



Nevada State Senator Patricia Farley (upper right) moderates a panel discussion on senior safety and security issues at the Boulder City Library. Representatives from state and local agencies participate in the discussion and vendor fair.

NSCB has grown along with the state

The Nevada State Contractors Board is celebrating 75 years of protecting the state's homeowners and advocating for competent, licensed construction professionals.

Foreseeing the stratospheric growth about to grip the state, the Nevada State Legislature es-

tablished the Board in 1941.

It was during that year that the El Rancho hotel, boasting a huge casino, posh restaurants, lush landscaping and expansive parking, opened in the southern Nevada desert.

El Rancho's success spawned construction of more

upscale casinos along the dusty "Las Vegas Strip." Construction of Reno's Mapes Hotel broke ground a few years later, ushering in the era of Reno's casino heyday. And such began Nevada's first modern population and construction boom.

See DIAMOND, page 4

INSIDE THIS EDITION

Board revokes solar contractor's licenses	2
Summerlin Energy victims may be eligible for Recovery Fund relief.....	2
Longtime unlicensed contractor pleads guilty	3
Contractors Board contact information	4

Solar contractor loses licenses

Nevada State Contractors Board has revoked Summerlin Energy Las Vegas, LLC's licenses after hearing testimony from Board investigators, homeowners, and suppliers alleging the company took money without providing work or material and failed to pay its vendors, which led to liens being placed on properties after homeowners had paid Summerlin Energy in full.

Judge Philip Pro sustained 46 of the 48 causes of action included in the nine cases the Board brought against Summerlin Energy.

The company lost its electrical and general building licenses for failure to comply with the terms of a construction contract, therefore causing material injury to another, abandonment without legal excuse of any construction project, diversion of funds, failure to take appropriate corrective action, failure to pay any money due for any materials or services rendered, failure to respond to and comply with a written request from the Board, and failure to establish financial responsibility.

NSCB opened its investigation in November 2015 after receiving complaints from homeowners. More than 100 complaints have been filed against the company from homeowners and material providers, leading the Board to suspend Summerlin Energy's licenses on February 3.

Recovery Fund offers recourse

The Residential Recovery Fund was established by the Nevada Legislature in 1999. It offers protection to Nevada owners of single-family residences who conduct business with licensed contractors for the performance of any construction, remodeling, repair or improvement. An owner must occupy the residence to qualify. An applicant's eligibility to receive funds is determined after an investigation is conducted by NSCB. The Fund was designed to assist in providing relief to homeowners, when they have been damaged by licensed contractors.

Contractors are required by law (NRS 624.400 – 624.560) to provide information to a homeowner regarding the Residential Recovery Fund upon establishment of a residential contract with the homeowner. To be considered for the Fund, a complaint must be filed with NSCB within four years after the completion of work.

A single claim cannot exceed \$35,000 and claims against a single contractor cannot exceed \$400,000. Additional information regarding the Residential Recovery Fund and other services provided by NSCB may be obtained by calling (702) 486-1100 in Southern Nevada, or (775) 688-1141 in Northern Nevada.

Information is also available on the Contractors Board website at: www.nscb.nv.gov.

“Protecting the public is our primary mission, and the Board makes every effort to ensure its licensees uphold their responsibilities and do right by their customers,” said NSCB Executive Officer Margi A. Grein. “It is unfortunate that the bad business decisions of one contractor can negatively affect so many trusting homeowners.”

The Board now is accepting and reviewing claims to the Resi-

dential Recovery Fund, which makes funds available to eligible homeowners. Nevada residents who have suffered financial damage as a result of the company's infractions may receive up to \$35,000 in compensation from the fund.

The available funds per contractor, however, are limited, so damaged homeowners may not receive compensation commensurate with their losses.

Repeat offender pleads guilty

Delbridge gets probation; must pay restitution

Chronic unlicensed contractor Michael Delbridge was ordered to pay nearly \$65,000 in restitution to victims and sentenced in Las Vegas District Court to 19 to 48 months in prison for engaging in business without a license, a felony because of his multiple prior convictions on the same charge. Judicial Officer Elizabeth Gonzalez suspended the sentence in lieu of placing Delbridge on probation for up to five years.

Delbridge pled guilty to the charge, a violation of Nevada Revised Statute 624.750 (2) (c), as part of a plea agreement that included dismissal of several other charges.

Terms of Delbridge's probation include stipulation that he not commit similar offenses, and complete 16 hours of community service (to be served concurrently with similar requirements from a previous case). Gonzalez ordered restitution to 15 victims, ranging from \$500 to \$13,500. He also was ordered to pay more than \$8,000 to reimburse the Nevada State Contractors Board for costs it incurred in investigating and compiling evidence against him.

The Contractors Board investigation alleged that Delbridge, operating as "Southwest Construction," "Roadrunner Construction" and "Michael Delbridge Construction," preyed on unsuspecting homeowners – often seniors. Claiming to be a licensed contractor, Delbridge often offered to perform construction work for a bargain price in exchange for a 50 percent cash deposit, ostensibly to take advantage of sales on materials that would save homeowners money. Deposit in hand, he then would abandon projects with little or no work being done.

He has been the subject of the Board's criminal investigations since 1994, amassing more than 17 unlicensed contracting cases with the Board. Delbridge's offenses have included allegations of posing as a licensed contractor, obtaining funds under false pretenses, diversion of funds, and



MICHAEL DELBRIDGE

victimizing vulnerable persons.

"Repeat offenders like Mr. Delbridge are the very reason the Contractors Board exists," stated NSCB Executive Officer Margi A. Grein. "It is easy for an unsuspecting homeowner to become victimized by a well-versed salesman,

which is why we want to caution the public that if it sounds too good to be true, it often is."

The Board encourages residential contractors to remind their customers to always verify a contractor's license number on the Board's website or contact the Board directly at (702) 486-1100 or (775) 688-1141 before signing a contract. It is also recommended homeowners request to see a contractor's Pocket ID card issued by the Board to validate a contractor's identity and license status.

Homeowners who hire licensed contractors may be eligible for the Board's Residential Recovery Fund, which offers financial protection up to \$35,000 should something go wrong during the course of the project. This, along with the Board's investigative services into a complaint are key incentives to hiring licensed contractors for any home repair project.

DIAMOND from page 1

Buoyed by the war effort – Basic Magnesium, which anchored what would become Henderson, and the Army Gunnery School, which would become Nellis Air Force Base, were founded in 1941 – and the Baby Boom that followed, contractors scurried to build houses, roads, factories, schools, offices and shops in southern Nevada.

While the Reno area has bustled as a transportation hub since before the Comstock era, it really took off in the 1940s. In 1941, the University of Nevada built a state-of-the-art gymnasium (the Legislature spared no expense, allocating up to \$300,000!) and engineering building (\$175,000).

And the Board has been there all along the way, ensuring only qualified, licensed contractors were allowed to build the foundations for one of the world's most recognizable skylines, overseeing development of "The Biggest Little City in the World" and protecting home-

owners and legitimate contractors throughout the state.

"Now, as then, the Nevada State Contractors Board works to ensure private and public construction projects adhere to the state's strict building laws and regulations," says NSCB Executive Officer Margi Grein. "With a mandate to protect citizens' health, safety and welfare, the Board takes special pride in its services to help Nevada's seniors find qualified construction tradespeople, avoid rip-offs, and make good decisions regarding their homes' repair and maintenance."

The Board protects homeowners by issuing licenses to contractors who demonstrate, among other requirements, the skills and experience of their trade; knowledge of the state's building, labor, and business laws; and financial stability. All license applicants also undergo criminal background checks.

Board-sponsored "Protecting Nevada's Seniors" information fairs and informational panel discussions in Las Vegas,

Boulder City and Reno.

Representatives from the Nevada Attorney General, local law enforcement, elected officials and prosecutors joined the Board at three "Protecting Nevada's Seniors" events across the state to show seniors and their loved ones how to recognize and avoiding scams and physical and emotional abuse. Other exhibitors presented information on where older Nevadans can turn for medical, financial, legal, emotional, and other support from government agencies, charities, and service providers.

"Knowledge is power when defending against fraud," noted NSCB Executive Officer Margi Grein. "When consumers learn to recognize the warning signs, they know the questions to ask, how to verify a contractor's license, insist on written contracts containing all provisions, and only make payments as the work progresses."

The Contractors Board will host similar events on various topics throughout the year.

Contact The Contractors Board!

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