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**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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NASCLA ANNOUNCES 2019 NATIONAL COORDINATED ENFORCEMENT EFFORT
THE OPERATION INCLUDED 11 STATE MEMBERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY, TARGETING UNLICENSED CONTRACTORS

PHOENIX, AZ – JUNE 27, 2019

The National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies NASCLA participated in a national coordinated enforcement effort the weeks of June 3 – 21, 2019 which included 11 NASCLA State Members who took part in this event across the country. The states that participated were Arizona, California, District of Columbia, Florida, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, and Utah.

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. The national coordinated 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 3 – 21, 2019, NASCLA State Members reported a total of 683 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 state statistics were reported by the NASCLA State Members based on their national coordinated enforcement efforts:



On Friday, June 14, 2019, the Arizona Registrar of Contractors (AZ ROC) participated in a national coordinated enforcement effort targeting unlicensed entities performing contracting work and educating property owners on the importance of hiring only licensed contractors.

AZ ROC committed 13 multi-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 investigators concentrated efforts in Maricopa, Cochise, Coconino, La Paz, Pima, Pinal and Santa Cruz (7 of Arizona's 15) counties and made contact with 228 individuals, including 25 homeowners, 160 contractors, 30 unlicensed entities, nine (9) building officials, and two (2) other individuals/groups.

The vast majority of contacts are described as educational in nature but AZ ROC investigators did document 13 violations of Contracting Without a License in reports, which could result in unlicensed cases being opened and investigated.

Arizona Registrar of Contractors Jeff Fleetham stated, "Our goal is to protect the public and promote quality construction. A remodeling project is one of the most expensive things a homeowner will do after buying a home, and yet many are unaware the contractor they hire needs a license. Additionally, there are many small businesses moving into Arizona who are unaware of Arizona's licensing laws. Concentrated efforts like this and the territory management our investigators do every day are an important part of reaching our goal."

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



The California Contractors State License Board (CSLB) conducted a variety of undercover sting and sweep operations around the state for its part in the NASCLA operation. The results include 169 legal actions for individuals who could face administrative or criminal charges. From the sting operations, 63 individuals, including 10 licensees, may face misdemeanor criminal charges after being caught for breaking state contracting law. Additionally, three (3) individuals were referred to District Attorney's offices. The stings were conducted in Rancho Cordova (Sacramento County), Campbell (Santa Clara County) and Paso Robles (San Luis Obispo County). Most of those charges were for contracting without a license or illegal advertising. In California, all home improvement work that totals \$500 or more (labor and materials) must be done by someone with a state contractor's license. Investigators also conducted 46 different sweeps during this operation. From those sweeps, 31 unlicensed contractors were cited and fined for illegal contracting; the fines totaled \$70,500. Four (4) individuals received notices to appear in court and 34 licensees were issued citations for their violations. Also, there were 34 referrals made to District Attorney's offices. Many of the violations relate to lacking the proper workers' compensation insurance coverage – this resulted in 61 stop orders.

"There's no telling if someone who is unlicensed has the skills, insurance, or knows the trade well enough to do the work and to do it right, which is why nationwide enforcement operations are critical to reminding consumers about the importance of doing their homework before hiring people to work on their homes," said David Fogt, California's Registrar of Contractors. "This month's enforcement actions show that there's no shortage

of people ready, willing, and able to take advantage of unsuspecting consumers,” added Registrar Fogt.

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



The District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs was part of a national effort by members of the National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies (NASCLA) to target fraudulent construction activity. NASCLA members who participated from June 3 – 21, 2019 were Arizona, California, District of Columbia, Florida, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, and Utah.

The DCRA conducted 15 unannounced site visits, resulting in filing three (3) complaints and are investigating an additional 10 cases.



The 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 3 – 21, 2019, the Division of Regulation conducted a statewide sweep targeting unlicensed construction and electrical contractors. The sweeps were performed by nine regional field offices and netted a total of 574 unannounced site visits with 506 license checks of construction and electrical contractors.

Additionally, the Division of Regulation’s Jacksonville, Gainesville, and Tampa field offices performed three enforcement operations, 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 Mississippi State Board of Contractors (MSBOC) participated with the National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies (NASCLA) in a national coordinated enforcement effort the weeks of June 3 – 21, 2019 that included 11 NASCLA State Members who took part in this event across the country. Participating states included Arizona, California, District of Columbia, Florida, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, and Utah.

MSBOC enforcement staff visited over 500 jobsites to perform compliance checks that resulted in the filing of 19 complaints. An additional 65 cases are still under investigation according to MSBOC Executive Director Stephanie Lee.

MSBOC strives to be a model regulatory agency that works to protect the public without being overly burdensome to contractors or a deterrent to business. Lee warns, “while most contractors are honest, there are some looking to take advantage of individuals. Consumers are encouraged to protect themselves by properly vetting contractors before hiring someone to perform work on their home or property.”

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



As part of a month-long crackdown on unlicensed construction activity, the Nevada State Contractors Board’s Special Investigations Unit conducted an undercover sting operation in southern Nevada and performed 86 proactive jobsite visits statewide to check for unlicensed construction activities.

The Board’s sting operation resulted in six (6) criminal cases for alleged unlawful activities, including advertising without a license (NRS 624.720) and contracting without a license (NRS 624.700). One of the suspects was arrested by Henderson Police Department on a custodial warrant. In addition to these efforts, Board investigative staff opened 12 criminal cases, issued three (3) cease and desist orders, and identified 27 statutory violations as a result of proactive community sweeps. Some of the investigations opened remain pending.

“Unlicensed contracting activities are serious, and the consequences can be devastating to homeowners who are taken advantage of because of the loss of protections and recourse they face in their time of need,” NSCB Executive Officer Margi A. Grein said. “Being able to join forces with states across the nation and share a unified message about the dangers of unlicensed contracting help reinforce the gravity of the issue and demonstrate the importance of always verifying contractors are properly licensed to perform work on your home.”

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



Santa Fe - New Mexico Regulation and Licensing Department Superintendent Marguerite Salazar announced Thursday that the Construction Industries Division participated with the National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies (NASCLA) in a national coordinated enforcement effort, the weeks of June 3 – 21, 2019, which included 11 NASCLA State Members who took part in this event across the country. Participating states included Arizona, California, District of Columbia, Florida, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, and Utah.

The New Mexico Construction Industries & Manufactured Housing Division focused on social media ads along with websites providing referrals for home maintenance and repair services. Licensing was verified on hundreds of contractors, 34 unlicensed contractors were identified and seven 7 criminal complaints have been filed while an additional 27 are still being investigated. Those 27 will result in additional criminal charges, but some of them may enter into stipulated agreements in an effort to get them properly licensed.

“This nationally coordinated collaboration provided the opportunity to protect the consumers, deter illegal construction activity and level the playing field for legitimate contractors in the construction industry,” said Salazar.

[View the New Mexico Construction Industries & Manufactured Housing Divisions’ Full Press Release](#)

[View the News Coverage from KOB 4, Albuquerque News](#)

[View the News Coverage from KRQE Media](#)



The Oregon Construction Contractor Board (CCB) found a dozen alleged violations of contracting regulations during unannounced visits to 115 job sites earlier this month. The “sweep” was part of a multistate action targeting the construction industry.

In Oregon, the CCB concentrated its investigators at job sites in Eastern Oregon, from Ontario to Boardman. The agency is now sending notices of intent to issue civil penalties to those suspected of violations.

Nearly everyone who repairs, remodels or builds a home needs a CCB license, meaning they are bonded and insured and can pull required building permits. Additionally, the CCB provides mediation services to help iron out disputes that arise between homeowners and licensed contractors. People who use unlicensed contractors don’t have access to the service.

“All Oregonians deserve protection from unlicensed contractors, just as all legitimate contractors deserve to benefit from a level playing field,” said Chris Huntington, CCB Administrator. “These focused enforcement sweeps highlight our efforts to protect consumers and business throughout Oregon every day.”

[View the Oregon Construction Contractors Board’s Full Press Release](#)



The Rhode Island Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board participated in a national enhanced enforcement operation, in conjunction with multiple state members of the National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies (NASCLA). This plan focuses on our state members joining together in a united partnership to promote consumer/public protection through the licensing/registration of contractors and elevating the regulatory boards presence in the community and nationally.

During the course of RICRLB's participation in the enhanced enforcement effort, three (3) separate teams were dispatched throughout the state on three specific days, resulting in a total of 131 construction projects, both residential and commercial being inspected. In all, the CRLB verified 122 of the contractor's interviewed were properly registered, while a total of 30 violations were issued; consisting of 25 to contractors not properly registered and five (5) to registered contractors hiring non-registered sub-contractors.

The majority of contractors receiving violations indicated it was simply a matter of not knowing they needed to be registered and stated they would comply with the regulations and obtain the necessary credentials to become registered, as required. Additionally, many of the registered contractors that were interviewed expressed appreciation for our efforts in helping to provide a "level playing field" for those who abide by the CRLB's Rules and Regulations.

[View the Rhode Island Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board's Full Press Release](#)



The Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation will file at least 47 enforcement cases against unlicensed electricians and air conditioning contractors as a result of the agency's participation in a national operation.

TDLR's efforts included jobsite sweeps by the Regulatory Program Management Division, who visited 52 jobsites in the greater Central Texas area, checking 233 people for electrician licenses and finding that 17 of them had expired licenses. Five (5) of the 233 did not have a license of any kind to perform electrical work.

TDLR investigators researched and obtained more than 100 advertisements in San Antonio where people were offering to perform electrical or air conditioning work and did not appear to have the appropriate license. Each of them was invited to provide a bid to undercover investigators. Forty-two of the unlicensed contractors provided a bid and offered to perform electrical work or install an air conditioning/heating unit.

Consumers and legitimate licensees should know that TDLR is working hard to find unlicensed contractors. "If you hire an unlicensed contractor, you risk not getting quality work, and you could be putting your family's safety at risk. Always check the TDLR website (www.tdlr.texas.gov) to make sure that your electrician or air conditioning contractor is licensed," said Brian E. Francis, TDLR executive director.

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

[View the Media Coverage by NBC Affiliate, News 4 San Antonio](#)

[View the Concho Valley, San Antonio, News Article](#)



The Utah Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing completed a statewide sting investigation to target fraudulent construction activity. Utah's undercover investigation was part of a national effort by members of the National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies (NASCLA). NASCLA members who participated from June 3 – 21, 2019 were Arizona, California, District of Columbia, Florida, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, and Utah.

There were 178 cases opened, 21 referred for agency action, and 96 administrative citations for unlicensed activity which included fines totaling \$543,000 during the operation.



“The purpose of the National Coordinated Enforcement Effort is to partner and spotlight the enforcement efforts of our contractor state licensing and registration agencies nationally, and to promote public and consumer protection. NASCLA along with our state members want to raise awareness and deter illegal construction practices across the country to level the playing field for professionally licensed contractors who are following the state laws, rules and regulations. NASCLA would like to recognize and acknowledge the amazing work of our state members for their dedication and commitment to protecting the public and combating unlicensed activity,” stated Angie Whitaker, 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.