

June 28, 2013

## **MINOT CONTRACTOR COMPLIANCE CHECKS A SUCCESS**

Bismarck, ND – Random inspections of construction sites around Minot this week revealed that the vast majority of contractors are complying with state licensing and reporting laws, according to a multi-agency Contractor Compliance task force.

The multi-agency Contractor Compliance task force inspected 28 job sites involving 194 contractors. The task force found only seven unlicensed contractors. The unlicensed contractors have been prohibited from working in North Dakota until they are properly licensed.

“While the inspection team's expertise and coordinated efforts contributed to the contractor compliance task force's successful results, the professionalism and excellent cooperation of the contractors interviewed greatly enhanced the team's ability to visit a large number of contractors and work sites,” said Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem. Stenehjem noted that 96% of the contractors were in compliance. “I am pleased with the results because although my office will be taking legal action against at least seven unlicensed contractors, our goal is compliance and a level playing field for licensed contractors, not legal action.”

“I'm very pleased with the results of the task force. The team checked nearly 200 contractors, everyone they contacted was cooperative, and only a handful of contractors were not properly licensed. This is very encouraging, but I still encourage the public to check to make sure the contractor has all the required licenses before doing business with them,” said Secretary of State Al Jaeger.

While on-site, task force members from the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division, the Tax Commissioner's office, Workforce Safety & Insurance (WSI), and Job service North Dakota provided information to several contractors about additional reporting requirements and obtained updated information about employees.

“By conducting these compliance checks we are able to address a couple important issues: first, as an educational opportunity to inform contractors and the public about their licensure and insurance responsibilities; and second, we can ensure that all contractors are paying the taxes that are due,” said Fong. “We were very pleased to find that the majority of contractors are operating in compliance with the state's laws.”

“The contractor compliance inspections emphasize the commitment by state agencies to ensure compliance with North Dakota laws and those contractors in violation unfortunately incur the costs of construction project delays and the civil penalties associated with the violations of North Dakota law. Contractors should be aware it will be more cost effective to comply with the licensing requirements up front because the state is monitoring their activities,” said Parrell Grossman, Director of the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division.

Contractors working on any project where the cost, value, or price per job or contract exceeds \$2,000.00 must hold a North Dakota Contractors License. The Secretary of State's office maintains a searchable database of licensed contractors, available online

at <https://apps.nd.gov/sc/busnsrch/busnSearch.htm>. Any contractor conducting temporary business in North Dakota also must have a Transient Merchant license issued by the Attorney General's office. More information about contractor licensing requirements is available at <http://www.ag.nd.gov/ContractorComplianceCheckList.pdf>.

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