

Building contractor businesses in Wisconsin need to register with the state Department of Commerce.

A four -year building contractor registration will be required beginning July 1, 2009, for businesses whose work is regulated under any of the Commerce codes affecting commercial buildings, places of employment, one- and two-family dwellings, and public swimming pools. Registrations can be done via the Internet. The fee for four years is \$100. Registrations done by mail or in person have a \$15 processing fee. There are no exams or education prerequisites for the registration.

The department adopted the registration as an emergency rule in order to put the process in place for the 2009 construction season. There was a hearing in January on a code change proposal that is the basis of the emergency rule, which was effective March 2, 2009.

A contracting business will need the registration to do most types of building construction work, to obtain building permits, to provide bids or contracts, or to work as a subcontractor.

Individual employees of contractors will not need this registration, nor will someone who is working on property they or their employer owns or leases. Individual licenses, certifications, etc., may be needed under other state codes or municipal ordinances.

Businesses that currently hold one of nine business credentials issued by the Safety and Buildings Division of the Department of Commerce, such as dwelling contractor certifications, elevator, or HVAC contractor registrations, do not need the new registration for any reason.

In part, the registration was adopted to help consumers and local and state agencies better identify businesses that work in construction. Enforcement of the registration system will be done by people in the construction industry, as consumers, contractors, local and state agencies, and suppliers find out who does and does not have the registration.

Registration allows contractors to get more information on codes and about safety and health practices. Contractor voices should be heard in discussions about construction regulations. More information will help contractors know their responsibilities in terms of taxes, worker's compensation insurance, and unemployment insurance. Some contractors are not following those regulations, which leads to unfair competition.

The Safety and Buildings Division has a Building Contractor Program Web page with more information and via which contractors can now register: <http://commerce.wi.gov/SB/SB-BuildingContractorProgram.html>. There is a list on that site that identifies most of the business types that will need to register.

Examples of businesses that will need to register includes:

Building site preparation/stabilization	Masonry and stone work
Drywall and plastering	Plumbing
Electric Wiring	Poured concrete foundations and structures
Finish carpentry	Precast concrete
Fire protection	Public Swimming Pools and Water Attractions
Flooring	Roofing
Framing carpentry	Siding
General building construction	Structural steel
Glass and glazing	Tile and terrazzo
Insulation	Wall coverings