



Contractor License Requirements

BB-12

BULLETIN

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Under state law, the City of Ellensburg is obligated to provide written notification to all homeowners regarding the contractor registration requirements set forth in the Revised Codes of Washington (RCW), Chapter 18.27 and to advise homeowners of the risks associated with using an unregistered contractor.

Any contractor conducting business in the city must be licensed by the State of Washington Department of Labor and Industries.

The requirements are outlined below. Please refer to RCW Chapter 18.27 for the exact language and the entire code text.

What is a contractor?

(See RCW 18.27.010)

A contractor is any person, firm, or corporation who, in the pursuit of an independent business, undertakes to construct, alter, repair, improve, move, or demolish for another person any building, excavation, or other structure, project, development, or improvement; who installs or repairs roofing or siding; or who employs members of more than one trade upon a single job or project or under a single building permit.

What is the purpose of contractor registration?

(See RCW 18.27.140)

Registration under state law affords protection to the public from unreliable, fraudulent, financially irresponsible, or incompetent contractors.

What are the registration violations?

(See RCW 18.27.200)

It is a violation for any contractor to:

- Advertise, offer to do work, submit a bid, or perform any work as a contractor without being registered;
- Advertise, offer to do work, submit a bid, or perform any work as a contractor when his or her registration is suspended or revoked; or
- Transfer a valid registration to an unregistered contractor or allow an unregistered contractor to work under a registration issued to another contractor.

What are the City of Ellensburg's responsibilities?

(See RCW 18.27.110)

The City of Ellensburg cannot issue a building permit without verifying that the contractor is currently registered as required by law.

The city is responsible for:

- Printing the contractor registration number on the building permit; and
- Providing a written notice to the building permit applicant informing him or her of the contractor registration laws and the potential risks for using an unregistered contractor.
- If an applicant or contractor falsifies building permit information to obtain an exemption provided under RCW 18.27.090, the building permit will be forfeited.

What are the risks associated with using an unregistered contractor?

First, a property owner who uses an unlicensed contractor will not be protected by the contractor's bond required by RCW 18.27.040. The general contractor and the specialty contractor bonds are designed to (1) pay persons performing labor for the contractor, including employee benefits; (2) pay all taxes and contributions due to the State of Washington; (3) pay all persons furnishing labor or material or renting or supplying equipment to the contractor; and (4) pay all amounts that may be adjudged against the contractor by reason of breach of contract, including negligent or improper work in the conduct of the contracting business.

Second, the property owner's construction project may be delayed due to enforcement actions of the Department of Labor and Industries or the City of Ellensburg caused by use of an unregistered contractor. There may be other risks associated with use of unregistered contractors.

Where can I get additional information?

- Department of Labor and Industries, 1-800-647-0982 (or) www.lni.wa.gov/ (or) www.lni.wa.gov/TradesLicensing/Contractors/HireCon/
- City of Ellensburg, 509-962-7239 (or) buildinginspections@ci.ellensburg.wa.us

This document is intended to provide guidance in applying certain regulations and is for informational use only. It cannot be used as a substitute for the Construction Codes or for other city, state or federal codes and regulations. For more information see the City website at: www.ci.ellensburg.wa.us.