

Minnesota Electrical Continuing Education Changes Effective October 1, 2011

As you may be aware, the 2011 Minnesota Legislature established a uniform continuing education (CE) program for licenses administered by the Department of Labor and Industry's Construction Codes and Licensing Division (CCLD).

The uniform CE program is based on the existing residential contractor CE program administered by CCLD, with additional features taken from the existing electrical CE program. In all, four independent CE activities administered by CCLD were consolidated into a single coordinated program. Electrical continuing education, building official continuing education, and manufactured home installer continuing education were brought together with residential contractor continuing education.

Administration of CE Program

Administratively, the key person for sponsors of continuing education is Josie Steinhoff. She coordinates the registration of sponsors, approval of course applications, and notice of subsequent offerings. Review and approval of CE courses will be performed by the subject matter experts in CCLD, which means that electrical CE courses will be reviewed by individuals expert in the NEC and residential contractor CE courses will be reviewed by individuals expert in Minnesota's building code. Course rosters may be entered directly into the CCLD licensing system by sponsors or mailed to us for data entry. When communicating to us regarding continuing education, please use our dedicated CE Sponsor email address dli.cesponsor@state.mn.us. By using this email address, we will be able to more directly respond to your inquiries and submissions.

A single webpage dealing with continuing education will be established on the CCLD website. A single set of forms is being finalized for use by sponsors regardless of the CE courses being submitted for review and approval. The forms will be available through our online forms page (www.dli.mn.gov/cclld/forms.asp). Our goal is to make this transition work for everyone, including sponsors, instructors, course attendees, and the department. The implementation of the uniform CE programs is a work in progress and we welcome your suggestions for improvement.

Uniform CE Program

The uniform CE program has the following features:

1. Sponsors of CE courses must pre-register with the department before sponsoring and offering continuing education courses in Minnesota.
2. Sponsors must submit CE courses to CCLD for approval before offering the courses (submissions by law must be received at least 30 days before the first course offering).
3. Sponsors must notify the department at least 30 days before offering an approved course.
4. CCLD will maintain an active CE record for each individual required to complete continuing education as a condition of renewing their license, certification, or registration.
5. Sponsors must submit the attendance roster from each course offering, either by recording attendance online or by submitting a physical copy to CCLD.

6. Individuals attending courses not approved by the department will have the ability to obtain CCLD review and approval of courses on a case-by-case basis.
7. Implementation of the uniform CE program starts on October 1, 2011. The immediate impact on sponsors and approved courses varies depending on the current status of the sponsor's registration or course approval.

Electrical CE Sponsors

Historically, the focus of electrical continuing education was on the review and approval of CE course content and approval of the instructors. While this focus remains intact, CE sponsors must formally register with the department and identify the industries they intend to offer continuing education courses. Implicit in past approvals of electrical CE courses and instructors was the registration of course sponsors. To facilitate the integration of electrical CE sponsors and their approved courses into the new uniform CE program, the following actions have been taken by the department or are needed by CE sponsors:

- The department created a registration record for sponsors that offer or have offered electrical continuing education courses.
- Electrical CE course sponsors with approved electrical CE courses that expire after October 1, 2011 had their sponsor registrations set to expire on November 30, 2011.
- Sponsors must complete renewal of their registration before November 30, 2011. Sponsors failing to renew by this date cannot offer or hold approved electrical CE courses in Minnesota after November 30, 2011 until their registration is renewed.
- Sponsors may renew their sponsor registration online at www.dli.mn.gov/paycenter.asp starting October 3, 2011.
- Sponsors currently approved to offer residential construction CE do not need to submit a renewal or new application or a new fee to also offer electrical CE. They do, however, need to submit a new application form to update the types of continuing education they plan to offer. The CE sponsor application form should be available online at www.dli.mn.gov/cclcd/forms.asp by October 1, 2011.

Electrical CE Courses

Although reviewing and approving electrical CE courses remains virtually unchanged, there are some administrative changes related to submitting CE course applications, notices of subsequent offerings, and attendance rosters.

- Electrical CE courses approved before October 1, 2011 remain in effect through the expiration date of the course. No fee is required on these courses. They have already been approved and we are not going to approve them again simply to obtain the fee.
- New CE course applications must be submitted with the \$20 per credit fee. The application form is being adapted to handle course applications for any of the four disciplines requiring continuing education. The updated form will be posted online at www.dli.mn.gov/CCLD/Forms.asp by October 1, 2011.
- Sponsors should submit Notices of Subsequent Offerings to dli.cesponsor@state.mn.us. You may still mail the notices. However, we believe the use of e-mail will benefit sponsors, CE attendees, and the department

by accelerating this process.

- All approved CE course offerings will be posted online, similar to what is posted currently for residential contractor continuing education (www.dli.mn.gov/CCLD/RBCcourses.asp). Since the exact webpage address has not been determined yet, please go to www.dli.mn.gov/cld.asp to access the CE webpage on October 3rd.
- Sponsors are required by law to report to the department who attended the approved course within 15 days of the course offering date. To facilitate this reporting, an online portal shall be made available to sponsors to report the attendance. Sponsors will need an access code issued by the department to use this online tool. Josie will provide the access code and webpage address when the course is approved or upon receipt of a Notice of Subsequent Offerings. Rosters may still be mailed to the department for data entry.

Licensee CE Status

Individual license holders have been able to check their electrical continuing education status online for a few years. The approach to check an individual's CE status online will change effective October 1, 2011. The existing reports will no longer be updated. Instead, an individual's current CE status will be posted online as either MET or NOT MET on their personal license record. The number of hours recorded by the department will no longer be reported online. A new license search tool will be launched on October 1, 2011 at www.dli.mn.gov/CCLD/LicVerify.asp that can be searched by license number or name.