

Special Edition:  
HIC/HOME  
IMPROVEMENT  
CERTIFICATION

# CALIFORNIA • LICENSED • CONTRACTOR

DR. C. LANCE BARNETT, REGISTRAR

SPECIAL EDITION—MARCH 2000

GRAY DAVIS, GOVERNOR

## REPORT OF THE REGISTRAR

**I**s it really time for another issue of the California Licensed Contractor already? Yes and no. If this issue of the CLC seems early to you, you are correct. This Special Edition was designed to hit contractor mailboxes ahead of the regular issue schedule this year. You may be wondering what set of circumstances could prompt a government agency to actually move ahead of schedule, to work more efficiently, to get in front of the curve, to take the bull by the horns and . . . well, you get the picture. The set of circumstances at work here includes a fast-approaching deadline requiring all contractors who wish to perform home improvement work after July 1, 2000, to obtain Home Improvement Certification (HIC).

Two years ago when Home Improvement Certification became a matter of law, the Board ran a survey in the CLC asking contractors if they worked in the home improvement industry and if they planned to obtain Home Improvement Certification. The Board received a huge response (nearly 5,000 replies), that showed more than 95 percent of California's licensed contractors planned to become certified in Home Improvement. Moreover, at least 95 percent of responding contractors claimed Home Improvement as part of previous work. All this means the Board determined that over 265,000 contractors were interested in continuing their

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## The Nuts and Bolts of Home Improvement Certification



**A** lot has been said about Home Improvement Certification (HIC) since lawmakers passed legislation in 1997 requiring its development. Over the last two years, the Contractors State License Board has developed testing materials and methods, as well as prepared for literally hundreds of thousands of exams to be taken, processed and recorded. The Board has also notified interested parties about HIC requirements. However, with the deadline approaching, this couldn't be a better time to reiterate everything you ever wanted to know about home improvement certification and more.

### What is HIC?

HIC stands for Home Improvement Certification. Certification shows a working knowledge of Home Improvement Contract Law.



### Who must be certified?

Any and every contractor or subcontractor who engages in the business of home improvement or who provides goods or services for home improvement must be certified. This means that even when the prime contractor is certified, all subs on the job must also have separate certification.

### Whose idea was this anyway?

After close review of CSLB records, it was determined that an overwhelming portion of consumer complaints resulted from violations of Home Improvement Law. CSLB recognized that Home Improvement complaints are very often based on contractors' failure to understand Home Improve-

ment Law. With that in mind, the California State Legislature passed AB 1213 during the 1997-98 legislative session and then-Governor Pete Wilson signed it into law. This law mandates all contractors and subcontractors who perform home improvement work to be certified in Home Improvement by July 1, 2000.

### What is the purpose of this certification?

Home Improvement Certification was designed to ensure that all contractors who work in the home improvement industry have a complete working knowledge of Home Improvement Contract Law. The Home Improvement Contract is an invaluable tool if and when a dispute arises between the contractor and homeowner and can often be used to avoid dispute. As such, it is imperative that contractors know how to use it fully and properly.

### How do I become certified?

You must take an open book exam either by mail or on the Internet and submit applicable paperwork to the Board. The CSLB began mailing test packets to all licensed contractors last July. If you no longer have this packet, you may call (800) 321-CSLB to order another one. Or, if you prefer, you may log on to our website at [www.cslb.ca.gov](http://www.cslb.ca.gov) and take the exam online. For your convenience, all reference materials are also provided through this website. You may take the exam and use reference materials concurrently while on-line. Another added benefit to taking the exam online is that once you have passed the exam and mailed your HIC application to CSLB, you will receive your new pocket license, showing your

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Home Improvement Certification Deadline Approaches . . . .

# How To Get Your HIC ASAP

*If you haven't passed the Home Improvement Certification exam, you should circle July 1, 2000, on your calendar. This fast-approaching date is the deadline for certification!*

**The California Licensed Contractor**  
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**How To Reach Us**

**Location:** 9821 Business Park Drive,  
Sacramento California 95827-1703

**Mailing  
address:** P.O. Box 26000  
Sacramento CA 95826-0026

**Information:** (800) 321-CSLB (2752)

**Internet:** www.cslb.ca.gov

Gina Crawford, Editor

**Exam Content**

The exam's emphasis is on understanding and properly completing the components of the home improvement contract. Because the contract inevitably becomes the prevailing documentation in the event of a dispute over a contractor's work or price, being familiar with this legal instrument is important for any contractor engaging in even the simplest home improvement. The reference guide *Home Improvement Certification Reference Booklet* was mailed to all contractors last summer along with an HIC packet. This booklet should be used to prepare for the exam. If you no longer have the reference guide, it is available on-line or may be ordered by calling (800) 321-CSLB.

There are several versions of the exam. Each version contains the same number of questions devoted to each topic, although the questions themselves will differ from version to version. A breakdown of exam topics can be found inside the front cover of the *Home Improvement Certification Reference Booklet*.

While you do not have to answer all 20 questions correctly to pass the exam, the benchmark is high. You must achieve a score of 90 percent or more (18 of 20 correct answers) to pass the exam. Blank answers will count against you so be sure to fill in all 20 spaces on the answer sheet.

**Exam Methods**

Taking the exam couldn't be easier. You may either complete and return the answer sheet that accompanies every *Home Improvement Certification Reference Booklet* or take the exam on the Internet. Ultimately, you may choose the exam method that best fits your needs, however, the Board's Testing Unit recommends taking the exam on-line for faster results and service. Continue reading for instructions on how to take the exam on-line and in printed format.

**Taking the Exam On-Line**

To take the exam on-line simply go to the Board's website at [www.cslb.ca.gov](http://www.cslb.ca.gov) and follow the links to the exam. After entering your license and Social Security number on the appropriate screen, you will gain immediate access to the version of the exam that has been randomly assigned to you. Note that in order to score the exam, your computer should be equipped with Netscape 3 or Netscape 4.5 and higher (Netscape versions between 3 and 4.5 do not always work), or Internet Explorer 4.0 or higher. Other browsers may or may not work.



If you do not have access to the Internet at home or work, check at your local public library. Most libraries have computers with Internet access available for use in 30-minute blocks of time. Even better—using these computers is free. You need not be a computer expert, or even have much experience with a PC to take the exam on-line. Once you are logged on to the website, the instructions are clear and easy. When taking the exam, just make sure the pointer is on the correct response and click the mouse button. After completing all 20 questions of the exam, click on the SCORE MY EXAM button for immediate feedback. When you have passed the exam, the computer will present an application that you must complete, print, sign and return to CSLB Headquarters at P.O. Box 26000, Sacramento, California 95826.

**Important: Even after you pass the exam, you will not be certified until the Board receives your application and posts your results. This process takes up to two weeks when taking the exam on-line and may take longer as**

**CSLB BOARD MEETINGS**

**April 26, 2000**  
Board Meeting—Los Angeles

**July 26-27, 2000**  
Board Meeting—San Diego

the deadline nears. To assure timely certification, please complete the Internet exam and submit your application as soon as possible.

Occasionally, a qualifier taking the exam on-line may not be able to see the application after hitting the SCORE button. If this happens to you, don't panic. Simply log on to the exam again. If you have passed the exam (as has been the case virtually every time this glitch has occurred), you will be taken immediately to the application screen that indicates your successful completion of the exam. At this point you should complete and print the application. If you are unable to print the application from your computer you will receive further instruction via your monitor. Note: Individuals who have passed the exam on-line will not be given another opportunity to take the exam.

In the event that you do not pass the exam on-line the first time, you may retake the same exam immediately as many times as necessary — or, when using the library's computer, until your 30 minutes are up! In the latter case, check with the librarian to schedule additional time.

**Taking the Exam on Paper**

If you choose to take the exam on paper, the Board's Testing Unit recommends that you photocopy your answer sheet prior to submitting it. Once you submit an answer sheet for scoring it cannot be returned to you and we cannot answer any questions about your answers. Remember, test questions are printed on **both sides** of the page. Be sure to answer all 20 questions. After completing the exam, mail your answer sheet and signed application to CSLB in the pre-addressed envelope that came with the exam. **Important: You are**



not certified until CSLB has: 1) received your testing material, 2) scored the exam and 3) posted the results. This process takes longer for paper exams than for Internet exams. Paper exams currently take six to eight weeks to fully process and may take longer as the deadline nears. The Board suggests contractors taking their exam on paper submit their answer sheets and applications no later than **May 1, 2000 to ensure certification in time for the July 1 deadline.**



If you pass the exam you will receive notification from the Board in the form of an updated pocket license showing affirmative HIC status. This will arrive in your mailbox approximately six to eight weeks after the Board receives your passing exam and application.

However, if you do not pass, CSLB will send you another answer sheet to complete and mail back again. In lieu of an answer-by-answer response, you will also receive a breakdown of how well you scored on each of the nine HIC categories covered by the exam. If the Board is aware that the qualifier needs a full replacement HIC packet, either because a request has been made or because the full packet was submitted to CSLB along with the answer sheet, CSLB will provide that too. Either way, the turn-around time for this process is between 6 and 8 weeks. Be aware: as July 1 approaches and larger numbers of contractors take the exam to meet the deadline, it may take longer to score your exam and return the results. You may significantly reduce the delay in getting your exam results and updated pocket license by taking the exam on-line. With the HIC deadline quickly approaching, the sooner you get started, the better.

CONTRACTOR EDUCATION CORNER

**The Business of Construction**

In the wake of the highly successful Contractor Education Seminars that have left contractors asking for more time devoted to an already 60+ minute session entitled "Avoid Being Sued", a more in-depth course has been developed. This four hour workshop is sponsored by William Dexter, Director of Cal Poly's Center for Construction Education and Mary S. Jones, attorney, arbitrator and mediator.

**Mastering the Business Side of Construction**

Learn to identify and eliminate construction risks, manage construction disputes within your contract, improve and develop customer relations and avoid the pitfalls of litigation. Find out the benefits of mediation and arbitration, obtain samples of effective contract language, receive handouts and more.

- Canoga Park – April 13, 2000
- San Francisco – May 11, 2000
- San Luis Obispo – May 24, 2000
- San Diego – June 6, 2000
- Orange County – June 14, 2000

Cost: \$99 pre-paid, \$125 at the door. Programs held evenings only, 6-10 p.m.

For more information or to register, call (310) 589-2597 or check the website at [wfdexter.com/construction\\_workshops.htm](http://wfdexter.com/construction_workshops.htm).

**Successful Business Workshops**

The U.S. Small Business Administration, Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) offers a series of monthly workshops and seminars designed to help new business owners and operators conduct their businesses successfully. SCORE is staffed by volunteers, all of whom have retired from successful careers as owners or executives in a wide variety of businesses.

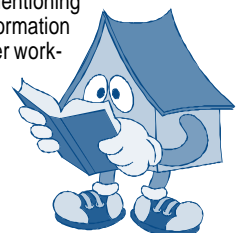
**Remodeling & Construction Trades Workshop**

This two-hour seminar is designed for contractors and sub-contractors in all construction specialty trades. The workshop includes information on getting new business leads, developing accurate estimates and arranging bank financing. Harold Hammerman, author of "Running Your Remodeling Business" conducts the seminar. A copy of his book is free to attendees.

Offered every third Wednesday of the month, the next seminar will be held:

Wednesday, April 19, 9:30-11:30 a.m.  
330 North Brand Blvd., Glendale

Cost: \$20. A 50 percent discount is available to those mentioning CSLB. For more information about this and other workshops offered by SCORE or to register for a seminar, please call (818) 552-3206.



## The Nuts and Bolts of Home Improvement Certification

(Continued from page 1)

HIC status, faster than if you had taken the exam on paper. **Note: Regardless of the testing method chosen, contractors will not be certified until exam results are posted with CSLB. Therefore, when taking the exam on-line, certification is achieved only after the contractor submits the completed application. Only then are results posted by the Board, not when passing status is indicated on-line. When taking the exam on paper, certification takes longer because the exam must first be scored prior to posting results.**

### *How will I know if I passed the HIC exam?*

If you take the exam on-line, you will receive your results immediately via your computer. If results are positive your screen will display an application for HIC. After the Board receives your completed application, (which you complete on-line, print, sign and mail) you will receive a new pocket license indicating affirmative HIC status in approximately two weeks. **Important: Even after passing the exam on-line, you are not certified until the Board receives your application and posts your results.** If you take the exam on paper and mail in your answers, the turn-around time for scoring your exam and sending out a new pocket license is approximately 6 to 8 weeks. This time may increase as the deadline nears. **Again, you are not actually certified until your exam is scored and favorable results are posted. You will receive an updated pocket license as evidence of posting.**



### *Once I obtain Home Improvement Certification (HIC), will I be able to perform work in other classifications if they are part of a home improvement project?*

**NO!** Obtaining HIC only allows you to continue doing the same type of work you were doing prior to HIC. HIC does not extend the scope of your contractors license at all. It is a mandatory addition to your current license if the scope of your work includes home improvements. This is true even if home improvement work is only a very minor part of your overall business, or even one job.

### *What is the deadline to be certified?*

Those contractors and subcontractors who are required to be certified must be certified by July 1, 2000 in order to legally continue to perform home improvement contracting work. This means contractors must take the exam early to allow time for the results to be posted at the Board. **Contractors taking the exam on paper should mail in their tests no later than May 1, 2000 to assure scoring, posting and certification prior to July 1.** Contractors choosing to take the exam on-line should also take the exam as early as possible, allowing at least two weeks for the Board to receive the completed application and post results.

### *What if I don't become certified?*

Uncertified contractors and subcontractors who accept home improvement work will be in violation of the law on and after July 1, 2000. These contractors will be open to citations and fines ranging from \$50 to \$2,000. Repeated violations of the law can result in an accusation being filed against the contractor to suspend or revoke their license. Furthermore, CSLB staff has strong reason to believe that any contract for home improvement entered into by a non-certified, yet otherwise licensed contractor or subcontractor, can be deemed unenforceable by the courts (See story on page 5.) This means that you could be forfeiting your right to payment for

a home improvement job if you perform the job without Home Improvement Certification. Or you may have to forfeit lucrative home improvement jobs until you receive your HIC. **If you are not certified by July 1, 2000 you must cease to accept Home Improvement work until you obtain certification.**

### *How long does the exam take?*

The time it takes individual contractors to review material and take the exam will vary. The 16-page *Home Improvement Certification Reference Booklet* should be used to study for the 20-question exam. Be sure to study the information and questions carefully. The Board is aware of several instances when, based on previous experience alone, contractors have been sure of an answer only to find out that their understanding over the years was incorrect. Fortunately, there is no limit on the number of times you may take the examination. You may keep taking it until you pass. However, it's to your advantage to make full use of the exam and accompanying reference material as valuable learning devices. So use them!

### *When will I receive my pocket license showing my HIC status?*

After you pass the exam on-line, you must print and sign the completed HIC application and mail it to the Contractors State License Board at P.O. Box 26000, Sacramento, CA 95826. When your results are posted in CSLB's system, you are officially certified. You will receive your new pocket license indicating certification approximately two weeks after the Board receives your completed application.

If you choose to take the exam on paper, you will receive your updated pocket license approximately six to eight weeks after we receive your successfully completed answer sheet and signed application.

## Licensing and Enforcement Implications of HIC

As of July 1, 2000, performing home improvement work without Home Improvement Certification (HIC) is cause for disciplinary action. Therefore, it is absolutely critical that contractors who wish to continue working in the home improvement industry obtain HIC.

Studying for the exam will familiarize contractors with the legal requirements of entering into a home improvement contract. However, after July 1 of this year, even when a contractor does everything else right in preparing a contract and homeowner for an upcoming job, if the contractor lacks HIC, the contractor will be in violation of the law. This is important for all contractors to know.

**Special note to subcontractors: You are not exempt! Subcontractors who perform home improvement work are also required to hold their own, separate Home Improvement Certification even when the prime contractor is Home Improvement Certified.**

The upcoming HIC requirement has been reported extensively over the last two years. Articles have regularly appeared in the *California Licensed Contractor*, notification has appeared on the Board's website and has been mailed to all California licensed contractors. Because there has been so much preparation for HIC as well as an 18 month period during which HIC was not required but could be obtained, the enforcement unit of CSLB will begin citing violators immediately following the HIC deadline of July 1, 2000.

This means that when a contractor is found to have entered into a home improvement contract without appropriate certification, the contractor is subject to a citation whose maximum fine is \$2000. Along with a fine, citations result in notation on the



contractor's license record. The notation is a matter of public record that remains associated with the license indefinitely. CSLB makes public records available through its website and discloses information by phone when consumers call to check on a contractor's license.

If a contractor chooses to appeal a citation, the matter will be heard by an Administrative Law Judge. In the event the contractor continues to engage in home improvement work without HIC, CSLB will send the case to the Attorney General asking for license suspension or revocation.

**Therefore, if a contractor does not have HIC as of July 1, 2000, he or she must cease bidding on, performing and completing home improvement work until properly certified.**

Michael A. Brown, Chief of the Licensing Division, encourages all contractors who operate in the home improvement field to obtain their certification without delay. Effective July 1, 2000, contractors who are performing home improvement work without certification are subject to disciplinary action.

Brown also pointed out that under certain conditions, the Contractors License Law may prevent a contractor from maintaining any court action to recover compensation. Specifically, a contractor must be able to show that he or she was "*duly licensed . . . at all times during the performance of [the] contract . . .*"

There is no way of knowing how the courts will rule on the issue of compensation for home improvement work if a contractor has failed to obtain HIC. At the very least,

failure to hold HIC when it is required raises the question of whether or not the contractor was "*duly licensed*" during the performance of the work.

As Brown states: "The best approach is to obtain HIC prior to July 1, 2000, and avoid it ever becoming an issue. All it takes is a little time to read the booklet and take the 20-question open-book exam. Contractors who perform home improvement work, whether a prime or subcontractor, need to know the information that is covered by the HIC exam."

### Trade Exam Update

Last fall, the *California Licensed Contractor* reported that the CSLB had committed to updating all licensing examinations over the next five years. With over 40 license classifications, this is a huge undertaking that cannot be successfully completed without the assistance and input of contractors currently working in the trades. An Occupational Analysis of the Trades is required before the Testing Unit can update a specific licensing examination.

The Board is now entering into the first phase of this process and needs your help. A sample of B and Asbestos Abatement (ASB) contractors as well as contractors in the classifications of C-10, C-27, C-36, C-39 and C-54 may have recently received or will soon receive questionnaires regarding their trade. When completed, these questionnaires will be used to form the Occupational Analysis of the Trade. If you receive such a questionnaire please complete and return it to CSLB in the postage paid envelope. Your input is critical to ensuring that the updated examinations are current, accurate and relevant. The Board greatly appreciates your taking the time to assist us with examination development.

## Protect Your Lien Rights

Last year, Assemblyman Honda introduced a bill setting up a recovery fund for unpaid lien claimants. The bill did not pass. But companion legislation inadvertently made a slight change to the Preliminary Notice requirement. This change requires that the "Notice to Owner" be revised to include a suggestion to property owners that they require contractors to furnish and record a receipt indicating that the contractor has been paid in full. This new provision is irrelevant without the companion legislation. Nonetheless, many attorneys practicing in the field have recommended that those who send Preliminary Notices revise them to include the new requirement. These attorneys

worry that a court may find the Preliminary Notice to be insufficient under a strict reading of the law and dismiss the lien claim on that basis.

In order to address this mistake, Assemblyman Honda has proposed urgency legislation to remove the irrelevant provision and direct courts that a lien claimant's failure to include the provision does not invalidate the Preliminary Notice.

Note: The legislation (AB 576) has not yet passed. Thus, strictly construed, the law still requires this irrelevant language. Until AB 576 is passed, contractors should understand that there is some risk that lien rights could be compromised.

## Report of the Registrar

*(Continued from page 1)*

home improvement work and would therefore need the HIC.

Now, with little more than three months before the deadline, the night is far spent, the day is at hand. To date, we have issued Home Improvement Certification to approximately 78,000 contractors, a fraction of those who need to be certified. As an agency here to serve California's licensed contractors, CSLB has a longstanding reputation for being prepared for the opportunities that come its way. Given this history, the Board is primed for what could turn out to be the mad rush of nearly 200,000 contractors clamoring for HIC over the next three months. In fact, more than ready, the Board hopes the rush happens. In dedicating this issue of

*the California Licensed Contractor to HIC and related issues, and in sending it to contractors as early as possible, CSLB strongly encourages all contractors who benefit from working in the home improvement industry to take necessary steps to continue working in the field, legally, with Home Improvement Certification.*

*So continue reading, for within these pages you will find everything you ever wanted to know about HIC—and how to get it—but were afraid to ask. In fact, we'll tell you just about everything but the answers to the test questions, and we'll even tell you where to find those.*

*As we resume our regular production schedule, keep a lookout for the Spring issue of CLC, coming soon to a mailbox near you. It will include more of our regular features and some interesting new ones too!*

## Survey Responses

Our thanks to contractors who have taken the time to answer our survey (Winter 2000) and express their opinions about the *California Licensed Contractor*! We have received several hundred responses and have begun tallying them. The information you provided will assist us in deliver-

ing a newsletter that is pertinent, informative and interesting to our readers! If you haven't yet submitted your response, it's not too late. Be sure to look in the next issue of the *California Licensed Contractor* for results of the survey and subsequent plans for improvement!

## Change in Cost Index for Type B Construction

Government Code Section 66452.6(a) establishes that an approved or conditionally approved subdivision map shall expire 24 months after its approval. However, the law provides several means of extending the life of the map if certain conditions are met. One such condition is the requirement of the subdivider to make a certain amount of public improvements, such as streets, traffic controls, bridges, overcrossings, etc.

The minimum amount of public improvements necessary to qualify a map for extension is based on \$125,000 multiplied by the current cost index. To reflect inflation, the cost index is adjusted annually at the January meeting of the State Office of Local Assistance. In January of this year, the State Allocation Board determined the new cost index to be 1.37 resulting in a new baseline of \$171,250. Therefore, subdivisions that require \$171,250 or more in public improvements are eligible for a subdivision map extension. Based on necessary action by the Registrar of the Contractors State License Board, the new baseline went into effect March 1, 2000.

## Revocation Clarification

In the last issue of the *California Licensed Contractor*, our License Revocations column reported that A-1 All American Roofing Company of Carson, license #698158, has been revoked for a variety of violations. The correct name of the company that holds the revoked license #698158 is A-1 All American Roofing Co M C Inc., also of Carson, California.

**A-1 All American Roofing Co Inc. of Carson California, license #642945, is current, active and in good standing.**

*We sincerely apologize for any difficulties this error may have caused anyone.*

## Continuing Education Survey

The Contractors State License Board is undertaking a study to evaluate the industry's requests for voluntary continuing education courses in business and technology. The Registrar will compile the results of the survey and present them to the Board, to be used in the implementation of a statewide continuing education program. Please complete the questionnaire below and fax it to (916) 255-1395. Also include any comments you have.

1. In what area(s) of the business side of construction would you like to be better informed? *(check all that apply):*

- Estimating and scheduling work
- Construction law
- Managing the work
- Customer service
- Dealing with disputes
- Mechanics' liens
- Insurance

2. My greatest challenges in the construction industry are with *(check all that apply):*

- General/subcontractor relations
- Changes
- Job closure and getting paid
- Under-trained workforce
- Owner's expectations
- Vague plans and specifications
- Contracts
- Job cost accounting
- Bidding the work
- Complying with complex laws
- Complaints and lawsuits

3. I would like to know more about *(check all that apply):*

- Reading plans
- New products
- Waterproofing buildings
- Structural concepts
- Where to get technical advice
- Dealing with architects and engineers
- Building codes

4. For me, the contracting business would be easier if . . . *(complete the statement)*

Owners \_\_\_\_\_

Subcontractors \_\_\_\_\_

General contractors \_\_\_\_\_

(Other) \_\_\_\_\_

5. I would attend a continuing education class if it were held:

- During the week anytime
- During the week in the evening
- On Saturdays
- On the Internet

6. I would be willing to pay a reasonable tuition for a well-presented seminar with study material.

Yes  No

7. I would be interested in teaching a class.

Yes  No

8. Company data:

Name *(optional)* \_\_\_\_\_

License classification \_\_\_\_\_

Number of employees \_\_\_\_\_

Residential  Commercial

Years in Business \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to be notified of contractor seminars?

Yes  No

How would you like to be notified ?

Fax  E-mail  Other \_\_\_\_\_

## You Count!

The Contractors State License Board joins the Department of Consumer Affairs and Governor Gray Davis in encouraging everyone to participate in the upcoming Census 2000. The Census Bureau is constitutionally required to count each person living in the United States every ten years. April 1, 2000, is Census Day—the date used for the official count. All answers are based on what will be or what was true on that date. You will soon receive or may have recently received your official census questionnaire.

The census is important. Information obtained through the census about the population of your community and the State of California is used to make significant decisions regarding state and federal expenditures and services for businesses, health care, infrastructure, schools, etc. It has been determined that in 1990, California had the largest undercount (people missed by the census) of all 50 states. As a result, Californians lost about \$2.2 billion in federal funds

that otherwise would have been spent in California on various projects and services. This time around, the stakes are even higher.

If Californians do not fully participate in the 2000 census, we could lose over \$3 billion in federal funds during the next decade.

Your census information is absolutely 100 percent confidential. The U.S. Census Bureau is legally prohibited from sharing personal census information with any other public or private individuals or organizations. This means that by law, your answers on the census questionnaire cannot be given to anyone—person or agency, public or private—including the Internal Revenue Service, courts, police, welfare agencies or the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Confidentiality is guaranteed, so participating in the census is completely safe.

The 2000 census will involve the government's largest peacetime commitment of human resources in the history of America. California and the U.S. Census Bureau are making unprecedented efforts to encourage

everyone to participate in the census. But these efforts will only make a difference if Californians respond. So, please, when you receive your official census questionnaire in March, take a few minutes to complete the form and then mail it to the U.S. Census Bureau promptly. Employers please also encourage your crew members, subs and day laborers to participate. Everyone who lives in California, regardless of citizenship status, must participate to maximize the effectiveness of the census. Ultimately, participating in Census 2000 is a simple and safe way for all Californians to work together to improve the state. Please do your part. After all, it's your future. Don't leave it blank.

For additional information, call the California Complete Count Campaign in Los Angeles (323) 965-2943 or Sacramento (916) 323-3301. Or visit either California's census-related website at [www.census.ca.gov](http://www.census.ca.gov) or the U.S. Census Bureau's website at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).



## Home Improvement Certification deadline is July 1, 2000!

PRSRSTSD  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Sacramento, CA  
Permit No. 434

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[www.cslb.ca.gov](http://www.cslb.ca.gov)

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License Board  
P.O. Box 26000  
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California 95826



SPECIAL EDITION—MARCH 2000

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