

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2005 SESSION

CHAPTER 792

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 54.1-1128, 54.1-1129, and 54.1-1130 of the Code of Virginia, to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 54.1-1129.1, relating to the Board for Contractors; licensure of water well systems providers.

[H 1921]

Approved March 26, 2005

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 54.1-1128, 54.1-1129, and 54.1-1130 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted, and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 54.1-1129.1 as follows:

§ 54.1-1128. Definitions.

"Backflow prevention device worker" means any individual who engages in, or offers to engage in, the maintenance, repair, testing, or periodic inspection of cross connection control devices, including but not limited to reduced pressure principle backflow preventors, double check-valve assemblies, double-detector check-valve assemblies, pressure type vacuum breaker assemblies, and other such devices designed, installed, and maintained in such a manner so as to prevent the contamination of the potable water supply by the introduction of nonpotable liquids, solids, or gases, thus ensuring that the potable water supply remains unaltered and free from impurities, odor, discoloration, bacteria, and other contaminants which would make the potable water supply unfit or unsafe for consumption and use.

"Board" means the Board for Contractors.

"Liquefied petroleum gas fitter" means any individual who engages in, or offers to engage in, work for the general public for compensation in work that includes the installation, repair, improvement, alterations or removal of piping, liquefied petroleum gas tanks and appliances (excluding hot water heaters, boilers and central heating systems which require a heating, ventilation and air conditioning or plumbing certification) annexed to real property.

"Natural gas fitter provider" means any individual who engages in or offers to engage in work for the general public for compensation in the incidental repair, testing, or removal of natural gas piping or fitting annexed to real property, excluding new installation of gas piping for hot water heaters, boilers, central heating systems, or other natural gas equipment which requires heating, ventilation and air conditioning or plumbing certification.

"Tradesman" means any individual who engages in, or offers to engage in, work for the general public for compensation in the trades of electrical, plumbing and heating, ventilation and air conditioning.

"Water well systems provider" means any individual who is certified by the Board in accordance with this article and who is engaged in drilling, installation, maintenance, or repair of water wells, water well pumps, and other equipment associated with the construction, removal, or repair of water wells and water well systems.

§ 54.1-1129. Necessity for licensure.

A. Beginning July 1, 1995, no individual shall engage in, or offer to engage in, work as a tradesman as defined in § 54.1-1128 unless he has been licensed under the provisions of this article. Individuals shall not be subject to licensure as a tradesman when working under the supervision of a tradesman who is licensed in the specialty for which work is being performed. Individuals holding a license in one specialty shall not be required to have a tradesman license in another specialty when performing work which is incidental to work being performed under their own specialty license.

B. Beginning July 1, 1998, no individual shall present himself as a certified backflow prevention device worker as defined in § 54.1-1128 unless he has been certified under the provisions of this article. Individuals certified as backflow prevention device workers shall not be required to hold any other professional or occupational license or certification; however, nothing in this subsection shall prohibit an individual from holding more than one professional or occupational license or certification. The certification program set forth in this article concerning backflow prevention device workers shall be voluntary and shall not be construed to prevent or affect the practice of backflow prevention device workers by those not certified by the Board, so long as any requirements of the applicable local governing body's programs relating to backflow prevention device workers are met. All local governing bodies shall accept certification by the Board of backflow prevention device workers as proof of experience and training without requiring additional examination.

C. Beginning one year after the effective date of the Board's final regulations, no individual shall engage in, or offer to engage in, work as a liquefied petroleum gas fitter or natural gas fitter provider as defined in § 54.1-1128 unless he has been licensed under the provisions of this article.

D. Beginning July 1, 2007, no individual shall engage in the drilling, installation, maintenance, or repair of a water well or water well system unless a certified water well systems provider is onsite at all times. Until June 30, 2012, any level of certification shall satisfy this requirement. Beginning July 1, 2012, only a certified individual shall engage in the drilling, installation, maintenance, or repair of a water well or water well system and a then certified master water well systems provider shall be available at all times. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prohibit licensed plumbing tradesman from completing work contained in the applicable plumbing code.

§ 54.1-1129.1. Certification of water well systems providers; continuing education.

A. The Board shall establish three levels of certification as follows: (i) trainee, which shall require proof of at least one year of full-time practical experience in the drilling, installation, maintenance, or repair of water wells or water well systems under the supervision of a certified master water well systems provider; (ii) journeyman, which shall require proof of at least three years of practical experience in the drilling, installation, maintenance, or repair of water wells or water well systems under the supervision of a certified master water well systems provider; and (iii) master, which shall require proof of at least six years of practical experience in the drilling, installation, maintenance, or repair of water wells or water well systems, under the supervision of a certified master water well systems provider.

B. A certified water well systems provider, as a condition of renewal or reinstatement and as part of the renewal or reinstatement application, shall certify to the Board that the applicant has completed at least eight hours of continuing education, approved by the Board, in the specialty of technical aspects of water well construction, applicable statutory and regulatory provisions, and business practices related to water well construction. The Board may establish requirements for approval of training instructors, criteria for continuing education, and other regulations it deems necessary to protect the public health, safety or welfare. In addition, the Board may require continuing education for renewal or reinstatement for any individual found to be in violation of the statutes or regulations governing the licensing or certification of water well system providers.

§ 54.1-1130. Application for licensure; fees; examinations; issuance; waiver of examination for water well systems providers.

A. Any individual desiring to be licensed as a tradesman, liquefied petroleum gas fitter or natural gas fitter provider, or certified as a backflow prevention device worker or water well systems provider shall file a written application on a form prescribed by the Board. The application shall be accompanied by a fee set by the Board pursuant to § 54.1-201. The application shall contain, at a minimum, the applicant's name, place of employment, and business address; and information on the knowledge, skills, abilities and education or training of the applicant.

If the application is satisfactory to the Board, the applicant shall be required by Board regulations to take an oral or written examination to determine his general knowledge of the trade in which he desires licensure or of backflow prevention devices if he desires voluntary certification unless he is exempt pursuant to § 54.1-1131. If the applicant successfully completes the examination, a license as a tradesman, liquefied petroleum gas fitter, or natural gas fitter provider, or a certificate as a backflow prevention device worker, shall be issued.

B. The Board shall require an applicant for certification as a water well systems provider, unless otherwise exempt, to take an oral or written examination to determine the applicant's general knowledge of water well systems, including relevant statutory and regulatory requirements. If the applicant successfully completes a required examination, a certificate shall be issued.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, unless an applicant is found by the Board to have engaged in any act that would constitute grounds for disciplinary action, the Board shall issue a certificate without examination to any applicant who provides satisfactory proof to the Board of having been actively and continuously engaged in water well construction activities immediately prior to July 1, 2007, as follows: (i) at least one year for trainee certification; (ii) at least three years for journeyman certification; and (iii) at least six years for master certification. This subsection shall apply only to individuals who have been employed by a properly licensed water well contractor during such period of active and continuous engagement in water well construction activities.