B Group

Why are additional contractor license classifications needed, and what is the City trying to accomplish? What are the current licensing requirements, and exactly what would change under the proposal? Where else in Wyoming do these recommended new licensing requirements exist? Will these additional license classifications make it harder to enter the skilled trades or undermine career and technical education opportunities for residents?

The current and new licensing requirements fall under Chapter 15.11 - Board of Appeals, Contractor Licensing, and Violations and Disciplinary Actions. The only change to this section is the addition of a few sub-contractor license categories and fire alarm and suppression categories. The intent of the creation of the sub-contractor licenses is to create a pathway for contractors to get licensed with the City of Casper as a sub-contractor and begin documenting their time if they wish to progress in their career and be able to obtain a General Contractor license. This also gives individuals who are seeking reciprocity from another jurisdiction the ability to get licensed with the City of Casper. The newly proposed contractor license categories are as follows:

- New Sub-Contractor License Categories:
  - Cellular Communications Contractor (eliminates the need for a General Class I or IIA **AND** Electrical Contractor)
  - Concrete Contractor, Flatwork
  - Concrete Contractor, General
  - Drywall Contractor
  - Framing Contractor
  - Insulation Contractor
- New Fire Alarm and Suppression Contractor Categories:
  - Fire Extinguisher Rook
  - Fire Extinguisher Technician
  - Fire Extinguisher Qualified Supervisor
  - Fire Alarm Rook
  - Fire Alarm Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance Technician
  - Fire Alarm Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance Qualified Supervisor
  - Fire Alarm Installation, Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance Technician
  - Fire Alarm Installation, Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance Qualified Supervisor
  - Fire Pump Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance Technician
  - Fire Pump Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance Qualified Supervisor
  - Fire Pump Installation, Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance Technician

- Fire Pump Installation, Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance Qualified Supervisor
- Fire Suppression Rook
- Fire Suppression Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance Technician
- Fire Suppression Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance Qualified Supervisor
- Fire Suppression Installation, Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance Technician
- Fire Suppression Installation, Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance Qualified Supervisor

Numerous other Wyoming Jurisdiction already offer Sub-Contractor license classification. Most of which have several other licenses than are being proposed with the repeal and replacement of Title 15. Comparable Municipalities to the City of Casper are as follows:

- **Cheyenne:** Subcontractor licenses - Concrete Flat Work, Drywall, Framing, Structural Concrete, Structural Masonry, Contractor D (all other trades not included in C1 or C2), Solar/Wind Turbin, Similar Fire Alarm and Suppression License Categories to what is being proposed
- **Laramie:** Subcontractor Class C - Building Sub-Contractors, Fire Protection Contractor
- **Sheridan:** Subcontractor licenses - Structural Concrete, Masonry, Drywall, Siding, Fire Sprinkler, Limited Electrical (Fire Alarm)
- **Cody:** Specialty licenses - Siding, Structural Concrete, Insulation, Drywall, Framing, etc.
- **Gillette:** Specialty licenses - Structural and Non-Structural Concrete, Drywall and Plaster, Framing, Insulation, and Miscellaneous (covers all licenses not specifically called out), Chemical Fire Suppression, Fire Alarm, Sprinkler (Fire/Standpipe)

These requirements will not make it harder to enter the skilled trades. If anything, it gives them an opportunity to progress through their trade of choice. Typically, individuals enter at the laborer or apprentice level. We are not requiring licenses for these types of individuals. As they gain experience and want to progress through their field they would then apply for applicable licensure in their trade. Typically, the Sub-Contractor license will be held by the company **Owner** only. Company employees/laborers will not be required to have licenses.

Could the proposed licensing requirements disadvantage contractors with limited English proficiency and, if so, how will the City awork with those with limited English proficiency?

The license categories that are being proposed are already required State wide for the most part in Jurisdictions which are comparable to the City of Casper. Furthermore, the

International Code Council and American Concrete Institute, for example, both offer education, training, and credentialling services for individuals with limited English proficiency. The Building Inspection Division also employs a Spanish speaking Inspector who can assist with answering questions and directing individuals to the appropriate resource.

Furthermore, the Municipal Code (which can be found online) can easily be translated into Spanish and numerous other languages for non-English speaking individuals.

Some code requirements make it impossible to renovate older buildings and put them into use; is there a scenario where alternative methods could be allowed? For instance, could the City offer practical, affordable waivers or alternative compliance solutions?

Code requirement are created by the International Code Council and adopted by the State of Wyoming every 3 years. The International Existing Building Code offers 3 compliance methods (Prescriptive Method, Work Area Method, and Performance Method) for determining which code requirements shall be met and how much of the building that they shall apply to an existing building. There are additional Code leniencies for Historic Buildings as well. It is the responsibility of the property owner to show which method that they will be utilizing and how the code requirements will be met. This is typically done with the help of an Architect but is not required for all projects. Additionally, the Building and Fire Code's give the Code Official the ability to approve alternate methods of construction as long as they meet the intent of the adopted Code.

The Building Inspection and Casper Fire Community Risk Reduction Divisions must ensure that adopted codes are applied consistently and fairly. To ensure that this occurs a process for code variances has been established. A variance can be applied for which requires that an applicant, with the help of a registered design professional, describe the reason for the variance, the alternative method proposed, and how it meets the intent of the adopted Code(s). The Code Official can approve or reject the variance. In the event that the variance is rejected the applicant has the ability to appeal the determination to the Appeals Board.

What continuing education or one-year training would be required for insulation and concrete flatwork contractors, and where can it be obtained, and how will it be validated by the city?

The proposed continuing education requirement for **ALL** license categories require is 4 hours annually. All electrical licensees are currently required to obtain 16 hours every 3 years by the State of Wyoming. Additionally, surrounding states currently require all license holders to obtain varying amounts of continuing education with 4 hours annually being the minimum amount.

Continuing education can be obtained through the following sources:

- International Code Council
- American Concrete Institute
- Building Performance Institute
- High Performance Insulation Professionals
- The Drywall Academy
- Intertek
- NICET
- Numerous other online continuing education sources are available
- Wyoming Conference of Building Officials (WCBO – offers semi-annual conferences which are open to Building Officials, inspectors, contractors, design professionals, and vendors and offer code update discussion and training.
- Manufacture product training presentations, videos, webinars, etc.
- College courses
- Any other source that can be verified through affidavit or completion certificate.

The City of Casper will leave it up to the individual contractor as to how they obtain their CEU's. There are numerous sources and opportunities for them to be able to obtain their 4 annual hours. Contractors will need to provide their CEU completion certificate or provide affidavits which prove the required 4 hours at time of renewal beginning the 2028 calendar year.

What CEUs are required by license classification, and why have they not been required by local jurisdictions in WY? What kind of education will qualify and what won't?

The City will not be specifying what form of CEU's that are submitted. Contractors may choose to provide CEU's based on code updates, product trainings, installation methods, etc. The requirement is that they complete some form of continuing education that pertains to their field.

As has been mentioned, surrounding states do require continuing education for all license holders. The State of Wyoming requires continuing education for electrical contractors. Smaller Municipalities often look to the larger cities such as Casper and Cheyenne, who have more certified and established Building, Fire, and Code Enforcement Departments/Division for guidance and enforcement processes and procedures. Continuing education has been discussed for several years amongst Building Officials (Wyoming Conference of Building Officials) because of the diverse and ever changing codes, material improvements, and installation practices. Additionally, life-safety does not

just fall on the electrical trade. Contractors consider themselves professionals and should be held to the same standard as other professionals who work in other industries. Because of this the City is taking the lead in this area and proposing that continuing education be required for the licensed contracting community.

Contractors shall submit continuing education which preferably pertains to their field in the form of a completion certificate or an affidavit proving completion and number of hours earned. Hours earned shall be for the calendar year prior to or including the year of the license renewal.

Does this ordinance change affect how appeals occur or change the appeal process in any way?

No. The appeals process will not be impacted in any way.

What effects will the proposed solar and wind provisions have on large projects compared to residential and commercial business scale projects?

The only portion of Chapter 15.08 - Solar and Wind Energy which was changed was the addition of Section 15.08.220 – Photovoltaic and Wind Energy Systems – Construction Permitting and Installation. This section requires:

- Residential Construction:
  - Plans be drawn up and submitted for review to reflect the Building Inspection Division's current processes.
  - Rapid shutdown and service disconnection located outside in a readily accessible location.
    - This is so the Fire Department can disconnect the power source easily in the event of an emergency.
- Commercial Construction
  - Plans be submitted for review to reflect the Building Inspection Division's current processes. These plans shall be prepared by a registered design professional due to the increased power loads and complexity typically associated with commercial buildings.

The major impact of this change will be that the current electrical and structural systems will need to be evaluated, and solar systems will be required to be designed in a manner that allows the Building Inspection Division to appropriately review a system prior to their installation.

Are we honoring the reciprocity requirements for out-of-state contractors, with CE requirements. Is this consistent throughout the state, or only in Casper?

The City would not require contractors seeking to become licensed with the City of Casper for the first time through reciprocity but would require proof of continuing education for subsequent renewals. This would not affect the State's reciprocity Statute that was established.

With the proposed continuing education requirements, are we scaring off students who might want to go into technical education but aren't good students? Are we creating a barrier?

Continuing education would not pertain in this manner because there aren't testing requirements associated with obtaining continuing education. C.E.U.'s are based off of attendance and not completed course work.

With the proposed permit fee increase to residential development, will that hurt our goals for affordable housing by having the cost passed onto buyers?

The proposed fee changes would not hurt the City's goals for affordable housing. Permit fees should be approximately 1% of the project valuation. The City's fee schedule for current and new construction permit fees breaks down as follows:

- $450,000 new construction project valuation (current fee)
  - Building Permit Fee - $2,801.00
  - Plan Review Fee - 280.00
  - Total Permit Fee - $3,081.00 (approximately .069% of valuation)
- $450,000 new construction project valuation (proposed fee)
  - Building Permit Fee - $3,050.00
  - Plan Review Fee - 1,220.00
  - Total Permit Fee - $4,270.00 (approximately .095% of valuation)

The primary factor for affordable housing falls on lot prices and cost of materials and labor which does impact permit fee prices, but ultimately these fees only affect housing costs by less than 1% overall.

There are voices in the contracting world sharing that they don't want to speak out against the proposed changes to Title 15 because they are fearful of retaliation. What can we do to dissuade this fear?

The City of Casper understands that Code changes do affect the contracting community and has tried to ensure that they have been made aware of the proposed changes through our invitation to our Coffee Talk presentation and through communication in the field with contractor that we come in contact with. The City's Public Hearing and Reading process will also offer contractors the opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns.

Are Building and Code divisions being fair & equitable to everyone? Treating everyone the same?

Currently electrical contractors are being held to a higher standard that other trades (i.e. pluming, mechanical, and general contractors). This is acknowledged through the State's continuing education requirement that is currently in place. The City is attempting to bridge the gap between electricians and other trades by implementing this requirement across the board.

The implementation of sub-contractor and fire license categories is also not consistent between the City of Casper and other Municipalities. The implementation of these license categories would bring the City in line with several of the other comparable Cities within Wyoming and afford contractors the ability to gain licensure in Casper that they currently hold in other Jurisdictions.

The City of Casper Building Inspection Division and Casper Fire Community Risk Reduction Division strive to interpret and apply adopted codes consistently and fairly to everyone they serve. This pertains to not only commercial but to residential projects. Additionally, all persons are afforded the opportunity to appeal a code interpretation or determination to the Appeals Board for final determination.