State of Wisconsin

DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

LICENSING OF ELECTRICIANS

Effective 9/2016

1. Do I need an electrical license to do work on a project for which I secured an electrical permit before April 1st 2014?

   Yes, unless exempt under Wis. Stat. 101.862, any person who installs, maintains, or repairs electrical wiring needs to be licensed. The date of a permit does not effect the licensing of electricians.

2. Do volunteers for a qualified non-profit need an electrician's license?

   Wis. Stat. 101.862 (6)(a) exempts volunteer workers from licensing if the person is performing electrical work for a qualified nonprofit corporation. The exemption is limited to installing electrical wiring in a new one or two family dwelling. The person may not be paid or receive any other compensation.

3. What is the definition of a "qualified" nonprofit corporation?

   A qualified nonprofit corporation is one the meets all of the following conditions:

   1. The corporation is described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is exempt from federal income tax under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code.
   2. The corporation has as its purpose the construction and rehabilitation of residential dwellings in a specific community or area.

4. If I was born before January 1st, 1956 do I need a license to perform electrical work?

   Yes. The Department has promulgated rules to license such persons. An individual who has 15 years of experience doing electrical work and is born

before January 1, 1956 shall obtain a "Registered Master Electrician License" to preform electrical work.

5. Do individuals born before January 1st, 1956 with 15 years of electrical work experience need direct supervision or can they provide direct supervision on job sites?

   Individuals who meet the exemption criteria will not require supervision, and can provide supervision. The ratio rules of SPS 305.40(5) would still apply.

6. Do electrical employees of existing industrial or manufacturing facilities need a license to install, maintain, or repair electrical wiring?

   No. Wis. Stat. 101.862 (4)(am) permits employees to install electrical wiring within an existing industrial or manufacturing facility without an electrician's license.

7. Are sign technicians required to have a state electrical license in order to install, maintain, or repair a sign, section sign, or field installed skeleton tubing and associated wiring?

   No, sign installers are not required to have an electrical license in order to install, maintain, or repair a sign or sign assembly. Their work is limited to signs, section signs, or skeleton tubing or tubing wiring. A non-licensed employee is limited to working on wiring or equipment on the load side of the required sign disconnecting means.

8. Do outside contractors who install, maintain, or repair electrical wiring in existing industrial or manufacturing facilities need a license?

   Yes. Electrical contractors shall be licensed and their employees shall be licensed electricians when installing, maintain, or repairing electrical wiring or equipment in any occupancy including existing industrial or manufacturing facilities.

9. Do I need an electrician license to replace receptacles or light fixtures?

   No. Wis. Stat. 101.862 (4)(n) allows a person to replace existing switch or receptacle outlets rated 20 amps or less without an electrician's license.

10. Does the licensing requirement apply to electrical contractors working on Wisconsin Department of Transportation Projects?

    No. Per Wis. Stat. 101.862 (4) (j), a person engaged in installing, repairing, or maintaining electrical wiring that provides lighting for public thoroughfares and for public airports is exempted form the licensing requirements. This exception does not require the person performing the work to be an employee of the State.

11. Do individuals who work exclusively on electrical systems that operate at 100-volts or less need a license?

    No. Per Wis. Stat. 101.862 (4) (d) Stats, individuals who work on electrical systems that operate at 100-volts or less are exempt from the licensing requirements. (This includes CCTV, Fire Alarm, Card Access, etc.)

12. If I am already licensed/certified by the State, am I still required to get a municipal license if a municipal license is required to do electrical wiring?

    No. Per Wis. Stat. 101.861 (1) Stats, municipal licensing requirements do not apply to electrical contractors, electricians, or electrical inspectors who are licensed, registered, or certified by the Department of Safety and Professional Services.

13. Can an unlicensed person install electrical wiring in an owner occupied single family dwelling?

    Yes. ss. 101.862(4)(a) allows a homeowner to install, repair, or maintain electrical wiring without a license on premises that the property owner owns and occupies unless a license is required by a local ordinance.
    (For example: a homeowner may have to take out a permit but would not need a license to add new lights or receptacles to either new or existing circuits.)

14. Wis. Stat. 101.862(4)(a) permits a residential property owner to do wiring on premises that the property owner owns and occupies as a residence. Does this exemption apply to a duplex or multifamily dwelling?

    This exemption applies to an owner occupied single family dwelling only. This exemption would also apply to accessory structures such as a detached garage that is directly associated with the dwelling.

15. Can the owner of a new dwelling under construction install the electrical wiring in the home as it is being built?

    No, as the individual does not occupy the building under construction, the statutory exemption does not apply.

16. Is a plumber required to be licensed as an electrician to make the final connection to an electric water heater? How about re-connecting a replacement water heater?

    No. Wis. Stat. 101.862 (4)(g) exempts individuals that are installing manufactured equipment from electrical licensing provided the work is after the last disconnect.

17. Is a POWTS system installer required to be licensed as an electrician to make the connection of the manufactured equipment to the junction, pull or device box that is nearest to the manufactured equipment? (Manufactured equipment includes but is not limited to the effluent pump, alarm system etc.)

    No. Wis. Stat. 101.862 (4) (g) exempts persons who work on manufactured equipment that is not primarily electrical in nature. This means that a POWTS system installer may install the manufactured equipment and make all connections up to and including the load side of junction, pull or device box that is closest to the manufactured equipment.

18. Can a POWTS system installer place the wire in the open POWTS trench and bury the wire?

    Yes, a POWTS system installer may place the wire in the trench but the wiring must be attached to the line side of the junction pull or device box closest to the manufactured system by a licensed electrician. Further, any connection made from the line side of the junction, pull or device box back to the main building power source must be connected by a licensed electrician at both ends.

19. Are HVAC installers who make electrical disconnect and reconnects on furnace and air conditioner replacements required to be licensed as electrician?

    No. Wis. Stat. 101.862(4)(g) exempts persons who work on manufactured equipment that is not primarily electrical in nature. This means the installation, maintenance or repair work to HVAC equipment does not need to be done by a licensed electrician if it only involves the installation of conductors that are considered part of the equipment.

20. Are water or well pump installers required to have an electrician's license to install water or well pumps?

    No. Wis. Stat. 101.062 (4) (g) exempts persons who work on manufactured equipment that is not primarily electrical in nature. This means the installation, maintenance or repair work of water or well pumps does not need to be done by a licensed electrician if it only involves the installation of conductors that are considered part of the equipment.

21. After April 1st 2014, who will enforce the licensing of electricians?

    The Delegated Agents of the Department may enforce the licensing of electricians. Examples of delegated agents are municipal inspectors and inspection agencies contracted to perform electrical inspections. Employees of DSPS will also enforce the licensing law in accordance with Wis. Stat. 101.88.

22. How many registered (formerly beginner) electricians can a master or journeyman electrician supervise?

    Per SPS sec. 305.40 (5), at any time, for any electrical wiring project the total number of registered electricians at an installation site may not exceed twice the total number of licensed master electricians and journeyman electricians at the installation site plus two.
    (For example: one journeyman may supervise four registered electricians. Three journeymen may supervise eight registered electricians.)

23. What is meant by the terms "general supervision" and "direct supervision"?

    SPS 305.003 defines:
    "General Supervision" means to assume the responsibility of an activity of others and its results without being present at the site where the activity is being conducted.
    "Direct Supervision" means to assume the responsibility of an activity of others and its results by providing oversight and guidance at the site where the activity is being conducted.

24. If I am exempt from the licensing requirements am I still required to obtain a local electrical permit?

    Yes, if required by the local municipal code or ordinance. Wis. Stat. 101.862 does not address permits; local requirements for electrical permits still apply.

25. Now that I will be licensed in the State of Wisconsin will my master electrician license reciprocate with our neighboring states?

    2013 WI Act 143 permits the department to enter into reciprocal agreements with other states provided the credentials are comparable. Wisconsin currently has a reciprocity agreement with Iowa. It covers the Journeyman and Master electrical licensing categories. Please check Iowa's website for more information on how to apply for a reciprocal license. No other agreements are in place at this time.

26. If I have an electrical license from a different state, will Wisconsin accept my license?

Wisconsin currently has a reciprocity agreement with Iowa. It covers the Journeyman and Master electrical licensing categories. Please check our website for more information on how to apply for a reciprocal license. No other agreements are in place at this time. Wisconsin will accept your experience of installation of electrical wiring from other states as comparable experience in qualifying to take our licensing exam. Another option would be to obtain a Registered Electrician license.