


 **Back**

 **Search All Issues**

 **Contents**

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Construction Labor

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Page 1612

State News

California

State Targets Construction Job Sites In Labor, Tax, Licensing Code Sweeps

Sweeps of more than 90 construction job sites Jan. 18-21 in three California counties netted 83 citations for violations of the state labor, tax, and licensing codes and nearly \$200,000 in potential fines, the California State License Board announced Jan. 31.


Working in partnership with the Economic and Employment Enforcement Coalition, the license board assembled teams that visited job sites of businesses suspected of evading these laws "to gain a competitive advantage over the almost 300,000 legitimate contractors who follow the law," according to the announcement.

The teams interviewed workers, managers, owners, and safety officers and examined business records.


In Santa Clara County, inspections at 65 sites with a total of 507 workers yielded 68 citations and \$110,550 potential fines, the agency reported.

During inspections of 25 job sites in San Diego County, the agency said investigators found "not one single operator" with a valid contractor's license. Among the 13 citations issued, violations included non-licensed contracting, cash pay to workers, and failure to pay workers' compensation insurance. Potential fines totaled \$41,650.

In Downey County, the license board said four inspections were made as follow-ups on a consumer tip. Citations for not being licensed were issued to two contractors, as well as alleged labor code violations for paying case wages and failure to pay workers' compensation insurance, the agency said.

This latest sweep of construction job sites follows similar inspections last year in Silicon Valley and in Southern California (51 CLR 102, 3/23/05)  that resulted in 300 citations and more than \$750,000 in potential fines, the agency said.

CSLB licenses and regulates 292,000 building contractors in the state and investigates about 20,000 complaints annually. Contractors who perform work valued at more than \$500 annually are required to be licensed.

Unlicensed contractors face jail sentences of up to six months, fines of \$500, and potential administrative fees of between \$200 and \$15,000. Subsequent violations increase criminal penalties, state agency officials said. 

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 **Back**

 **Search All Issues**

 **Contents**