



Construction Contractors Board

Background on Oregon's Commercial and Residential Continuing Education Mandate

(April 12, 2011)

The Oregon Construction Contractors Board (CCB) is moving forward with implementation of legislation passed in 2007 directing CCB to implement continuing education requirements for contractors renewing their CCB licenses.

The Board is sensitive to the fact that these are very difficult economic times for all contractors, and are particularly difficult times for residential contractors.

The CCB has worked with the residential construction industry to establish the following guiding principles for the Residential Continuing Education (RCE) program. Continuing education must:

1. Increase knowledge for the sound construction of buildings by preventing buildings that leak and other construction defects.
2. Increase knowledge for businesses to operate successfully.
3. Lowest cost with the highest quality.
4. Must give contractors flexibility and control for much of the education required.
5. Must be beneficial to contractors.
6. Must be easy to obtain.

The following is a summary on the background of Oregon's continuing education mandate for residential construction contractors.

How did continuing education start?

In 2007, Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 2654 (2007) requiring the Construction Contractors Board (CCB) to implement a continuing education system for all contractors. This bill contained many of the recommendations presented to the Legislature by the Task Force on Construction Claims (TFCC)¹.

At the same time, House Bill 3242 (2007) passed separating commercial and residential contractors. This bill contained a prescriptive mandate on continuing education for commercial contractors.

What is the current law?

Commercial contractors were required to begin meeting the continuing education obligation July 1, 2010.

¹ The TFCC was formed by a 2005 Bill to study the relationship between construction liability claims, construction defects, construction industry practices and liability insurance requirements. Their report can be accessed online at: www.oregon.gov/DCBS/CCTF/final/report_recommendations.pdf

Commercial continuing education (CCE) consists of between 16–80 hours during the two year license period. The amount of hours is dependent upon the commercial endorsement.

Residentially endorsed contractors will begin meeting residential continuing education (RCE) requirements with their CCB license renewal on or after October 1, 2011. This requirement is a total of 16 hours during a two-year license period. It consists of 8 hours in mandatory subject areas (3/hrs in Building Exterior Shell Training (BEST); 2/hrs in building codes; 3/hrs in CCB laws, regulations and business practices) and 8 hours in elective subject areas.

What has the CCB done to implement the program?

Based on the TFCC recommendations, we began with the premise that residential contractors needed basic education in the building exterior shell and building codes. With the agency's experiences through dispute resolution and enforcement, we added laws, regulations and business practices component.

In September of 2007, the CCB sent a letter to industry stakeholders explaining the continuing education requirement and asking for written input. Public meetings were held in Portland, Salem and Eugene beginning in October of 2007.

In March and June of 2008, the agency developed a survey that was sent to every licensee through the CCB newsletter asking for input on the continuing education requirement.

For more than 18 months, the CCB and a three-member subcommittee of the Board worked with industry and other stakeholders to develop administrative rules to clarify the overall continuing education program. In October 2008, the commercial rules were passed. In June 2009, a public hearing was held on the residential continuing education and the rules were adopted by the Board.

What has the CCB done to inform contractors about the mandate?

In April 2007, the CCB reported in the agency newsletter, the findings of the Task Force on Construction Claims Information and the legislation proposed. The agency used each subsequent newsletter to provide additional information. The agency began to develop web pages on the Residential Continuing Education (RCE) and the Commercial Continuing Education (CCE) mandates. In July 2009, the agency created a blog which provided current up-to-date information. This information continues to be disseminated through the CCB e-newsletter, blog and on the CCB website with specific pages designated to continuing education.

A flyer was developed in 2009 and for the past two years is sent to all new and renewing contractors along with their license.

What can I do if I don't like the residential continuing education mandate?

Written input can be made to the agency. All letters will be shared with the Board.