



**IN THIS EDITION:**

**Message From the Board Chair**

Chair's Report

Board Members Elect  
New Officer Slate for  
2016-17 Fiscal Year

Board Member Lamb  
Wraps Up Productive  
Decade of Public  
Service

Solar Contractors,  
Stay on the Sunny  
Side of the Rules

New Online Forms  
Speed Up HIS  
Registration Process

CSLB Keeping Watch  
on Legislation

CSLB Cracks Down  
on Up-selling

Kern Fire Provides  
Early Test for CSLB  
Disaster Relief Team

Offender Who Fled  
Contracting Crimes  
Returned to California,  
Sentenced

No License Numbers



**It's with a great deal of pride**, and sense of responsibility that I take over as Board Chair for 2016-17. Although I'm a relative newcomer on the Board, having been appointed in 2014, I appreciate my colleague's confidence in my ability to lead this vital regulatory body in its oversight of California's construction community – one of

the state's largest and most important industries.

Joining me as part of the Board's leadership team is Kevin Albanese Jr. and Marlo Richardson. Like me, Kevin and Marlo are among the more recent Board arrivals, but they bring an enthusiasm and fresh perspective that will blend nicely with the wealth of knowledge about contractor law and regulation that our more veteran Board members possess. I look forward to a most productive year working with such a dedicated group.

###

**So what kind of issues** will the Board be dealing with for the coming year? I think it's safe to say that CSLB will continue to keep close watch over the rapid growth of solar contracting, which has opened up many new employment and business opportunities for contractors, but unfortunately, has also attracted unethical operators who are taking advantage of consumers. CSLB has seen a sharp upswing in complaints about solar contracts and financing methods that have grown increasingly complex, as well as overstated promises of power/cost savings for particular solar systems.

In response, CSLB has launched a solar task force to weed out those harming the reputation of our many honest, law-abiding solar contractors. We've also stepped up our enforcement and public

on Ads, Contracts is a Persistent Problem

---

Sting Properties Needed to Help Fight Unlicensed Contracting

---

Contractors Sought as CSLB Industry Experts in Sacramento, Santa Clarita

---

Website on Title 20 Water-Saving Standards is Flush with Information

---

Public Works Contractors Must File Online Payroll Records With State

---

Publications Help Construction Industry, Workers in Mobile-Friendly Formats

---

Whether You Operate a Shovel or Backhoe, Get an Excavation Ticket First

---

Quick Quiz

---

CSLB Home

---



education efforts, including a story in this issue reminding licensees and Home Improvement Salespersons (HIS) of their legal obligations in the sales and installation of solar systems.

We're pleased that this campaign will be a multi-state effort. During a joint meeting in June with our counterparts on the contractor licensing boards of Nevada and Arizona, board and executive staff members discussed solar issues that we are all encountering. We have agreed to share information on trends and solar companies/contractors who think they can leave a troubled history behind in another state.

###

**Another area of CSLB operations** that I think you will be interested is our efforts to create an online, interactive licensing and registration system. We've taken the first step toward that goal in the last few months by adding an interactive option to complete the (HIS) registration and contractor association/disassociation process. With so many of us now comfortable with online forms and registrations, we hope that this interactive transaction will prove simple and faster for those involved in the HIS process. A story in this issue further explains the program, and includes links to the forms. This will be a test model of sorts for bringing more of our application/licensing functions online, so we would appreciate your comments about your experiences with the technology.

###

**The changes on the Board** aren't limited to new executive positions. Unfortunately, we've lost a stalwart member of the Board after a decade of devoted service. Bob Lamb attended his last meeting as a Board member in Garden Grove, and he left us with parting words of knowledge and, true to form, a few wisecracks, too, as he reflected on his long association with CSLB. Bob has truly been an active member of the Board, serving ably in various leadership capacities, and he devoted much time to a long list of CSLB duties, whether it was swearing in new peace officers or representing the Board in high-profile settings. We'll really miss Bob's sense of humor and his straightforward, common sense approach to contracting issues of the day.

###

**As always, the Board welcomes your input**, and encourages you to attend quarterly meetings that are held around the state. You can also view Board meetings on our website, and review the agenda that gives detailed explanations of the contracting issues we are considering.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Agustin Beltran".

**Agustin "Augie" Beltran**  
CSLB Board Chair



**IN THIS EDITION:**

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Decade of Public  
Service

Solar Contractors,  
Stay on the Sunny  
Side of the Rules

New Online Forms  
Speed Up HIS  
Registration Process

CSLB Keeping Watch  
on Legislation

CSLB Cracks Down  
on Up-selling

Kern Fire Provides  
Early Test for CSLB  
Disaster Relief Team

Offender Who Fled  
Contracting Crimes  
Returned to California,  
Sentenced

No License Numbers

**Board Members Elect New Officer Slate for  
2016-17 Fiscal Year**

New Board officers have been elected by their colleagues to assume leadership positions for the 2016-2017 fiscal year. Agustin (Augie) Beltran of Oakdale will serve as Chair for the 15-member Board, Kevin Albanese Jr. of San Jose takes over as Board Vice Chair, and Marlo Richardson of Playa Del Rey was selected as Board Secretary at the June 23-24 Board meeting in Garden Grove.

Mr. Beltran currently serves as the President and Director of Public and Governmental Relations for the Northern California Carpenters Regional Council. Mr. Beltran, who had been the Board's Vice Chair in the previous fiscal year, takes over the Chair's seat from Ed Lang.



Since beginning his career as a carpenter apprentice in 1989, Mr. Beltran has worked in various facets of the construction industry. Mr. Beltran also has served on several government boards since 1997, including the Lathrop City Council from 2000-2004, and the Delta Protection Commission from 2002-2004. He also was a member of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve from 1985-1993. Mr. Beltran was first appointed to the Board by the Senate Rules Committee in 2014, and his term continues through June 2017.

Mr. Albanese is the President and CEO of Joseph J. Albanese, Inc., a Northern California concrete contractor. He has been the company's Chief Operating Officer for the last 10 years and served in a multitude of other management positions.



Mr. Albanese graduated magna cum laude

on Ads, Contracts is a Persistent Problem

---

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---

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---

Website on Title 20 Water-Saving Standards is Flush with Information

---

Public Works Contractors Must File Online Payroll Records With State

---

Publications Help Construction Industry, Workers in Mobile-Friendly Formats

---

Whether You Operate a Shovel or Backhoe, Get an Excavation Ticket First

---

Quick Quiz

---

CSLB Home

---

from the Santa Clara University School of Law and remains an active member of the State Bar. He also is a longtime member and past President of United Contractors and also serves as a management trustee for the Operating Engineers Local 3 Trust Funds. Mr. Albanese was first appointed by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. in July 2013. His term continues through June 2017.

Ms. Richardson takes over as Board Secretary. Ms. Richardson is a lieutenant with the Los Angeles Airport Police Division, where she has worked since 1999. She has an extensive background as a business entrepreneur with experience in the restaurant, real estate, home health care, import/export, and financial services industries, and mentors other business entrepreneurs.



Ms. Richardson is co-chair of Public Safety for Los Angeles County Empowerment Congress, and also is a member of the California State Bar Association Professional Responsibility and Conduct, the Los Angeles African American Women's Public Policy Institute, and California Women Lead. Ms. Richardson was first appointed to the CSLB Board in 2015 by Governor Brown. Her term continues through June 2020.



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[License Revocations](#) | [Past Issues](#)

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Chair's Report

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New Officer Slate for  
2016-17 Fiscal Year

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Decade of Public  
Service

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Stay on the Sunny  
Side of the Rules

New Online Forms  
Speed Up HIS  
Registration Process

CSLB Keeping Watch  
on Legislation

CSLB Cracks Down  
on Up-selling

Kern Fire Provides  
Early Test for CSLB  
Disaster Relief Team

Offender Who Fled  
Contracting Crimes  
Returned to California,  
Sentenced

No License Numbers

## Board Member Lamb Wraps Up Productive Decade of Public Service

Longtime CSLB Board member Robert Lamb of Cypress said farewell to his colleagues of the last 10 years at his final official meeting June 23-24 in Garden Grove.

Mr. Lamb started his Board service in May 2006,



appointed by then-Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez. He was reappointed by then-Assembly Speaker Karen Bass to a full four-year term in 2008, and reappointed again in 2012 by then-Assembly Speaker John Perez.

Mr. Lamb, a certified plumber and pipefitter by trade, was a model of dedication and involvement during his decade of public service. He spent four years in Board leadership positions, serving as Board Chair in 2011-12, as well as Vice Chair and Secretary at other intervals.

In addition, Mr. Lamb chaired three other Board committees, and handled a variety of assignments on behalf of CSLB, and was most proud when lauding the work of others in the organization.

He also was known for his sense of humor and was quick to lighten the moment with a joke or a quip, often at his own expense.

A replacement on the Board has not been named by the state Assembly.



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New Officer Slate for  
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Decade of Public  
Service

Solar Contractors,  
Stay on the Sunny  
Side of the Rules

New Online Forms  
Speed Up HIS  
Registration Process

CSLB Keeping Watch  
on Legislation

CSLB Cracks Down  
on Up-selling

Kern Fire Provides  
Early Test for CSLB  
Disaster Relief Team

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Contracting Crimes  
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## Solar Contractors, Stay on the Sunny Side of the Rules



While most of the contractors licensed to install solar energy systems do their jobs well, and customers are satisfied with the results, the number of complaints to CSLB about deceptive solar practices continues to rise rapidly. CSLB's latest statistics show 535 solar-related complaints received from January 1, 2015 through May 1, 2016 – quite a change from when only 59 complaints connected to solar projects were filed in 2010.

Licensees should know that the sales/lease process is generating the majority of solar-related complaints filed with CSLB. The deceptive practices alleged include misleading electric production claims, overstated promises of cost savings, or financing that may not be in a consumer's best interest.

"Although it's great to see that solar is really taking off, bringing the benefits of clean, less expensive energy and more jobs, the industry is going through some growing pains," noted CSLB Registrar Cindi

on Ads, Contracts is a Persistent Problem

---

Sting Properties Needed to Help Fight Unlicensed Contracting

---

Contractors Sought as CSLB Industry Experts in Sacramento, Santa Clarita

---

Website on Title 20 Water-Saving Standards is Flush with Information

---

Public Works Contractors Must File Online Payroll Records With State

---

Publications Help Construction Industry, Workers in Mobile-Friendly Formats

---

Whether You Operate a Shovel or Backhoe, Get an Excavation Ticket First

---

Quick Quiz

---

CSLB Home

---



Christenson. "We're seeing more complaints come through about unscrupulous business practices that lock consumers into unfavorable, long-term contracts, or systems that perform below what had been promised. As a consumer protection agency, CSLB won't tolerate abuses in this or any other construction field."

In addition to acting on consumer complaints, CSLB has established a Solar Task Force made up of investigators who pursue bad practitioners in the solar field and identify strategies to reduce exploitive or predatory business practices.

Specifically, these are the areas of sales and service that solar licensees need to pay particular attention to:

**Financing and contract/lease terms** – An array of new financing options, as well as quickly evolving technology that has brought down equipment costs, has contributed greatly to solar's popularity in California. However, the complexity of financing contracts also has grown as customers choose between owning, leasing, or power purchase agreements.

Given the significant differences between the types of solar financing, it's more important than ever that licensees provide potential customers a detailed breakdown on how much they can expect to pay by converting to a solar power system.

CSLB has found that the lack of specificity during solar sales presentations generates the most consumer dissatisfaction. Problems arise when contract terms are not fully explained, or minimized, or when the contract contains "fine print" conditions discovered after signing – such as payments that start low but contain annual escalators, long payback commitments, or surprise costs that include 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.

**Financing programs** – The rise of special financing programs to pay for energy-efficiency projects has been an increasing source of misunderstandings. This financing is done through programs such as the Home Energy Renovation Opportunity (HERO). Although this type of financing is legal and comes with no up-front costs, some complaints to CSLB have indicated that consumers are unaware the loans must be paid back for periods of five to 20 years through additional assessments attached to the property tax, and often at a rate higher than what may have been obtained through a traditional lending institution. It's important to fully explain the terms of these types of financing to potential customers.

**Refrain from high-pressure sales tactics** – Prospective customers should not be hurried into signing a contract, especially after a first meeting. If a solar installation contract is signed, customers have three business days to cancel.

This three-day period, after a contract is signed, is not when building

permits should be pulled. You cannot begin work or pull permits during this waiting period, in case the customer changes his or her mind.

**Solar sales and financing personnel must be registered as Home Improvement Salespersons (HIS) with CSLB** – As a solar contractor or company, you are required to register sales staff through the HIS program before they can sell or lease systems. A trained and CSLB-registered staff helps reduce the chance that staff will mislead or misinform potential customers about the benefits of installing a solar system. Solar sales staff should always carry an HIS registration card issued by CSLB they can show potential customers when making sales calls.

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.

**Avoid overselling cost savings, or solar energy system capabilities** – It's difficult to pin down exactly how much power, or cost savings, a system will generate. Factors such as design, equipment, installation, site location, and weather/cloud patterns all play a role in the electricity output of each system. Licensees should avoid making claims that promise unrealistic energy/money savings.

**Follow the permit process** – Contractors with solar projects must 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.

In addition, licensees need to be aware that individual cities, counties, and utility departments have different permit requirements that have to be followed.



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[License Revocations](#) | [Past Issues](#)

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Board Members Elect  
 New Officer Slate for  
 2016-17 Fiscal Year

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 Wraps Up Productive  
 Decade of Public  
 Service

Solar Contractors, Stay  
 on the Sunny Side of  
 the Rules

New Online Forms  
 Speed Up HIS  
 Registration Process

CSLB Keeping Watch  
 on Legislation

CSLB Cracks Down on  
 Up-selling

Kern Fire Provides  
 Early Test for CSLB  
 Disaster Relief Team

Offender Who Fled  
 Contracting Crimes  
 Returned to California,  
 Sentenced

No License Numbers  
 on Ads, Contracts is a  
 Persistent Problem

**New Online Forms Speed Up HIS  
 Registration Process**

CSLB has launched a series of interactive forms to simplify and speed up the registration process for **Home Improvement Salesperson (HIS)** applicants, and licensed contractors who employ HIS. These new forms are also CSLB's first move toward an online system that should fill many licensing and registration needs.

Those seeking to become an HIS are directed to the interactive registration application. Licensed contractors can use the new employment notification form to alert CSLB when a HIS joins their staff, or the employment cessation notification form when the HIS employment ends.

These new forms are:

	Form Name	Who Fills Out	Purpose
1.	<a href="#">HIS Interactive Application</a>	HIS Applicant	Apply for HIS Registration
2.	<a href="#">HIS Interactive Employment Notification Form</a>	Licensed Contractor	Connect HIS to License
3.	<a href="#">HIS Interactive Employment Cessation Notification Form</a>	Licensed Contractor	Disconnect HIS from License

It's important to remember that contractors who use HIS must notify CSLB of any change in their employment status, be it hiring or disassociation. That's a new requirement of the law that took effect this year revamping the HIS registration system.

There is no fee for licensed contractors to notify CSLB of HIS hiring or employment ending. There is a \$75 fee to register as a HIS, renewable every two years.

The ability to make changes online should make the association/disassociation process, as well as HIS registrations, a relatively straightforward one.

With all three new forms, HIS registrants and contractors are alerted if an

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Unlicensed Contracting

---

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CSLB Industry Experts  
in Sacramento, Santa  
Clarita

---

Website on Title 20  
Water-Saving  
Standards is Flush with  
Information

---

Public Works  
Contractors Must File  
Online Payroll Records  
With State

---

Publications Help  
Construction Industry,  
Workers in Mobile-  
Friendly Formats

---

Whether You Operate a  
Shovel or Backhoe, Get  
an Excavation Ticket  
First

---

Quick Quiz

---

CSLB Home

---

error is made when entering information, or if any of the required fields are skipped. Also, forms cannot be completed if information is missing or in conflict with other CSLB records. Upon completion, the form must be saved and printed out, signed, and sent to CSLB.

Direct links to the forms, and further instructions, are available on the CSLB home page.

CSLB staff will monitor the response to the interactive forms by contractors and registered sales staff, and use that feedback to develop more forms for online completion.



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[License Revocations](#) | [Past Issues](#)

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### Chair's Report

Board Members Elect  
New Officer Slate for  
2016-17 Fiscal Year

Board Member Lamb  
Wraps Up Productive  
Decade of Public  
Service

Solar Contractors,  
Stay on the Sunny  
Side of the Rules

New Online Forms  
Speed Up HIS  
Registration Process

CSLB Keeping Watch  
on Legislation

CSLB Cracks Down  
on Up-selling

Kern Fire Provides  
Early Test for CSLB  
Disaster Relief Team

Offender Who Fled  
Contracting Crimes  
Returned to California,  
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No License Numbers

## CSLB Keeping Watch on Legislation



CSLB is tracking a host of bills before the state Legislature this year that would affect contractors if passed and signed. The bills considered by the Senate and Assembly can still be amended until the end of August.

The list is not all-inclusive, but includes legislation

that CSLB is either sponsoring or believes will have the greatest impact on the contracting industry if passed and signed by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr.

You can follow a bill's progress and amendments, or search for legislation of interest, on the Office of Legislative Counsel's legislative information [website](#).

In Senate:

- **Senate Bill (SB) 465 (Hill) Contractors: Discipline: Reporting** – This bill would require licensees to report to CSLB in writing if they are convicted of any felony or any other crime substantially related to the qualifications, functions, and duties of a licensed contractor. It also would require CSLB to study and report to the Legislature on whether public protection would be enhanced if licensees were required to report judgments, arbitration awards or settlements for construction defects relating to rental residential units to CSLB.
- **SB 661 (Hill) Protection of Subsurface Installations** – The bill, the Dig Safe Act of 2016, would create the California Underground Facilities Safe Excavation Board under the Office of the State Fire Marshall. The board would investigate reported

on Ads, Contracts is a Persistent Problem

---

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---

Contractors Sought as CSLB Industry Experts in Sacramento, Santa Clarita

---

Website on Title 20 Water-Saving Standards is Flush with Information

---

Public Works Contractors Must File Online Payroll Records With State

---

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---

Whether You Operate a Shovel or Backhoe, Get an Excavation Ticket First

---

Quick Quiz

---

CSLB Home

---



violations of state excavation regulations and refer results of investigations to the appropriate state agency, including CSLB, to take action. The bill also would require excavators to delineate the area to be excavated, and compel the installation operator to locate and field mark its subsurface installations within that area. It also would exempt an excavator of financial liability for inaccurate field markings.

- **SB 1039** (Hill) **Professions and Vocations** – Sponsored by CSLB, this bill would raise CSLB's existing fees, effective July 1, 2017, and raise the statutory cap on fees.
- **SB 1155** (Morrell) **Professions and Vocations: Licenses: Military** – This bill would require every board within the Department of Consumer Affairs to grant a fee waiver for the application and the issuance of an initial license to an applicant who supplies satisfactory evidence that he or she has served as an active duty member of a state National Guard or the U.S. Armed Forces and was honorably discharged.
- **SB 1209** (Morrell) **Contractors: Discipline** – Sponsored by CSLB, this bill would expand the existing citation disclosure provision in contractor law, to require that disclosure of citations also appear, for the period of disclosure of the citation, on the license record of any other licensee identified as a qualifier who is listed in the members of the personnel or record of the license that was issued the citation.
- **SB 1479** ( **Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee**) – Sponsored by CSLB, this bill would eliminate the provision of existing law that voids an application to CSLB after an applicant has failed to reschedule an exam within 90 days of cancellation, or twice failed to appear for an exam. This bill also would revise existing requirements for a blanket performance and payment bond.

In Assembly:

- **Assembly Bill (AB) 1793** (Holden) **Contractors: Licensure Requirements: Recovery Actions** – This bill would amend Business and Professions Code Section 7031, and modify the criteria that must be met for a court to determine that a contractor is in substantial compliance with the licensing requirements.
- **AB 1926** (Cooper) **Public Works: Prevailing Wage: Apprentices** – This bill would require, when a contractor requests an apprentice to perform work on a public works project, that the apprentice be paid the prevailing wage rate for the time spent on a required activity.
- **AB 2486** (Baker) **CSLB: License Search** – This bill would require the Board, prior to January 1, 2019, to add an enhancement to the current contractor license check search function on its website to enable consumers to search for a licensed contractor by either ZIP code or geographic location.
- **AB 2693** (Dababneh) **Financing Requirements: Property Improvements** – This bill would prohibit a public agency from

permitting a property owner from entering into contractual assessments to finance certain energy-related improvements unless the owner satisfies certain conditions and is given the right to cancel the assessment within a specified time period without penalty or obligation. It additionally would prohibit making representations to the owner regarding the effect of improvements on the property's value without using certain methods.

- **AB 2859** (Low) **Professions and Vocations: Retired License** – This bill would authorize any board within the Department of Consumer Affairs to establish a retired license category of license for persons not actively engaged in the practice of their profession or vocation.

The legislative session ends August 31. September 30, 2016 is the last day for the Governor to take action on legislation.



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[License Revocations](#) | [Past Issues](#)

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Decade of Public  
Service

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Stay on the Sunny  
Side of the Rules

New Online Forms  
Speed Up HIS  
Registration Process

CSLB Keeping Watch  
on Legislation

CSLB Cracks Down  
on Up-selling

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Early Test for CSLB  
Disaster Relief Team

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Contracting Crimes  
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## CSLB Cracks Down on Up-selling

Despite repeated warnings from CSLB, the unscrupulous practice of up-selling consumers on unneeded equipment or contracting services still continues. These predatory practices have been most prevalent in the warm-air heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning (HVAC) trade, but abuses can occur with almost any repair where a consumer only needing a relatively minor fix is talked into a major – and unnecessary – remedy.

CSLB investigative staff have been trained to spot potential cases of up-selling services or products, particularly when high-pressure sales and scare tactics are used. These unethical business practices cheat unsuspecting customers, especially older persons. CSLB also works with local district attorney's offices and organizations such as the Better Business Bureau to identify and prosecute potential up-sell cases.

Here is what investigators are watching for:

- **Hard-sell tactics to obtain grossly inflated contracts** All too often, what starts out as a simple inspection, tune-up, or modest repair turns into a complete replacement that costs thousands of dollars.
- **Work that is represented as critical or safety-related, needing immediate correction** In one case, an elderly homeowner reported that a technician performing a free duct inspection claimed to have found a cracked heat exchanger that was leaking carbon monoxide gas. The technician turned off the gas supply, rendering the unit inoperable during a December cold spell, and pressured the woman to replace the entire unit. Her son suspected a scam and called CSLB. An inspection by another HVAC contractor revealed that the unit was in good working condition.
- **Failing to provide the three-day right to cancel a home improvement contract** Some contractors are convincing consumers to waive this legal right so a job can quickly proceed

on Ads, Contracts is a Persistent Problem

---

Sting Properties Needed to Help Fight Unlicensed Contracting

---

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---

Website on Title 20 Water-Saving Standards is Flush with Information

---

Public Works Contractors Must File Online Payroll Records With State

---

Publications Help Construction Industry, Workers in Mobile-Friendly Formats

---

Whether You Operate a Shovel or Backhoe, Get an Excavation Ticket First

---

Quick Quiz

---

CSLB Home

---

and be paid for up-front.

- **Failing to obtain building permits** Although technically not considered a service and repair scam, CSLB is on the lookout for contractors that cut corners by sidestepping the permit and inspection process. It's one of the larger issues of noncompliance that CSLB is addressing.
- **Lack of workers' compensation insurance or under-reporting of employees** These practices harm workers and cause consumers to face financial risk if an uninsured employee is injured on the job, and create an unbalanced playing field for licensees by forcing them to pay higher rates for WC policies.



---

[License Revocations](#) | [Past Issues](#)

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New Officer Slate for  
2016-17 Fiscal Year

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Side of the Rules

New Online Forms  
Speed Up HIS  
Registration Process

CSLB Keeping Watch  
on Legislation

CSLB Cracks Down  
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No License Numbers

## Statewide Fires Provides Early Test for CSLB Disaster Relief Team



CSLB disaster response teams have geared up early this wildfire season, traveling to Kern County in early July to help property owners whose homes were damaged or destroyed by the Erskine Fire near Lake Isabella, and at the start of August responding to victims of the Sand Fire in the Santa Clarita area and Soberanes Fire in Monterey County. CSLB recovery staff also returned to Lake County in late August in response to the Clayton Fire there, near the same area where last year's disastrous blazes struck, and are expected to be extra-busy through the remainder of the year.

For the Erskine Fire, outreach was staged in tandem with the California **Department of Insurance** (CDI). CSLB staff members and their CDI counterparts circulated through the fire zone, assessing the scope of devastation, talking with shaken residents, and posting signs in various locations warning against unlicensed contracting. CSLB also staged a press conference and took local TV reporters on a tour of the charred

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---

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---

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---

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---

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---

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---

Quick Quiz

---

CSLB Home

---

landscape to get the word out about assistance efforts, elaborating on CSLB's role as a public protector against predatory contractors in disaster areas.

As a member of the [California Emergency Management Agency](#)'s disaster recovery team, CSLB is always one of the first governmental agencies to respond to communities after fire, floods, earthquakes, or any other natural disaster. In the town of Lake Isabella, CSLB and other agencies helped set up and staff a Local Assistance Center for affected residents. CSLB representatives spoke with property owners with questions about rebuilding their homes, and handed out educational information about post-disaster contracting laws.

CSLB also maintains a [Disaster Help Center](#) section on its website, with a link right on the home page.



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[License Revocations](#) | [Past Issues](#)



# CONTRACTORS STATE LICENSE BOARD CALIFORNIA LICENSED CONTRACTOR

Summer 2016 | Cindi Christenson, Registrar | Edmund G. Brown Jr., Governor

## IN THIS EDITION:

Chair's Report

Board Members Elect  
New Officer Slate for  
2016-17 Fiscal Year

Board Member Lamb  
Wraps Up Productive  
Decade of Public  
Service

Solar Contractors,  
Stay on the Sunny  
Side of the Rules

New Online Forms  
Speed Up HIS  
Registration Process

CSLB Keeping Watch  
on Legislation

CSLB Cracks Down  
on Up-selling

Kern Fire Provides  
Early Test for CSLB  
Disaster Relief Team

Offender Who Fled  
Contracting Crimes  
Returned to California,  
Sentenced

No License Numbers



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

## Offender Who Fled Contracting Crimes Returned to California, Sentenced

A long history of unlicensed contracting finally caught up with former CSLB Most Wanted contractor Ronald Holland after he pleaded guilty to a pair of felony charges in connection with a San Diego-area complaint. Holland has been the subject of 16 complaints filed with CSLB since 1997, records show, and he has previously received two citations, been criminally prosecuted 14 times, and been placed on probation five times since 2000.

His latest violation involved a \$133,690 contract to landscape an Encinitas homeowner's front yard. Holland claimed to be a supervisor for a legitimate, licensed contractor, and provided the homeowner with the unsuspecting licensee's number. The homeowner verified the license on CSLB's website, and then paid Holland \$11,500 for plans, permits, and down payment. Holland never obtained permits, and began work with multiple workers.

Two months later, after the homeowner had paid Holland \$53,084 on the

on Ads, Contracts is a Persistent Problem

---

Sting Properties Needed to Help Fight Unlicensed Contracting

---

Contractors Sought as CSLB Industry Experts in Sacramento, Santa Clarita

---

Website on Title 20 Water-Saving Standards is Flush with Information

---

Public Works Contractors Must File Online Payroll Records With State

---

Publications Help Construction Industry, Workers in Mobile-Friendly Formats

---

Whether You Operate a Shovel or Backhoe, Get an Excavation Ticket First

---

Quick Quiz

---

CSLB Home

---



project, a city official stopped at the site and informed the owner that no permits had been issued for the work. The homeowner contacted Holland, who promised to take care of the problem. Instead, Holland disappeared from sight.

Based on CSLB's investigation, the San Diego District Attorney's Office charged Holland with five criminal counts, and an arrest warrant was issued. In November 2015, Holland was arrested in, and extradited from, his new home in Austin, Texas (where he was again contracting without a license). In February 2016, Holland agreed to plead guilty to felony diversion of construction funds, obtaining money by false pretenses (also a felony), and failure to pay workers' compensation insurance. He also agreed to pay \$101,000 in restitution and serve probation, and will face up to four years in prison if he does not comply.

## Unlicensed S.F. Contractor Accused of Bogus Billing, Fraud for Project



*Patrick Otsuki*

An investigation initiated by CSLB led to multiple felony and misdemeanor charges being filed in June against an unlicensed San Francisco contractor accused of defrauding a couple out of at least \$110,000 on a residential renovation project.

Acting on a recommendation from CSLB, the San Francisco District Attorney's Office charged Patrick Otsuki, of Foster City, with felony grand theft by false pretenses, felony diversion of funds, and felony

fraudulent use of a license. He has also been charged with misdemeanor counts of contracting without a license and advertising by an unlicensed person. His next court date is in September.

Otsuki was hired by the couple to renovate a two-unit residence in San Francisco. Otsuki allegedly told the owners he was licensed, and listed a license number in his advertising and on his invoices. He also is accused of failing to prepare a proposal to perform the work, and submitting confusing and misleading invoices as work progressed, with many invoices requiring payment in advance. Otsuki allegedly also invoiced and was paid for permits that were never obtained. He also is accused of failing to provide workers' compensation insurance for his workers on the site.

When the owners realized Otsuki was not licensed, and began questioning the validity of his invoices and use of funds, they had already paid out in excess of \$110,000 over 18 months. They ended up spending an additional \$60,000 to hire a licensed contractor to correct and complete the project.

Not only did Otsuki allegedly misrepresent that he was licensed as a

contractor to obtain approval to perform the renovation work, he stated under oath that he held both a "B" General Building and a C-27 Landscaping license when he testified before the San Francisco Rent Stabilization and Arbitration Board on behalf of the owner of the adjacent property, according to reports.



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[License Revocations](#) | [Past Issues](#)

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**IN THIS EDITION:**

Chair's Report

Board Members Elect  
New Officer Slate for  
2016-17 Fiscal Year

Board Member Lamb  
Wraps Up Productive  
Decade of Public  
Service

Solar Contractors,  
Stay on the Sunny  
Side of the Rules

New Online Forms  
Speed Up HIS  
Registration Process

CSLB Keeping Watch  
on Legislation

CSLB Cracks Down  
on Up-selling

Kern Fire Provides  
Early Test for CSLB  
Disaster Relief Team

Offender Who Fled  
Contracting Crimes  
Returned to California,  
Sentenced

No License Numbers

## No License Numbers on Ads, Contracts is a Persistent Problem

Whether you're advertising your contracting business through online listings, on TV, radio, or print, you must include your license number as part of the ad ([Business and Professions Code section 7030.5](#)).

There are still a significant number of licensees who fail to disclose their license number when promoting themselves through advertising.

Disciplinary action can be taken if this law – intended to assure the public that you operate a CSLB-licensed business – is ignored.

The mandatory license number inclusion applies to all forms of advertising – even if it's a decal on the side of a business truck, or on a contract itself. Licensees are responsible for any omission, even if the license number is inadvertently left off by outside agencies hired to produce ads.

Licensees with commercially registered vehicles have additional specifications for listing their business name and contractor license number ([BPC section 7029.6](#)) on their fleet. The name and number must be in a clearly visible location on the vehicle (in letters of at least 72-point font or three-quarters of an inch high and wide) and the name that is displayed must be identical to the business name you provided to CSLB in your application.

The standards are higher for C-36 Plumbing, C-45 Sign, and C-57 Water Well Drilling contractors who use vehicles for business. They must post their permanent business address on the vehicle, in addition to the business name and contractor license number, and in a type size at least 1½ inches high ([BPC section 7029.5](#)).

Also, licensees must list the name of their business exactly as it appears in CSLB records for any advertisement, bid, or contract. The law forbids name style variations.

Licensees should use the [Application to Change Business Name or Address](#) form on the CSLB website to update changes to a business

on Ads, Contracts is a Persistent Problem

---

Sting Properties Needed to Help Fight Unlicensed Contracting

---

Contractors Sought as CSLB Industry Experts in Sacramento, Santa Clarita

---

Website on Title 20 Water-Saving Standards is Flush with Information

---

Public Works Contractors Must File Online Payroll Records With State

---

Publications Help Construction Industry, Workers in Mobile-Friendly Formats

---

Whether You Operate a Shovel or Backhoe, Get an Excavation Ticket First

---

Quick Quiz

---

CSLB Home

---

name, addresses, telephone numbers, and emails.

Take pride in your contractor's license. Promote your license and encourage consumers to check your license status on the CSLB website. This can help set you apart from your competition.



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[License Revocations](#) | [Past Issues](#)

California Contractors State License Board  
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**IN THIS EDITION:**

Chair's Report

Board Members Elect  
New Officer Slate for  
2016-17 Fiscal Year

Board Member Lamb  
Wraps Up Productive  
Decade of Public  
Service

Solar Contractors,  
Stay on the Sunny  
Side of the Rules

New Online Forms  
Speed Up HIS  
Registration Process

CSLB Keeping Watch  
on Legislation

CSLB Cracks Down  
on Up-selling

Kern Fire Provides  
Early Test for CSLB  
Disaster Relief Team

Offender Who Fled  
Contracting Crimes  
Returned to California,  
Sentenced

No License Numbers

## Sting Properties Needed to Help Fight Unlicensed Contracting

CSLB has stepped up the number of undercover sting operations it conducts around the state to catch unlicensed contractors, and needs more residential and commercial properties to use as sting sites.

The stings are conducted by CSLB's Statewide Investigative Fraud Teams (SWIFT) with the assistance of state or local law enforcement agencies. Every year, investigators arrest hundreds of unlicensed contractors through these undercover operations that are staged unannounced year-round throughout the state.

Recognizing that stings are one of CSLB's most effective weapons against illegal contracting, the Board gave the go-ahead to schedule more events to flush out phony contractors in 2016.

To offer a property, or for more information, contact:

**Northern SWIFT** (Sacramento), 916.255.2924

**Central SWIFT** (Fresno), 559.490.0580

**Southern SWIFT** (Norwalk), 562.345.7600





## IN THIS EDITION:

### Chair's Report

Board Members Elect  
New Officer Slate for  
2016-17 Fiscal Year

Board Member Lamb  
Wraps Up Productive  
Decade of Public  
Service

Solar Contractors,  
Stay on the Sunny  
Side of the Rules

New Online Forms  
Speed Up HIS  
Registration Process

CSLB Keeping Watch  
on Legislation

CSLB Cracks Down  
on Up-selling

Kern Fire Provides  
Early Test for CSLB  
Disaster Relief Team

Offender Who Fled  
Contracting Crimes  
Returned to California,  
Sentenced

No License Numbers

## Contractors Sought as CSLB Industry Experts in Sacramento, Santa Clarita



CSLB is putting out the call for veteran contractors in the Sacramento and Santa Clarita areas to join its Industry Expert Program, a group of trade professionals who assist CSLB in investigating consumer complaints.

In Sacramento, C-13 Fencing contractors are needed as Industry Experts (IEs), as are those holding **C-17 Glazing**, **C-23 Ornamental Metal**, and **C-39 Roofing** licenses.

In the Santa Clarita area, **C-22 Asbestos Abatement** contractors are needed to work as IEs with CSLB's Valencia Investigative office.

More cases involving asbestos handling and removal are expected in north Los Angeles County.

IEs serve as independent consultants to CSLB, and are compensated for their time. 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.



**IN THIS EDITION:**

Chair's Report

Board Members Elect  
New Officer Slate for  
2016-17 Fiscal Year

Board Member Lamb  
Wraps Up Productive  
Decade of Public  
Service

Solar Contractors,  
Stay on the Sunny  
Side of the Rules

New Online Forms  
Speed Up HIS  
Registration Process

CSLB Keeping Watch  
on Legislation

CSLB Cracks Down  
on Up-selling

Kern Fire Provides  
Early Test for CSLB  
Disaster Relief Team

Offender Who Fled  
Contracting Crimes  
Returned to California,  
Sentenced

No License Numbers

## Website on Title 20 Water-Saving Standards is Flush with Information

Licensees who work with plumbing fittings and fixtures should know that new, more stringent regulations have gone into effect for certain appliances covered under California's **Title 20** water efficiency standards.

Certain types of lavatory faucets and aerators, as well as showerheads, purchased or installed after July 1, 2016 are now required to operate at higher efficiencies to save water and energy. The new standards are called for under the **California Appliance Efficiency Regulations**, first approved in 1976 and updated regularly since that time.

The requirements are part of the California Code of Regulations, Title 20, Public Utilities and Energy, most recently updated in April 2016. "Title 20," as the rule is known, establishes water flow standards for lavatories, toilets, urinals, showerheads, faucets, and aerators in California homes and public areas.

A website set up through the California Statewide Codes & Standards Program offers free energy code training, tools, and resources to help contractors who work with appliances that must comply with the more stringent standards. The **Energy Code Ace** site is administered by the state's investor-owned utilities under the auspices of the state **Public**



on Ads, Contracts is a Persistent Problem

---

Sting Properties Needed to Help Fight Unlicensed Contracting

---

Contractors Sought as CSLB Industry Experts in Sacramento, Santa Clarita

---

Website on Title 20 Water-Saving Standards is Flush with Information

---

Public Works Contractors Must File Online Payroll Records With State

---

Publications Help Construction Industry, Workers in Mobile-Friendly Formats

---

Whether You Operate a Shovel or Backhoe, Get an Excavation Ticket First

---

Quick Quiz

---

CSLB Home

---

[Utilities Commission](#) and [California Energy Commission](#) (CEC). The site "decodes" the new standards set by Title 20, as well as the more comprehensive Title 24 energy savings mandate.

For those seeking information on Title 20, a [Plumbing Fittings and Fixtures Fact Sheet](#) can be downloaded on the Energy Code Ace website. Licensees also can view on-demand [video training](#) on certification, learn about using the CEC's [Modernized Appliance Efficiency Database](#) to determine if plumbing products conform with new standards, or email staff with questions.



---

[License Revocations](#) | [Past Issues](#)

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**IN THIS EDITION:**

Chair's Report

Board Members Elect  
New Officer Slate for  
2016-17 Fiscal Year

Board Member Lamb  
Wraps Up Productive  
Decade of Public  
Service

Solar Contractors,  
Stay on the Sunny  
Side of the Rules

New Online Forms  
Speed Up HIS  
Registration Process

CSLB Keeping Watch  
on Legislation

CSLB Cracks Down  
on Up-selling

Kern Fire Provides  
Early Test for CSLB  
Disaster Relief Team

Offender Who Fled  
Contracting Crimes  
Returned to California,  
Sentenced

No License Numbers

## Public Works Contractors Must File Online Payroll Records With State

Contractors and subcontractors on public works projects must file certified payroll records online with the California [Department of Industrial Relations](#) (DIR) beginning in August.

Enforcement of the requirement to submit certified payroll records using DIR's online system has started up again after an update was recently completed. DIR has additional compliance information on its [Public Works](#) page.



In a related matter, CSLB is reminding public works contractors that they must be registered with DIR for the current fiscal year (that started July 1, 2016) before bidding, being awarded or performing public works projects in California. Registered contractors who failed to renew by July 1, 2016, but continue working on public works after that date are subject to late fees and potential penalties.

Public agencies must confirm this registration before considering a bid or awarding a public works contract, and prime contractors are required to make sure their bid team members are registered.

More information is available through DIR's online [public works contractor registration](#) system.

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on Ads, Contracts is a Persistent Problem

---

Sting Properties Needed to Help Fight Unlicensed Contracting

---

Contractors Sought as CSLB Industry Experts in Sacramento, Santa Clarita

---

Website on Title 20 Water-Saving Standards is Flush with Information

---

Public Works Contractors Must File Online Payroll Records With State

---

Publications Help Construction Industry, Workers in Mobile-Friendly Formats

---

Whether You Operate a Shovel or Backhoe, Get an Excavation Ticket First

---

Quick Quiz

---

CSLB Home

---

The [Labor Enforcement Task Force](#) (LETF), of which CSLB is a member, has released a mobile device-friendly version of its online fact sheets, in [Spanish](#) and [English](#), to help employers in industries such as construction understand and follow the appropriate labor, licensing and payroll tax laws.

LETF also has produced a mobile version of its [booklet](#), "What are Your Rights as a Worker?" which covers such topics as minimum wage and overtime, rest and meal breaks, safety and health on the job, and benefits for those who are injured or unemployed. It also can be accessed on the LETF website in English or [Spanish](#) versions.

LETF's objective is to combat the underground economy in California that undercuts legitimate, tax-paying businesses such as contractors, and cheats the state of tax revenues that fund essential public services. CSLB investigators participate in LETF sweeps of construction sites to verify employee wages and check compliance with license, insurance, tax, and job safety regulations.



---

[License Revocations](#) | [Past Issues](#)

California Contractors State License Board  
P.O. Box 26000, Sacramento, CA 95826 | 800.321.CSLB (2752)

© 2016



**IN THIS EDITION:**

---

Chair's Report

---

Board Members Elect  
New Officer Slate for  
2016-17 Fiscal Year

---

Board Member Lamb  
Wraps Up Productive  
Decade of Public  
Service

---

Solar Contractors,  
Stay on the Sunny  
Side of the Rules

---

New Online Forms  
Speed Up HIS  
Registration Process

---

CSLB Keeping Watch  
on Legislation

---

CSLB Cracks Down  
on Up-selling

---

Kern Fire Provides  
Early Test for CSLB  
Disaster Relief Team

---

Offender Who Fled  
Contracting Crimes  
Returned to California,  
Sentenced

---

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**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

## Whether You Operate a Shovel or Backhoe, Get an Excavation Ticket First

No matter how minimal a project may seem, contractors who plan to dig or excavate are required to call 8-1-1 or file an online request at least two days beforehand with either the [Underground Service Alert of Northern California](#) (known as USA North 811) or [Underground Service Alert of Southern California](#) (aka DigAlert).

Here is the notification checklist:

- Call 8-1-1 or go online 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 receive 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 request is made, accurately outline the 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.
- If you accidentally strike a line, you must notify the affected utility, even if there is no visible damage. Internal damage to the pipe may have occurred that can lead to future problems.

USA North covers Northern/Central California and Nevada. DigAlert handles Southern California.



## IN THIS EDITION:

Chair's Report

Board Members Elect  
New Officer Slate for  
2016-17 Fiscal Year

Board Member Lamb  
Wraps Up Productive  
Decade of Public  
Service

Solar Contractors,  
Stay on the Sunny  
Side of the Rules

New Online Forms  
Speed Up HIS  
Registration Process

CSLB Keeping Watch  
on Legislation

CSLB Cracks Down  
on Up-selling

Kern Fire Provides  
Early Test for CSLB  
Disaster Relief Team

Offender Who Fled  
Contracting Crimes  
Returned to California,  
Sentenced

No License Numbers

## Quick Quiz

1. **True or False: A Home Improvement Salesperson (HIS) does not have to submit a new application if they change employers.**
2. **Swimming pool demolition is most appropriately performed by:**
  - a. C-21 – Building Moving/Demolition contractor
  - b. C-53 – Swimming Pool contractor
  - c. Both A and B
3. **True or False: An A – General Engineering contractor may drill a water well as long as it is part of an engineering project.**
4. **True or False: A C-22 – Asbestos Abatement contractor must hold an active registration with California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH).**
5. **The four-year experience requirement for licensure can be waived if:**
  - a. If the applicant has a college degree or certificates.
  - b. If the applicant has served as the qualifier on a license in the same classification they are currently applying for.
  - c. If the applicant holds another classification that is significantly related to the classification applied for.
  - d. All of the above.



on Ads, Contracts is a Persistent Problem

---

Sting Properties Needed to Help Fight Unlicensed Contracting

---

Contractors Sought as CSLB Industry Experts in Sacramento, Santa Clarita

---

Website on Title 20 Water-Saving Standards is Flush with Information

---

Public Works Contractors Must File Online Payroll Records With State

---

Publications Help Construction Industry, Workers in Mobile-Friendly Formats

---

Whether You Operate a Shovel or Backhoe, Get an Excavation Ticket First

---

Quick Quiz

---

CSLB Home

---

**6. True or False: The C-47 – General Manufactured Housing contractor may only set and install manufactured homes; repairs require the B – General Building classification.**

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**Answers:**

1: True – The HIS registration number stays the same; however, notice by the current employer must be submitted when an HIS is hired or leaves employment. 2: B – The C-53 – Swimming Pool contractor. The C-21 – Building Moving/Demolition classification is not appropriate, since a swimming pool is not considered a "building." 3: False – Only the C-57 – Well Drilling classification may drill a water well. 4: True. A C-22 – Asbestos Abatement license cannot be issued unless an applicant or contractor is duly licensed with DOSH. 5: B 6: False – The C-47 – General Manufactured Housing classification may alter, repair, and install manufactured homes.

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[License Revocations](#) | [Past Issues](#)