



2880 International Circle Colorado Springs, CO 80910

Building A Better Community
Thru Education and Enforcement



“CAN WE TALK? ”

The past year has been both challenging and rewarding. We have executed over 1,500 Stop Work Orders for work being performed without the required permits, and have closed over 1,200 of them. Stop Work Orders are closed by one of three ways: the property owner removing the violation, permitting the work, or by RBD recording a Certificate of Non-Compliance against the property. I've talked with too many property owners that have been ripped off by con men misrepresenting themselves as licensed contractors. Some of them have lost many thousands of dollars to these people and in most cases have never permitted or completed their projects. I usually refer these folks to the District Attorney. Unfortunately, we have no jurisdiction over contractual agreements and we can only go after licensed contractors if the problems are code related.

I'm encouraged that our efforts to educate the public are having some success. I've been receiving more calls checking to see if the contractor they are considering is licensed to do the work they need done. I would say less than 50% of the 'contractors' called about are licensed. Hopefully those calling me saved themselves a lot of headaches, heartache and money.

Having the appropriate license to perform work requiring permits is **not** an option, but is the law. The requirements to obtain a license include the following; passing the appropriate test demonstrating the applicant has the basic knowledge required to perform the work covered by the type of license applied for.

Proof of liability insurance and workers comp insurance (if the company has employees) is also required. Every applicant must furnish 3 references. RBD runs a criminal background check on every applicant. Electrical and Plumbing contractors are licensed through the State and must be registered with RBD to be granted a license. RBD administers the testing for all other required licenses except Electric and Plumbing. Once the testing and reference requirements are satisfied every license must be approved by the appropriate Committee and the Board of Review.

As you can see becoming a licensed contractor is not an easy task. We are approaching issuing the 19,000 license since RBD began in 1966.

QUESTION: I purchased a homeowner permit last week to finish my basement. Now I'm getting calls from subcontractors wanting to bid my basement. How did they find out about my permit?

ANSWER: Building permits are public record. Permit information can be accessed on our website. Also, the Gazette lists, every Saturday, all permits issued the previous week by the Regional Building Department. Given the current state of the economy I'm sure there are many subcontractors using the permit list to try to generate work.

I hope you all have a healthy and productive 2010!

All of the previous 'CAN WE TALK' columns are available on our website www.pprbd.org under the PPRBD title.

By Terry R. Brunette 'Special Investigator'

Regional Building Department

Submit your questions to: terryb@pprbd.org or mail to: Pikes Peak Regional Building Department

2880 International Circle Colorado Springs, CO 80910 Attn. Terry Brunette