

Licensing & Certification

In this section we will be discussing various license and certification requirements and scopes. It is important that the plumber understand what his license may and may not cover. In the previous section we discussed the requirements of when an OSHA card may be required and the requirements of being certified in lead remediation.

Definition: Plumber—General Statue Chapter 393 Section 20-332-1 (g)

"Plumber" means any licensed journey person employed by a plumbing and piping contractor or who is in fact a licensed contractor and is entitled to perform plumbing and piping work.

(The instructor can type in <http://cga.ct.gov> to bring up the general assembly site. Click on the blue box with the word statutes, click on browse statutes. This will bring you to a page with a link to every state statute. Volume 7 is where the statutes addressing licensing and consumer protection are located.)

Definition: Plumbing and Piping Maintenance—General Statue 393 Section 20-332-1 (j)
"Plumbing and piping maintenance" means the keeping in a state of repair or efficiency all types or classes of plumbing and piping equipment. The replacement of existing equipment with equivalent materials, or materials substantially equal to existing materials if identical equipment is not available, but excluding any alteration or additional work adversely affecting safety, or change in original design. Change of original function or design is permitted as maintenance only where the existing equipment or system is in a dangerous condition and not in compliance with the present code provisions, provided that the maintenance performed will render the system or equipment safe and in compliance with applicable code provisions. Excluded from the definition of plumbing and piping maintenance is the removal and/or replacement of a vital element of gas, water, or soil pipes, cisterns, tanks, bathtubs, shower stalls, interior drains connected to soil pipes, water closets and fittings appurtenant thereto, or any sanitary or fire protecting apparatus, except the closing of valves to cut off a supply if a dangerous condition exists and the cutting off would render the condition safe and the removal or rendering safe of equipment in a dangerous condition.

The first scope that we discuss will be for a license known by a few different names, unlimited contractor's license, master's license or P-1. Whichever term you may use it is the license that is required by the state that allows the plumber to pull a permit. As we are all aware, permits are required for any plumbing work except for the clearing of clogs or the repair or replacement of a valves and faucet. Plumbers who fail to pull a permit can be given a fine and/or lose their license. Plumbers who hold a P-1 should also be aware that the selling of their license, pulling permits for others, can also lead to fines and/or loss of their license. Chapter 393 Section 20-330 Sec. (3)

"Plumbing and piping work" means the installation, repair, replacement, alteration or maintenance of gas, water and associated fixtures, tubing and piping mains and branch lines up to and including the closest valve to a machine or equipment used in the manufacturing process,

laboratory equipment, sanitary equipment, other than subsurface sewage disposal systems, fire prevention apparatus, all water systems for human usage, sewage treatment facilities and all associated fittings within a building and includes lateral storm and sanitary lines from buildings to the mains, process piping, swimming pools and pumping equipment, and includes making connections to back flow prevention devices, and includes low voltage wiring, not exceeding twenty-four volts, used within a lawn sprinkler system, but does not include (A) solar thermal work performed pursuant to a certificate held as provided in section 20-334g, except for the repair of those portions of a solar hot water heating system that include the basic domestic hot water tank and the tie-in to the potable water system, (B) the installation, repair, replacement, alteration or maintenance of fire prevention apparatus within a structure, except for standpipes that are not connected to sprinkler systems, (C) medical gas and vacuum systems work, and (D) millwright work. For the purposes of this subdivision, "process piping" means piping or tubing that conveys liquid or gas that is used directly in the production of a chemical or a product for human consumption.

The next category of license that we will be discussing is the unlimited journeyman or P-2 license. The scope of work for this license is the same as the scope for the holder of a P-1. This license allows the holder to work unsupervised by a P-1 but does not allow the license holder pull their own permit. A registered apprentice may work under a P-2 direct supervision.

Certifications are not licenses. A certification is a skill that attaches itself to an occupational license. Certifications cannot be attached to an apprentice card. The two certifications that we will be discussing in this section are the Medical Gas and Solar Thermal certifications.

In 2001 the Plumbing Board began looking into the possibility of a issuing a medical gas certification which would attach to either a person's P-1 or P-2. After putting together a subcommittee to research the requirements for a license holder to obtain the medical gas certification the subcommittee through the plumbing board referenced and suggested the certification be issued in accordance with the requirements of NFPA 99-C Gas and Vacuum Systems which specifies that installers meet the requirements of ASSE 6010 which include but are not limited to...

- A minimum of a 32 hour class.
- A 100 question closed book test.
- A 1 1/2" Horizontal brazed coupling.
- A 1 1/2" Vertical, up-flow only, brazed coupling.

This test must be administered by an independent third party approved by the Department of Consumer Protection. Once the mechanic has passed the written and braze portions of the test they will receive a certificate and identification card. The mechanic will then mail a copy of the certificate along with a check in the amount of \$50.00 and a notarized medical gas certification application, the DCP now has a specific application just for medical gas certification, **do not** use

the standard licensing application. These should be mailed to the DCP 165 Capital Ave, Hartford, CT. The DCP will then issue the medical gas certification which is physically identical to your plumber's license. The state issued certification will become due for renewal each October. Unlike the state certification the medical gas certification has two other different expirations. The first is for the braze certification which expire every six months. The medical gas certification holder may maintain the braze portion of their certification by having the contactor complete a brazer continuity form on company letterhead and submitting it to the third party testing agency. As stated previously this must be done every six-month's to keep up continuity. The second portion of the certification is the code portion. The installer must also take a written recertification test every three years in order maintain their certification. Installers may not work on medical gas projects without having all three portions, braze, code and state, of their certifications up to date. Apprentices may obtain their third party installer certification before becoming license. This will allow them to install but not to braze the piping systems.

The state of Connecticut's plumbing and heating and cooling boards set up a solar thermal subcommittee to address the possibility of issuing a solar thermal certification to properly licensed plumbers and heating and cooling mechanics. The committees believed that an additional 24 hours of training in actual solar thermal system installation was all that was required for the properly licensed mechanic to take the state exam.

The solar thermal certification was enacted last year. This certification allows properly licensed plumbing and heating and cooling mechanics to install and maintain thermal solar systems without having the need for the state solar thermal license.

What are the minimum requirements and process to take the solar thermal exam and obtain the state certification?

- That person must hold a P-1, P-2, P-3, or P-4 State of Connecticut plumbing license or hold an S-1, S-2, S-3 or S-4 State of Connecticut heating & cooling license.
- That person must complete and pass a 24 hours solar thermal certification class
- That person must apply to the State of Connecticut using either the STC-1 or STC-2 Occupational trade license application. This application is specific for the state's solar thermal exam through PSI. **Do not** use the standard licensing application.
- That person must mail in the properly completed application along with a copy of their valid trade license and certification of completion from the state approved solar training agency. There is **no** application fee for the test but there is a test fee which must be made payable to PSI Examinations.
- That person must past the PSI STC 1 or 2 exams.
- Once the test is passed that person must mail the signed exam results to the state of Connecticut's Department of Consumer Protection, 165 Capital Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106, along with a check in the proper amount to obtain their certification.

Many plumbing contractors do not realize that when working in remodeling situations that they are required to hold a state issued Home Improvement Contractors certificate. They also may not realize that a separate permit may be required for this portion of the work. Chapter 400 of the CT General Statutes covers "Home Improvement Contractor" Section 20-419 (4) defines Home Improvement as...

"Home improvement" includes, but is not limited to, the repair, replacement, remodeling, alteration, conversion, modernization, improvement, rehabilitation or sandblasting of , or addition to any land or building or that portion thereof which is used or designed to be used as a private residence, dwelling place or residential rental property, or the construction, replacement, installation or improvement of driveways, swimming pools, porches, garages , roofs, siding, insulation, sunrooms, flooring, patios, landscaping, fences, doors and windows and waterproofing in connection with such land or building or that portion thereof which is used or designed to be used as a private residence, dwelling place or residential rental property or the removal or replacement of a residential underground heating oil storage tank system in which the total cash price for all work agreed upon between the contractor and owner exceeds two hundred dollars. "Home improvement" does not include: (A) The construction of a new home; (B) the sale of goods by a seller who neither arranges to preform nor performs, directly or indirectly, any work or labor in connection with the installation or application of the goods or materials; (C) the sale of goods or services furnished for commercial or business use or for resale, provided commercial or business use does not include use as use as residential rental property; (D) the sale of appliances, such as stoves, refrigerator, freezers, room air conditioners and others which are designed for and are easily removable from the premises without material alteration thereof; and any work performed without compensation by the owner on his own private residence or residential rental property.

What does this all mean to the plumbing contractor? If we are installing vanities, medicine cabinets, or sheet rock, etc., we must be holding a state Home Improvement Contractors certificate. Although these things may be ancillary to what we are doing, they are not covered by our state Plumbing license. Fortunately the requirement is for the contractor only and not the journeypersons or apprentices working for them. We have included an application packet with your handouts.

The application is also available online at
<http://www.ct.gov/dcp/cwp/view.asp?a=1622&q=446460>.

You may also get an application by contacting the state at the...

- Department of Consumer Protection,
- License Services Division
- 165 Capitol Avenue, Room 147, Hartford, CT 06106.
- Phone 860 713 6000
- <http://www.state.ct.us/dcp>.

The certificate will cost you \$160, or less, depending on how late in the year you get it. Certificates expire the last day of November each year. You will also have to pay \$100 every year to the Home Improvement Guaranty Fund and you may be required to post a bond.

(The instructor should click on the application packet information, the first link, at this time. It will bring you to the DCP HMI home page which show four bullet pointed links which can be briefly discussed before clicking on the Home Improvement Contractor link. This is a good resource to review. Within the contact packet is a section on frequently asked questions which the instructor may want to review with the class.