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**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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NASCLA ANNOUNCES 2021 NATIONAL COORDINATED ENFORCEMENT EFFORT *THE OPERATION INCLUDED 8 STATE MEMBERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY, TARGETING UNLICENSED CONTRACTORS*

PHOENIX, AZ – JULY 1, 2021

The National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies (NASCLA) participated in a national coordinated enforcement effort the weeks of June 7 – 25, 2021, which included 8 NASCLA State Members who took part in this event across the country. States with regulatory agencies participating included: Arizona, California, Florida, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nevada, North Carolina, and Texas.

The national coordinated enforcement effort focused on elevating the regulatory agency's presence in the community and nationally. The goal of our state members was to come together in a united partnership to promote both consumer and public protection through the licensing and/or registration of contractors and tradesmen. The enforcement effort involved state public information departments, investigative departments, executive directors/officers and the public media.

This nationally coordinated collaboration among our state members provided the opportunity to protect the consumers, deter illegal construction activity and level the playing field for legitimate contractors in the construction industry. Along with combating the increased illegal unlicensed activity nationally, the intention was to warn consumers that they need to be aware of these activities for regulatory compliance.

Based on joint coordinated enforcement efforts during the weeks of June 7 – 25, 2021, NASCLA State Members reported a total of **538** that were found non-compliant with state licensing requirements. Administrative citations, criminal notices, legal actions, additional investigations, and more have been issued by the state contractor licensing agencies. The following regulatory agency statistics were reported by the NASCLA State Members based on their national coordinated enforcement efforts:



On Friday, June 18, 2021, the **Arizona Registrar of Contractors (AZ ROC)** performed a statewide enforcement effort aimed at educating businesses and property owners about Arizona's contracting laws. AZ ROC's participation represented one of many states participating in their own efforts, all in coordination with the National Association of Contractor Licensing Agencies (NASCLA).

AZ ROC dedicated 15 two-person teams of investigators to make contact with contractors, unlicensed entities and property owners to increase outreach, provide education, and when necessary, issue warnings or violations.

The 30 investigators concentrated efforts in Maricopa, Coconino, Yavapai, Gila, Pinal, Pima, Santa Cruz and Cochise counties and made contact with 236 individuals, including 30 homeowners, 184 contractors, 9 unlicensed entities, 5 business property owners, 5 building officials and 3 law enforcement officers.

The vast majority of contacts are described as educational in nature. The AZ ROC did however issue over 30 warning letters for violations such as contracting without a license, aiding and abetting unlicensed entities and working outside the scope of a license.

Director of the Arizona Registrar of Contractors Jeff Fleetham stated, "A remodeling project is one of the most expensive things a home or property owner will do, and yet many are unaware the contractor they hire needs a license. The goal of concentrated efforts like this and the territory management our investigators do every day is to make sure Arizona property owners and business know Arizona's contracting laws and where they can go with questions."

[View the Arizona Registrar of Contractors Full Press Release](#)



A series of statewide stings and sweeps conducted by the **California Contractors State License Board (CSLB)** has revealed that unlicensed activity was not slowed by the pandemic.

During the operation, 74 people were cited for unlicensed contracting. One of the many ways unlicensed contractors put homeowners at risk is because they do not carry workers' compensation insurance, making consumers liable if someone is injured on the job.

"Licensed contractors have proven experience, qualifications and verifiable business credentials to do the job right," said David Fogt, CSLB Registrar. "This enforcement effort shows that even in an industry thriving after the pandemic there are still unlicensed contractors looking to take advantage of consumers," Fogt said.

From June 7 to 25, 2021, CSLB partnered with local law enforcement to conduct four undercover sting operations in El Cajon, San Diego County; Montclair, San Bernardino County; St. Helena, Napa County; and in Visalia, Tulare County. Undercover stings target unlicensed contractors, with investigators contacting the suspects through their advertisements.

The suspected unlicensed operators came to the sting locations to place bids on projects including concrete, electrical, flooring, kitchen and bathroom remodeling, landscaping, painting, plumbing, roofing, and tree services. As a result, a total of 56 legal actions were filed and 49 people are accused of contracting without a license. Unlicensed contractors can face penalties of up to 6 months in jail and/or a fine of up to \$15,000 if they bid or contract for work valued at more than \$500.

[View the California Contractors State License Board's Full Press Release](#)



The **Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR)** licenses and regulates more than one million Florida businesses and professionals, from real estate agents and veterinarians to contractors and cosmetologists. Protecting the public from unlicensed activity is one of DBPR's top priorities. DBPR regularly performs "sweeps" of regulated businesses and professionals to ensure they are working within the constraints of their licensees.

From June 7 – 25, 2021, the Division of Regulation conducted a statewide sweep targeting unlicensed construction and electrical contractors. The sweeps were performed by 10 regional field offices and netted a total of 169 unannounced site visits with 489 license checks of construction and electrical contractors.

Additionally, the Division of Regulation's Gainesville field office performed an enforcement operation, where they provided individuals the opportunity to offer services that require a license. These individuals often provide a bid, proposal, or performance of the service to an undercover investigator and/or law enforcement personnel. Once confirmed that the individuals are unlicensed to provide such services, cases are initiated against them.

As a result of all sweeps and enforcement operations, 55 cases were initiated.

[View the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation's Full Press Release](#)



The **Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI)** participated with the National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies (NASCLA) in a national coordinated

enforcement effort the weeks of June 7 – 25, which included 8 NASCLA State Members that took part in this event across the country.

In addition to their regular casework, investigators with DLI's Construction Codes and Licensing Division's Enforcement unit devoted time each day to search various online platforms for unlicensed residential building contractors offering services for which licensure is required. Many of the consumer complaints DLI receives relating to unlicensed contractors are from homeowners who found their contractor on websites such as Craigslist, Facebook, Home Advisor, Neighborhood and Thumbtack.

During the period of the coordinated effort, DLI investigators identified 56 unlicensed contractors and have so far opened 28 formal cases that are now being investigated for possible enforcement action. However, in many cases the contractor provides only a first name and phone number, which makes identifying them difficult for enforcement purposes and points out the danger these unlicensed individuals pose to homeowners, who should always get a contractor's full name and address and check their state license status before considering hiring them.

"Minnesota homeowners are able to obtain compensation from the Contractor Recovery Fund if they suffer a loss as a result of a contractor's failure to perform," said DLI Commissioner Roslyn Robertson, "but only if the contractor they hire is licensed."

[View the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry's Full Press Release](#)



The **Mississippi State Board of Contractors** filed complaints against 22 contractors for working without a license as part of a national enforcement effort to combat unlicensed construction activity conducted from June 7 – 25, 2021. The nationwide effort was coordinated by the National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies (NASCLA).

In Mississippi, enforcement staff visited more than 350 jobsites, filed 22 complaints and are investigating an additional 41 cases, announced MSBOC Executive Director Stephanie Lee. “Participation in the national effort highlights the work performed by enforcement officers on a daily basis. MSBOC placed a special emphasis on the important role contractor licensing plays in ensuring public safety and consumer protection by making 275 educational contacts with consumers,” said Lee.

Contractors must hold a Mississippi contractor’s license in order to perform most work on homes and commercial structures. Licensing protects public health, safety and welfare by ensuring contractors meet minimum standards and are properly insured to cover liability and worker’s compensation claims.

[View the Mississippi State Board of Contractors’ Full Press Release](#)



During the weeks of June 7 – 25, 2021, the National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies (NASCLA) brought together NASCLA State Members from across the country in a national coordinated enforcement effort. While formal efforts were not constructed by the **North Carolina State Board of Examiners of Electrical Contractors**, during these 3 weeks, the agency did receive 26 complaints by consumers alleging charges against applicants, non-licensees, licensees, or qualified individuals with the Board.

“Our mission is to protect the life, health and property of the public through examination of applicants, education of licensees and discipline of individuals to promote quality electrical contracting in accordance with the North Carolina General Statutes,” said Tim Norman, Executive Director of the North Carolina State Board of Examiners of Electrical Contractors. “The efforts made by NASCLA and its members to support the licensing of contractors and tradesmen is extremely important to the consumer, to increase awareness of the potential risks of hiring unlicensed and to deter illegal construction activity.”



Over the past 3 weeks, the **Nevada State Contractors Board's (NSCB)** Enforcement Division has been engaged in a multi-state effort to combat individuals unlawfully performing construction related activities in the State of Nevada, including those advertising without a license (NRS 624.720) and contracting without a license (NRS 624.700). Investigators from the Board's Compliance and Special Investigations Divisions teamed up to perform 121 site visits during the 3-week time period where violations of NRS Chapter 624 were validated among licensed and unlicensed contractors.

The Board's investigations resulted in 20 criminal cases for unlawful construction activities; 8 cases related to violations of industry regulations under NRS 624; and the issuance of 13 Cease and Desist Orders, 3 criminal citations and 4 violation letters, which are generally administered to first-time offenders whose actions do not pose an immediate or serious threat to the public's health, safety, and welfare. Only 2 cases opened during the reporting period were found to have no violation established.

"Every day, Nevada consumers are harmed by the misleading and dishonest practices of unlicensed contractors. Nationwide efforts that collaboratively raise awareness of deceptive and unlawful contractor tactics are vital to the ongoing protection of the public's health, safety, and welfare," explains NSCB Executive Officer Margi A. Grein. "The cases filed with the Contractors Board reflect a small portion of the actual harm that is taking place within Nevada's communities. We want to use this opportunity to reinforce the hiring of licensed contractors, but also to encourage consumers to file complaints with our Board when they experience problems with their contractors, which allows us to investigate the facts and take appropriate action."

[View the Nevada State Contractors Board's Full Press Release](#)



The **Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR)** will file at least 49 enforcement cases against unlicensed electricians and air conditioning contractors as a result of the agency's participation in a national operation aimed at deterring illegal, unlicensed activity.

"If you hire an unlicensed contractor, you're putting your family's safety at risk. Licensed electricians and air conditioning contractors have completed training and passed examinations that cover regulations and building codes designed to protect health and safety," said Brian E. Francis, TDLR executive director. "They've also had criminal background checks and have liability insurance to cover damage or injuries. Always check the [TDLR website](#) to make sure that your electrician or air conditioning contractor is licensed."

TDLR enforcement investigators ran a one-week undercover sting in the Houston area. During the sting, TDLR investigators contacted people who advertised electrical and air conditioning services in local newspapers or on social media and did not include license information in the ads as they're required to do by state law. Investigators filed 49 enforcement cases against unlicensed electricians and air conditioning contractors who offered to perform unlicensed work during the sting.

In addition, TDLR Regulatory Program Management (RPM) electrician program staff and members of the TDLR Anti-Trafficking Unit (ATU) visited 45 construction sites in the Central Texas area where electrical work was being performed, checking 621 people who were working as electricians. The vast majority of those working as electricians were licensed.

[View the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation's Full Press Release](#)



“The **National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies (NASCLA)** coordinated a national enforcement effort during the weeks of June 7 – 25, 2021. NASCLA had 8 state members participate in this impactful event across the country. The goal of this operation was to elevate consumer protection and deter illegal construction practices. The shared commitment of our state members brought awareness to unlicensed activity and spotlighted the contractor state licensing and registration agencies nationally. NASCLA would like to thank all the state members for their continued partnership and national enforcement efforts as we forge ahead to protect the public and combat unlicensed activity,” stated Angie Whitaker, CAE, NASCLA Executive Director.

NASCLA encourages consumers when looking for a construction contractor to:

- Verify the contractor is actively licensed; always hire a licensed contractor
- Get 2-3 estimates and don’t automatically accept the lowest bid
- Check at least 3 references
- Require a written contract
- Don’t make a large down payment; make payments as work is completed
- Monitor the job in progress
- Don’t make the final payment until the job is complete
- Keep all paperwork related to your job

The association would like to reinforce the message to consumers always *Hire a Licensed Contractor and Verify Your Contractor is Licensed*. To review our consumer awareness information, please visit our website located www.nascla.org/page/ConsumerReferenceLib. To verify your contractor is licensed and in good standing with the state contractor board, please visit our website located at www.nascla.org/page/LicensingInfo or contact your local state contractor licensing board for state specific information.

For more information on NASCLA, please visit our website at www.nascla.org or contact the association office at (623) 587-9354.