



INDUSTRY NEWS

HELP PROTECT YOUR CUSTOMERS FROM UNLICENSED CONTRACTORS By – SECRETARY DIANE CARR

With spring just around the corner, home remodeling season is about to begin. Unfortunately, many consumers are unaware of the dangers and problems related to hiring an unlicensed contractor.

DBPR is launching an intensive unlicensed activity campaign for the professions we regulate. We have also been rebuilding the department to make it easy for consumers to educate themselves before making that big purchase — to see if a professional is licensed and in good standing, or to file a complaint of alleged unlicensed activity.

The user-friendly process begins at www.MyFloridaLicense.com. For those who are not computer savvy, our Customer Contact Center's automated telephone system (850-487-1395) can retrieve this information 24 hours a day/7 days a week. Shorter and easier phone menus were introduced in December, further streamlining the automated process.

We've also added a new feature to our homepage, www.MyFlorida.com/dbpr. By clicking on DBPR News, licensees and consumers can download publications. Of particular interest to you and your customers is "Protect Your Home: Hire ONLY Licensed Contractors."

DBPR has placed a top priority on strengthening our ability to protect consumers by ensuring increased compliance. Our Division of

Professions and Regulation, based in Tallahassee with field offices around the state, proactively monitors licensees by performing statutorily required inspections and aggressively investigating complaints of violations. We are focusing enforcement efforts on those who pose the greatest threat of harm to the public. In addition to notices of non-compliance and citations, we are using mediation, alternative dispute resolution, stings, sweeps and industry partnerships.

In FY 2001-02 alone, the department's mediation program successfully recovered over \$2 million for consumers and saved taxpayers an additional \$590,000 in investigative and legal costs. Since July 2003, we have conducted 935 license checks, visited 868 sites, issued 79 notices of non-compliance, 47 citations, 29 cease and desist orders and opened 32 unlicensed activity complaints.

The Florida DBPR is committed to making Florida a safe and viable place for people to live, work and retire. If you have information on an unlicensed contractor, please contact Mark Reddinger, our Unlicensed Activity Coordinator, at (850) 922-5420 or Mark.Reddinger@dbpr.state.fl.us.

Diane Carr is Secretary of the Department of Business and Professional Regulation. The Division of Professions and Regulation's mission is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of those who live in and visit Florida by regulating and educating professional licensees.

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DAVE BESSETTE
FLASEIA PRESIDENT

Noble Cause or Industry?

A few months ago, I asked a locally well known marketing person who has been involved with the HBA for 22 years to review our industry and come up with suggestions on how we can best market our product. After a couple of interviews and endless hours pouring over our industry's literature, she said that she was ready to address the board.

The very first thing that she stated was, "I really admire you guys. What a NOBLE Cause you represent."

Several of us choked on this spoken reality. This is the perception of the general public! This individual, who has been around the building industry for 22 years, perceives us as a Cause and not a viable industry. I thought, "What audacity! What could she possibly know about us? Does she know how hard we have worked to get here?" For the rest of the day, I pondered her words and asked myself, "What can we do to change this perception?"

But first, the inevitable research. The definition of Cause: the state of operating as if you are creating your own reality. An ideal or principle served with dedication and zeal: the societal need, void or value addressed by an organization. Sound and feel familiar? For the lack of a better cliché, how about . . . If the shoe fits . . .

So, the question is, do we change our image or do we hire Ralph Nadar or maybe Jane Fonda to represent us?

If we change our image, we need to develop some short range and long range goals. Due to our limited fiduciary resources, we must rely upon creativity. I propose we open up a forum in which we can share ideas on how to accomplish this task. Maybe we can open up a Chat Room

on our website. Remembering that we need to keep this forum in the following context: identifying our audience and target markets. Then incorporating three things in all of this: 1) Awareness, 2) Acceptance; and 3) Preference. Awareness of our product, gain public acceptance and, finally, we will obtain the public's preference for our product(s).

I am asking all of you to participate. I certainly wouldn't want to be renamed the Florida Solar Energy Cause Association.

Best Regards,

Dave Bessette

SEIA UPDATE

ENERGY BILL

The Energy Bill will not come up until after the Senate discusses medical malpractice legislation, and will have to compete for space with a foreign sales tax bill and gun manufacturer liability legislation. However, when the bill does come up, it will go straight to the floor without going through the normal committee process.

President Bush mentioned a stable long-term energy policy as one of the ingredients for growing the economy in a speech last week, but there are mounting indications that the House may object to any bill, even should it pass the Senate. We will work to move the significant solar-friendly provisions in the bill either through the Energy Bill or in subsequent vehicles.

SEIA WEBSITE

The new SEIA website is up and running for most people! Please visit us at www.seia.org. (If you see green and yellow, that's still the old site.)

2003/2004 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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SHERWOOD FOREST COMMUNITY FEELS THE POWER OF THE SUN

Governor Jeb Bush is putting Florida's sunshine to work to conserve energy and reduce electricity bills. Florida is providing solar water heaters to seven households in Jacksonville – part of 150 that will be delivered to residents in underserved communities throughout the state. Named Front Porch Sunshine, Florida is the first in the nation to install solar energy technology in weatherized, low-income homes.

"Energy conservation protects the environment and saves money," said Governor Bush. "Extending the environmental and economic benefits of conservation to Florida's neediest citizens improves our quality of life and strengthens our communities."

The reliable, low-maintenance solar systems use the sun's energy, instead of electricity, to heat water. A solar collector installed on the roof holds water that is heated by the sun. A traditional water heater serves as a backup supply of hot water on

overcast or rainy days.

"The Department of Community Affairs is proud to be a part of this collaborative effort," said Department of Community Affairs Secretary Colleen Castille. "By providing weatherization and energy-savings opportunities to our residents, families that need it most are able to minimize their energy bills and dedicate their financial resources to other important items in their monthly budgets."

The Florida Energy Office, Florida Solar Energy Center and Florida Solar Energy Research & Education Foundation established a partnership with Front Porch Florida, a program launched by Governor Bush in 1999 to revitalize low-income neighborhoods, to improve energy efficiency of homes in designated communities throughout the State. State agencies are assisting 20 designated neighborhoods with community-driven initiatives for economic growth, education and



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environmental preservation.

“Florida enjoys extensive sunshine throughout the year,” said Department of Environmental Protection Deputy Secretary for Regulatory Programs and Energy Allan Bedwell. “Harnessing the power of the sun is clean, free and expands energy savings to Florida’s underserved communities.”

As a part of its Solar Incentive Program, JEA is providing \$1,200 for each solar system installation in the Sherwood Forest Front Porch Community. The funding will allow the Front Porch Sunshine program to reach more homes across the state.

“I am thrilled the Sherwood Forest Front Porch community is benefiting from this groundbreaking program,” said Patricia West, Director of Florida’s Office of Urban Opportunity. “Bringing the power of solar energy to our communities is a wonderful way for residents to take advantage of this successful collaboration between the Department of Community Affairs,

Department of Environmental Protection, Florida

Solar Energy Center and community partners.”

One of Florida’s newest Front Porch communities, Sherwood Forest was designated October 16, 2002. The goal of the more than 34,000 residents is to provide affordable housing for its low income and elderly residents, accessible transportation and better child care facilities. The residents are also striving to reduce crime and expand economic growth and development.

“The Sherwood Forest community is excited about the opportunity we have been given through the Front Porch Florida initiative,” said Sherwood Forest Front Porch Community Liaison Karen Joyner-Montgomery. “This program has allowed us to receive the necessary resources to enhance residents’ quality of life now and for years to come.”

For more information about Front Porch Florida, visit www.myflorida.com. For more information about Front Porch Sunshine, visit www.fsec.ucf.edu/solar/projects/frontporch/frontporch.htm.

THIS IS NEWS!



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FLORIDA MIXES WATER AND SUNSHINE TO POWER SUV

STATE DEP DEMONSTRATES POLLUTION-FREE TRAVEL OF THE FUTURE

Governor Jeb Bush recently joined Department of Environmental Protection Secretary David B. Struhs to introduce Florida to the high-tech world of pollution-free travel. Governor Bush is proposing a \$15 million investment to test the commercial viability of fuel cells and hydrogen powered automobiles. Secretary Struhs demonstrated a hydrogen-fueled Sports Utility Vehicle powered by just sunshine and water.

“More than \$1.5 billion is invested in hydrogen technology each year,” said Governor Bush. “Florida’s leadership in the development of ‘next generation’ energy would protect the environment and bring new investment, companies and jobs to the State.”

If approved by the legislature, Florida would use the seed money as well as private and public partnerships, to install and demonstrate the latest advances in fuel cell technology and develop the infrastructure to meet the State’s future energy demands. The initiative would also attract new corporate investment, accompanied by highly skilled jobs to manufacture, install and operate the emerging technology.

“Nearly every major auto maker worldwide is developing hydrogen cars,” said Department of Environmental Protection Secretary David B. Struhs. “Florida’s investment in new energy technology would reduce our reliance on imported oil and drive pollution-free vehicles from the showroom to our highways, guaranteeing cleaner air for Florida’s communities.

Burning petroleum-based fuels like gasoline is the primary cause of air pollution from the more than 20 million vehicles on Florida’s roads. Hydrogen can power cars by replacing gasoline in an internal combustion engine or as a source of power for a fuel cell. A fuel cell combines hydrogen and oxygen to produce electricity, which powers the car and emits only steam.

Florida joins the White House in its commitment to “next generation” energy technology. President Bush is proposing a \$1.7 billion investment over the next five years to develop hydrogen-powered fuel cells, hydrogen infrastructure and advanced automotive technologies.

Governor Bush joined executives from Toyota, Stuart Energy and Florida Solar Technology at the capitol plaza for the demonstration.



Industry News is published quarterly by the Florida Solar Energy Industries Association (FlaSEIA). Ideas, opinions and views expressed herein are not necessarily those of FlaSEIA.

OCOEE MIDDLE SCHOOL RECEIVES SOLAR ELECTRIC SYSTEM

SOLAR ENERGY TO LIGHT CLASSROOMS AND IMAGINATIONS

Florida schools are putting the state’s free supply of sunshine to work. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), together with the Florida Solar Energy Center and Orange County Schools, recently held a ribbon cutting ceremony for the newly installed solar electric system at Ocoee Middle School.

“Planning for future energy needs ensures a brighter tomorrow for Florida,” said DEP Deputy Secretary for Regulatory Programs and Energy, Allan Bedwell.

“Installing solar technology in our schools protects our environment and quality of life while also providing an unparalleled educational opportunity for students.”

The solar electric system is a part of Florida’s Solar for Schools Program which aims to install 29 solar electric systems in schools throughout the state. As the first of its kind in Florida, the program combines state funding with private partnership to provide clean energy and science education.

“Florida’s energy and environmental futures are inextricably linked,” said Bedwell. “The most important source of energy is the energy we conserve. Advancing clean energy technologies conserves resources, prevents pollution, saves taxpayer dollars and, in this case, teaches valuable lessons to the leaders of tomorrow.”

Unlike fossil fuels, the energy created by the solar unit emits no noise or pollution. The electric power generated by the system will be used to power the school’s classrooms, with excess energy returned to the local power grid. The system will also provide an on site classroom for students to learn more about solar power and the benefits of energy conservation.

“We are very excited about this unique opportunity,” said Ocoee Middle School Principal Katherine Clark. “Ocoee Middle School is a cutting edge technology school. This provides yet another opportunity to demonstrate how technology can change our teaching and learning environment.”

The solar unit was installed by Orange County Public School District electricians, students and instructors from Westside Technical School. While the middle school students learn important lessons about renewable energy, Westside students receive practical hands-on career training in welding, construction and electrical installation.

Florida’s Solar for Schools Program is funded by the Florida Energy Office and managed by the Florida Solar Energy Center. The Center is providing the engineering design for system installations and inspections, and posting select metered data online at www.fsec.ucf.edu.

Notice to Construction Industry Exemption Holders

As of January 1, 2004, in order to have an exemption in construction, you must be incorporated. You must also own at least 10% of the corporation and be able to prove it by providing a copy of your stock certificate.

No more than three persons in any corporation, including any affiliated corporations, may claim an exemption.

If you are not incorporated and want to use and exemption, you will need to incorporate.

As in past years, FlaSEIA has secured prime exhibit space at the Southeast Building Conference (SEBC) being held August 5–7, 2004 at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida. FlaSEIA will be selling five 10' x 10' booth spaces to its membership at \$2,000.00 each. A deposit of \$1,000.00, along with the Exhibitor Registration Form must be submitted to the FlaSEIA office **no later than March 23, 2004.**

For companies who do not need the 10' x 10' booth space but want to participate in the SEBC trade show, FlaSEIA will be selling 1' x 1' space on a table at \$200.00 per space in the FlaSEIA booth. A deposit of \$100.00, along with the Exhibitor Registration Form must be submitted to the FlaSEIA office **no later than March 23, 2004.**

Exhibitors, imagine the benefits of tapping into the marketing power of the largest building industry trade show in the Southeast. The SEBC attracts over **10,000 qualified purchasers** in the residential

construction industry, including builders, remodelers, developers, architects, designers, and other housing professionals from **12 Southeastern states.** With over **800 exhibits** all under one roof for a one-stop shopping spree of the latest in new-generation products and services, the SEBC is geared to **help you increase sales.** This is your opportunity to **reach new customers, reinforce existing customer relationships, build brand awareness, and increase customer loyalty.**

If you need more information on SEBC, please feel free to visit their website at www.sebcshow.com.

If you have any questions, need additional information or the Exhibitor Registration Form, please do not hesitate to contact the FlaSEIA office at (407) 339-2010.

Please mark your calendar with the future SEBC trade show dates:

July 14–16, 2005
August 3–5, 2006

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ADVERTISING OF LICENSE NUMBER

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Contractors can be fined \$100.00 per instance if reported to the Department of Business & Professional Regulations (DBPR) Unlicensed Activity Division.

CERTIFIED

CONTRACTOR LICENSE RENEWALS

Just a reminder that the Certified Contractor licenses from the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) are up for renewal on August 31, 2004. Current law requires licenseholders to obtain 14 hours of continuing education with at least one hour in workplace safety, one hour in workers' compensation and one hour in business practices.

Don't forget to notify the DBPR office of any address change. Section 489.124(2) gives sole responsibility to the licensee for notifying DBPR in writing of the licensee's current mailing address and phone number. Failure to notify the department of a change of address shall constitute a violation of this section. In addition, if your address changes and you do not notify the department, you may not receive important mailings from the department such as your renewal notice.

State Certified Solar Exam

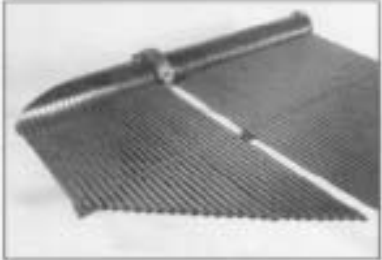
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Initiative:

FlaSEIA wishes to thank the following companies for their financial commitment to FlaSEIA and the Florida solar energy industry as participants in the Florida Manufacturers' Initiative (FMI) program.

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Horizon:

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FlaSEIA Board of Director's Meeting
April 1, 2004
Tallahassee

FlaSEIA Board of Director's Meeting
June 15, 2004
FlaSEIA office in Longwood

Southeast Building Conference Trade Show
August 5–7, 2004
Orange County Convention Center
Orlando, Florida

Southeast Building Conference Trade Show
July 14–16, 2005
Orange County Convention Center
Orlando, Florida

For additional information on the above mentioned meetings and/or events, please contact the FlaSEIA office at (407) 339–2010.



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