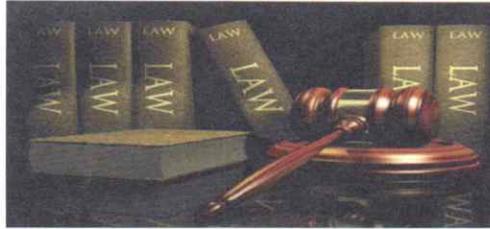




Volume 3, Issue 1

September 25, 2015



## 2015 LAW CHANGES EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1

During the 2015 Legislative Session, sweeping changes were made to the laws governing the practice of plumbing and gas fitting in the State of Alabama. It is very important that individuals certified by this board to practice in the State of Alabama not only be aware of all the laws and regulations governing their profession, but to keep informed when changes are made that might affect the day-to-day functions of their business.

The following is a few of the key changes for 2015 that you need to be aware of. Please check the Board's website for complete information concerning all the changes which became effective September 1, 2015.

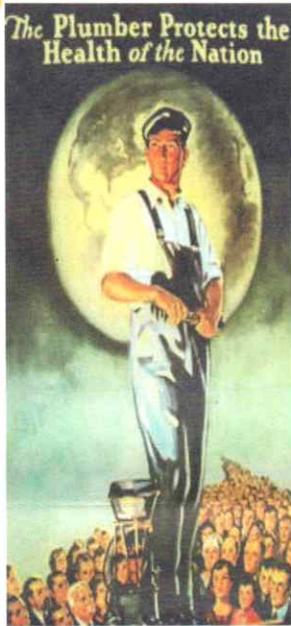
**Section 34-37-1 Definitions-** Many subsections of this law were added or refined to better reflect the operations of the Board.

**Section 34-37-13** – This section was eliminated because the bond requirement was cumbersome for contractors. The bond was initially established for consumer protection; however, the Board has opted to handle consumer complaints through administrative procedures outlined in Section 34-37-15.

**Section 34-37-6(c)** – requires business names on all service and construction vehicles in order to easily identify certified contractors and ensure consumer protection.

**Section 34-37-6(b)** – requires all companies to be registered with the Board. This also brings these companies under the jurisdiction of the Board with regards to disciplinary actions for violations of any Board law or Rule.

**\*Refer to website for complete law changes.**



## BOARD MEMBERS & OFFICE STAFF

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**2016 Renewal Season begins October 1, 2015, and runs through December 31, 2015.**

Please remember to send in your renewal during this time to avoid a late penalty. We accept check, money order, cash, or credit card. Online renewals will also be available during this time.

If you DID NOT complete a Verification of U.S. Citizenship form with your 2015 renewal, you must submit this form to renew for 2016. This form can be found on our website.

**BOARD DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

**Number of cases October 2014 – August 2015**

Certified Contractor cases: 128

Uncertified Contractor cases: 51

Consumer Complaints Addressed: 23



**Common Notices of Violation among Certified Contractors:**

720-x-11-.01 (Responsibility of a Master – No supervision on job site):	36
720-x-12-.01 (Responsibility of a Master Plumber – Working uncertified individuals):	70
720-x-13-.01 (Responsibility of a Master Gas Fitter – Working uncertified individuals):	20
34-37-6(a) (Working without certification or with delinquent certification):	68
34-37-13 (Master performing work with no bond):	12
34-37-14(b) (Failure to update records with the Board):	10

Please note that these numbers are intended to provide an idea of what type violations our compliance officers are finding during routine job sites inspections or when a consumer complaint is received by the Board. The number of violations per each case file can be different for each case.

The Board is aggressively pursuing uncertified contractor activity as reflected in the number above. Since October 1, 2014, the Board has addressed 51 uncertified contractor cases.

## Educational Update

### By: Phillip Till

#### Industry & Education Facts:

In the Birmingham area: In early 2014, the pass percentage on an open book Journeyman Plumber exam was 12%. Because of this low pass rate, the Board identified a need for after-hours education, and implemented this program in Spring of 2014. From 06/01/2014 – 10/31/2014, the same test had a pass percentage of 15.4%. From October 1, 2014 – April 30, 2015, the pass rate was 29%. From May 1, 2015 – August 30, 2015, the pass rate was 41.5%. Education has made THE difference. The plan is to promote evening classes to workers in the plumbing and gas field to ensure industry has certified plumbers and gas fitters on the job. We are increasing our class to two sessions per month in the Birmingham area. We are also expanding our after-hours program in Huntsville, Montgomery, and Mobile.

#### High School Programs:

In response to industry's need, the Board's intent is to promote educational programs throughout the state. The plan is to help promote high school programs using NCCER Plumbing curriculum, IPC, IFGC, and shop training. Industry will be heavily involved and possibly co-op these students. In August 2015, a plumbing program was launched at Madison County High School. This program is being led by a Master Plumber. We have also met with Shelby County Schools and understand that they intend to begin a plumbing program to be implemented in Fall 2016. We are also in the beginning stages of talks with high schools in Montgomery and Tuscaloosa.

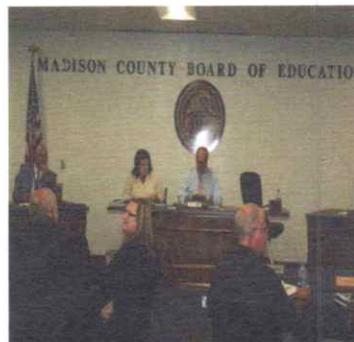
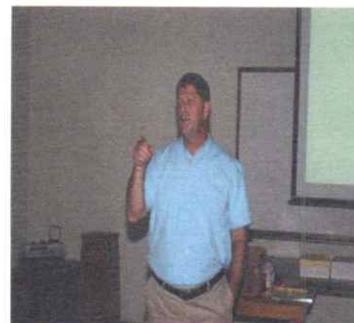
#### Goals:

The goal of promoting educational programs for the high school is to produce work ready entry level Journeyman plumbers. The goal of promoting the after-hours education programs is to produce work ready entry level or above Journeyman & Master Plumbers and Gas Fitters. The Board is committed to educational programs to meet the needs of the industry. We intend to work with educational entities and industry to reach the goals or end outcomes that our entire industry needs.

#### Testing:

The Board's intent is to be more involved in the process of creating the Journeyman Plumber and Journeyman Gas Fitter exam by writing our own pool of test questions that ensure that individuals are tested on entry level Journeyman skills and knowledge.

For information on after hours training, please visit our website at [www.pgfb.alabama.gov](http://www.pgfb.alabama.gov) under "Education".



We're  
on  
the  
Web!!



**STATE OF ALABAMA  
PLUMBERS & GAS FITTERS  
EXAMINING BOARD**

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## THANK YOU CERTIFIED CONTRACTORS

The Board appreciates the hard working licensed contractors who are determined to deliver quality services to Alabama's consumers. These contractors spend a lot of time and money to meet the requirements necessary to maintain their certifications while unscrupulous contractors attempt to take business from the certified contractor by lowering prices and doing substandard work.

The Board often receives calls from certified contractors who are discouraged by the continued presence of uncertified contractors working without obtaining the proper certification.

The Board's officers attempt to find as many of these uncertified contractors as possible, however, when you see or know of a possible uncertified contractor working in your area, please notify the Board in order for our officers to check on the validity of these contractors.

*Thank You!*