tops in Nation

A **California State University, Sacramento, Construction Management** team won the national concrete solutions championship held recently at the Associated Schools of Construction's (ASC) Region 3 student competition in Downers Grove, Ill. This makes the fourth consecutive national title for Sac State's concrete solutions teams.

In addition, another Construction Management team finished second in the health-care preconstruction competition at the ASC meet.

Twelve concrete solutions teams from across the country were challenged to prepare a successful bid for a private client in New York. They were faced with a remote location, "terrible terrain" and a completion deadline of just 150 days. The teams had to provide a detailed request for qualifications, a concrete pour sequence schedule, and other deliverables, and made an oral presentation to the judges.

The team in the health care competition faced off against 11 other schools from around the country to estimate and plan the construction of a hospital, and to present their preconstruction proposal to the judges.



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## 2016 Contractors License Law & Reference Book Arrives Soon

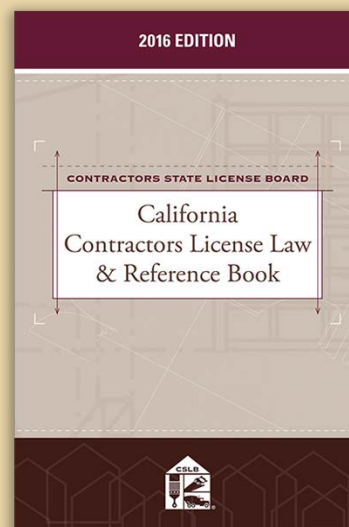
The 2016 edition of CSLB's *California Contractors License Law & Reference Book*

will be available for purchase or for free

viewing on the CSLB website in late January. The updated publication, totaling over 1,000 pages, provides easy reference to new and amended construction laws that took effect January 1, 2016.

The book's all-inclusive format continues to provide CSLB's history and mission, and specialized sections about becoming a licensed contractor; home improvement; business management; construction standards and safety regulations; California's Business and Professions Code and other construction-related state codes; and complete Contractors State License Law rules and regulations.

The 2016 law book can only be purchased from the publisher, LexisNexis, and is not available at any CSLB office. Copies may be purchased by calling 800.533.1637, or by writing to Matthew Bender & Company, Attn. Customer Service, 1275 Broadway, Albany, NY 12204-2694; or at the LexisNexis website. This year's



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law book costs \$30.50 plus \$10.44 for shipping and handling.

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## CSLB Clarifies Scope of C-39 Work Allowed on Reroofing Insulation

**C-39 Roofing** contractors who work on reroofing projects need to know that they can install insulation, as required by California's **Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards**, as part of the overall roofing job. CSLB considers such insulation work as "incidental and supplemental" as defined under **Title 16, California Code of Regulations § 831**, not requiring a separate **C-2 Insulation and Acoustical** contractor license.

Some confusion has cropped up on the scope of work allowed for such projects, given the Title 24 requirement that requires insulation be installed as part of California's mandated energy-saving measures.

On reroofing jobs, C-39 contractors must comply with the all California Energy Code requirements. Roofers may either install insulation on their own, or subcontract the job to a C-2 contractor. In either case, documentation affirming that the insulation work has been completed and complies with the California Energy Code requirements must be submitted to the local building department to receive an approved final inspection for a project. One note of caution: C-39s cannot take on stand-alone insulation jobs – only C-2 contractors may.



## Dig Notification Can Avoid Pipeline Strike Accidents

Pipeline strikes, inadvertent or not, are potentially deadly – and

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must be avoided. Contractors who plan to dig or excavate are required to call 8-1-1 and, at least two days beforehand, coordinate with either the [Underground Service Alert of Northern California](#) (known as USA North) or [Underground Service Alert of Southern California](#) (aka DigAlert).

You must call 8-1-1 at least two working days, but not more than 14 days, before starting your dig. You are not allowed to dig during that time.

You will be given a ticket number that references your dig information. Each contractor must have his or her own number. Sharing a ticket among contractors on a single job is not allowed. Tickets are valid for up to 28 days after they're issued.

Once the call is made, accurately outline your excavation area. Utility company representatives will visit within two working days either to mark or stake the horizontal path of their underground lines, provide information about the location, or advise whether there are lines in conflict with your project. Hand excavation may be required when digging around underground facilities.



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## **Earthquake Brace + Bolt Program Provides Contractors with New Work for the New Year**

Earthquake Brace + Bolt (EBB), an earthquake retrofit program that provides a financial incentive for homes built before 1940, is expanding to 18 cities throughout California. EBB will offer homeowners up to \$3,000 for seismic retrofits, which presents additional work opportunities for contractors.

Almost 95 percent of homeowners participating in EBB rely on the program's directory to hire skilled contractors for their retrofit projects. The searchable directory provides a list of licensed contractors trained for seismic retrofitting. Qualified workers can participate in the program at no charge and be added to a searchable contractor list by completing the online Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) education training. In addition to being added to the directory, participants will be eligible to receive free EBB marketing materials including brochures, job site checklists, and yard signs.

Contractors experienced in seismic retrofitting, specifically with California Existing Building Code (CEBC) Chapter 24, Title 10, Chapter A3, are being sought for this work. Contractors who want to participate should register and take the online FEMA training as soon as possible so they are on the program's list of contractors when homeowner registration opens. Homeowner registration ends February 20, 2016.

EBB's 2016 program will be offered in the following ZIP codes:

### ***Northern California ZIP codes***

- **Albany:** [94706](#)
- **Berkeley:** [94702](#) [94703](#) [94704](#) [94705](#) [94707](#) [94708](#) [94709](#) [94710](#)
- **Burlingame:** [94010](#)
- **Emeryville:** [94608](#)



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- **Hillsborough:** [94010](#)
- **Millbrae:** [94030](#)
- **Piedmont:** [94610](#) [94611](#)
- **Oakland:** [94602](#), [94607](#), [94601](#), [94610](#), [94603](#), [94605](#), [94606](#), [94612](#), [94619](#), [94621](#),
- **San Francisco:** [94112](#), [94121](#), [94127](#), [94132](#), [94102](#), [94103](#), [94107](#), [94108](#), [94109](#), [94110](#), [94112](#), [94114](#), [94115](#), [94116](#), [94117](#), [94118](#), [94123](#), [94124](#), [94131](#), [94133](#), [94134](#), [94145](#), [94151](#)
- **San Leandro:** [94577](#), [94578](#), [94579](#)
- **Woodside:** [94061](#), [94062](#)

### ***Southern California ZIP codes***

- **Los Angeles:** [90026](#), [90031](#), [90039](#), [90041](#), [90042](#), [90065](#), [90004](#), [90005](#), [90006](#), [90012](#), [90014](#), [90015](#), [90017](#), [90019](#), [90020](#), [90023](#), [90027](#), [90028](#), [90029](#), [90033](#), [90036](#), [90038](#), [90046](#), [90048](#), [90057](#), [90063](#), [91608](#), [91604](#), [90065](#)
- **Pasadena:** [91101](#), [91103](#), [91104](#), [91105](#), [91106](#), [91107](#)
- **Santa Monica:** [90401](#), [90404](#), [90402](#), [90403](#), [90405](#)
- **San Bernardino:** [90065](#), [90065](#), [90065](#), [90065](#), [90065](#), [90065](#), [90065](#), [90065](#), [90065](#)
- **San Marino:** [91108](#)
- **South Pasadena:** [91030](#)
- **West Hollywood:** [90046](#), [90048](#), [90069](#)

Visit the Earthquake Brace + Bolt [website](#) for additional information.



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## Quick Quiz

- 1. Are local jurisdictions required by law to verify a contractor's license prior to issuing a permit?**
- 2. A new law effective January 1, 2016 increased the amount required for a contractor license bond to:**
  - a. \$12,500
  - b. \$15,000
  - c. \$20,000
- 3. True or False: A C-8 Concrete contractor can erect a lattice patio cover.**
- 4. A licensed contractor can place a stamp in a contract's signature block that is intended for an architect or engineer if:**
  - a. The contractor has special permission from the architect or engineer whom they are working with on a project.
  - b. If a building department reviewing the plans gives written consent to the contractor.
  - c. Never – the signature block may only be used by a licensed architect or certified engineer.
- 5. Can a C-27 Landscaping contractor perform a single trade, i.e., concrete, masonry, or carpentry?**



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**Answers:**

1: Verifying license status is good practice, but not a state requirement. Some cities and councils have adopted such a requirement by ordinance. 2: B. 3: False – A C-8 contractor can only work with wood when it is part of the formwork for concrete. 4: C – It is considered misrepresentation if a licensed contractor use their stamp in place of an architect or engineer. 5: Yes – A C-27 contractor may undertake any single trade contract, as long as the work is part of a project to improve the grounds within or surrounding a structure, tract or plot of land.



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