

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESB 6630

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Providing for certification as a master electrician.

Sponsors: Senators Prentice, Honeyford, Rasmussen and Sheahan.

Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions
House Committee on Commerce & Labor

Background: The Department of Labor and Industries currently certifies journeyman and specialty electricians, electrical trainees, electrical contractors and administrators. In order to obtain an electrical contractor license, a business must designate a certified administrator.

In order to become a specialty electrician, a person must complete two years of supervised work experience regardless of his/her educational background. There is concern that this work requirement is too high for people who have obtained electrical degrees from community or vocational colleges.

Summary: New certifications for master journeyman and master specialty electricians are created. In order to take the examination to become a master journeyman or specialty electrician, a person must be certified for four or two years, respectively. If an applicant has been certified for a requisite amount of time before July 2005, that person may apply to become a master electrician without taking an examination. Elements of the master electrician examination are specified.

To obtain a general or specialty contractor license, an applicant can designate a certified master electrician instead of a certified administrator. A contractor must notify the department within ten days if a master electrician's or administrator's relationship with the contractor terminates. Administrator's certificates are valid for three instead of two years, and may be renewed without examination if the certificate holder completes an annual eight hour continuing education course. A person who holds more than one administrator's certificate is only required to pay a fee for one certificate. The department must set fees for administrative certificates and renewals by rule. The fees must cover, but not exceed, the costs of issuing certificates and enforcing electrician certification requirements.

Electrical training certificates are reviewed once every two years instead of once every year. Master electricians, in addition to other electricians, can supervise trainees. The ratio of certified to noncertified specialty electricians on a job site is extended to 1:4 if the trainees are part of a vocational or community college program. When trainees are part of a vocational or community college program, certified electricians must be on the job site for 100 percent of the work day instead of 75 percent.

Work requirements for journeyman and specialty electrician certification are measured by hours instead of years. Specialty electricians who have less than 4000 hours of work

experience cannot credit their work hours toward qualifying to become a journeyman electrician.

"Two year electrical programs" are defined as consisting of at least 3000 hours, at least 2400 of which must be technical electrical instruction.

If an applicant for a specialty electrician certificate has completed a two-year community college or vocational school program, the applicant can substitute up to one year of school experience for one year of work experience. Persons enrolled in electrical school programs of less than two years can substitute up to half of the required work experience with school experience.

Applicants for the residential, pump and irrigation, sign, limited energy, or nonresidential maintenance specialties, or a restricted nonresidential maintenance specialty or any other new nonresidential specialty created by rule by the department, must have a minimum of 4000 hours of supervised work experience. Applicants for all other specialties, including an appliance repair specialty created by rule by the department, must have a minimum of 2000 hours of work experience. The first 90 days of experience for these specialties, or a longer period of time if set by rule by the department, must be fully supervised. After this initial full supervision period, a person may take the specialty examination. If the person passes the examination, the person may work unsupervised for the balance of the hours required for certification. No noncertified person may work unsupervised more than one year beyond the date that they would be eligible to be certified if they were working on a full-time basis.

The department can revoke a certificate of competency if a person endangers the public or property, and can deny an application for up to two years if a person's certificate has been previously revoked.

The certified electrical specialty pertaining to "domestic appliances" is eliminated. The definition of "equipment" includes equipment that insulates, but does not include plug-in appliances or plug-in equipment determined by rule by the department.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	45	3	
House	95	1	(House amended)
Senate	43	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: June 13, 2002