



23309 N. 17<sup>th</sup> Drive, Building 1, Unit 110  
Phoenix, Arizona 85027  
Phone: (623) 587-9354  
Fax: (623) 587-9625

## NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Angie Whitaker  
NASCLA Executive Director  
Phone: (623) 587-9354  
Email: [angiewhitaker@nascla.org](mailto:angiewhitaker@nascla.org)

### NASCLA NATIONAL STING OPERATION WITH NINE (9) STATE MEMBERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY TARGETING UNLICENSED CONTRACTORS

**PHOENIX, AZ – JULY 1, 2015**

The National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies (NASCLA) participated in a national sting operation the weeks of June 15-26, 2015; we had nine (9) state contractor members take part in this event across the country. The states that participated were Arizona, California, Florida, Nevada, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Utah and Washington.

The sting operation and communication plan focused on our state members coming together through a united partnership to promote both consumer and public protection through the licensing and/or registration of contractors. The goal was to elevate the regulatory boards presence in the community and nationally. The sting operation involved state public information departments, investigative departments, executive directors/officers and the public media.

The sting operation provided a national partnership opportunity among our state members 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.

The following state statistics were reported by the NASCLA State Members based on their sting operation efforts the weeks of June 15-26, 2015:



On Monday, June 29, 2015, the Arizona Registrar of Contractors conducted a statewide undercover sting operation targeting unlicensed individuals performing contracting work. These efforts resulted in a total of nine (9) arrests, with two (2) being among Arizona's top most wanted list and criminal and civil citations of an additional five (5) individuals. Sixteen (16) individuals were issued warnings and required compliance for advertising without a license.

Director of the Arizona Registrar of Contractors, Jeff Fleetham stated, "Individuals and entities performing contracting work illegally and without a license place the public at risk and effectively steal millions from Arizona's hardworking, law-abiding contractors and their employees. AZ ROC proudly participates in this annual, nationwide sting and I thank each of our law enforcement partners, who everyday assist our investigators in curbing unlicensed activity in Arizona."

[Please Click Here to View the Arizona Registrar of Contractors Full Press Release.](#)



The California Contractors State License Board conducted eight undercover sting operations during June 23-25, 2015. These operations resulted in one hundred sixteen (116) legal actions taken by CSLB Investigators including one hundred and five (105) Notices to Appear and fourteen (14) administrative citations.

"Unlicensed contracting is a problem that knows no state lines," said CSLB Registrar Cindi Christenson. "Consumers everywhere benefit if they ask the right questions before hiring anyone to work in or around their home."

[Please Click Here to View the California Contractors State License Board's Full Press Release.](#)



The Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR), which includes both the Construction Industry Licensing Board and the Electrical Contractors Licensing Board, conducted an undercover sting operation on June 22-25, 2015. This operation resulted in eight (8) citations to unlicensed individuals including 1 arrest for not having any identification and seven (7) Notices to Appear.

"DBPR continues to partner with local and state agencies to proactively combat unlicensed activity in an effort to protect Florida's consumers and maintain the integrity of the construction industry, especially during a time of construction growth throughout the state," DBPR Secretary Ken Lawson said. "Unlicensed contractors lack the necessary training, qualifications and insurance to complete a job in compliance with building codes and often leave homeowners responsible for any additional costs to repair substandard work."

[Please Click Here to View the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation's Full Press Release.](#)



The Nevada State Contractors Board conducted three undercover sting operations on June 23, 2015. These operations resulted in twenty-nine (29) citations to unlicensed contractors for alleged unlawful advertising and contracting activities and one licensed contractor who will be further investigated by the Board.

“NASCLA’s national sting event is an opportunity to be united in our efforts to protect the public’s safety by raising awareness of unlicensed contracting activities,” said Nevada State Contractors Board Executive Director Margi Grein. “Unscrupulous contractors affect and prey upon people in every community, in every state. We want to ensure homeowners know the value of hiring a licensed contractor and the protections they receive from the Board as a result.”

[Please Click Here to View the Nevada State Contractors Board’s Full Press Release.](#)



The Rhode Island Contractors’ Registration and Licensing Board participated in a national sting operation the week of June 22, 2015 to promote consumer/public protection through the registration of contractors’ and elevating the regulatory boards presence in the community and nationally. We partnered with other states (Arizona, California, Florida, Nevada, South Carolina, Texas, Utah and Washington) who are members of the National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies, (NASCLA) to protect consumers and deter illegal construction activity and level the playing field for legitimate contractors in the industry. Although we did not have any media coverage, our efforts resulted in the issuance of thirteen (13) violations; twelve (12) for being non-registered contractors; one (1) violation for hiring a non-registered subcontractor. All violations resulted in tickets being issued assessing fines up to the amount of \$5,000 for performing work illegally in our state. Efforts to combat the increased illegal activity and to warn consumers of the need to be aware to hire registered contractors will continue to be made to assure compliance with Boards rules and regulations.

“A highly effective sting operation was the result of NASCLA’s coordination, collaboration, and genuine concern for the protection of the public,” stated Rhode Island Contractors’ Registration and Licensing Board’s Executive Director George Whalen.



During the week of June 16, 2015, the South Carolina Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation’s Office of Investigations and Enforcement (OIE) in conjunction with the South Carolina Residential Builders Commission (RBC) and the South Carolina Contractors Licensing Board (CLB) conducted an undercover sting operation to identify unlicensed builders and contractors working/advertising in the state. These collaborative efforts resulted in seventy-three (73) cases that were opened for investigation and Cease and Desist Orders either have been or are in the process of being served to the unlicensed individuals.



The Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation conducted sting operations during June 22-23, 2015. A total of twenty-four (24) cases will be opened against individuals for offering to perform activity requiring a license, without possessing the required license.

“The Department performs stings across the state throughout the year to help ensure the safety of all Texans and to provide consumer protection,” states Susan Stanford, Public Information Officer for the Agency.



The Utah Department of Commerce, Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing conducted an undercover sting operation during the weeks of June 15-26, 2015. These efforts resulted in a total of thirty-one (31) administrative citations totaling more than \$20,000 in the following areas: three (3) for aiding unlicensed practices, six (6) for failure to supervise and twenty-two (22) for unauthorized practices.



Dean Simpson, Chief of Compliance stated, “The opportunity to partner with other states across the country is an invaluable effort to take a stand against the underground economy. We share a common goal across the nation to level the playing field for legitimate contractors, protect consumers and take action on those violating the law.”

The Washington State Department of Labor & Industries Construction Compliance Inspectors conducted an undercover sting operation on 257 job sites and checked 547 contractors, electricians and plumbers for compliance with state licensing requirements. These efforts resulted in six (6) infractions issued for unregistered contracting, thirteen (13) infractions issued for plumber certification violations and one (1) infraction issued for a factory assembled structures violation. A total of sixty-eight (68) referrals were made; one (1) for an electrical licensing violation, forty-four (44) for collections for outstanding debt owed to the agency and twenty-three (23) for audit for worker compensation violations. The Detection Tracking Unit focused their efforts on internet compliance where they reviewed 145 electronic advertisements. Twenty-two (22) violations were issued for advertising while unregistered or with other advertising violations.

[Please Click Here to View the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries Full Press Release.](#)



“The National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies (NASCLA) coordinated a national sting operation during the weeks of June 15-26, 2015. NASCLA had nine (9) state members participate in this historic event across the country. The goal of this operation was to elevate consumer protection and deter illegal construction practices. The shared commitment of our state members brought awareness to unlicensed activity and spotlighted the contractor state licensing and registration boards nationally. NASCLA would like to thank all the state members for their continued partnership and national enforcement efforts to protect the public and combat 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

For more information on consumer awareness tips or to purchase a copy of the *NASCLA Consumer Guide for Home Improvement Projects* publication, please visit our website at [www.nascla.org/nascla-consumer-guide-home-improvement-projects](http://www.nascla.org/nascla-consumer-guide-home-improvement-projects).

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/publications](http://www.nascla.org/publications). To verify your contractor is licensed and in good standing with the state contractor board, please visit our website located at [www.nascla.org/licensing\\_information](http://www.nascla.org/licensing_information) 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](http://www.nascla.org) or contact the association office at (623) 587-9354.