

April 10, 2019

For further information, contact: Andy Gallagher,  
(304) 425-4187, or [andy@wvhi.org](mailto:andy@wvhi.org).

### **State Board discussed federal regulatory changes**

The West Virginia Board of Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety took a look at reshaping some rules as they moved to eliminate what the industry perceives as an annoying paperwork problem for the contractors that install the homes.

The Board also delayed applications on manufacturer licenses from Alabama, Pennsylvania and Ohio while they obtain more paperwork.

The manufactured housing industry is overseen in West Virginia by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development through powers HUD delegates to the State Board. Now, HUD has ordered state regulators to consider modifications to the program. Those changes would in part increase home inspections for consumers and add education and training for those working in the industry.

The changes were given to the board Wednesday, but were not distributed beyond the board members. The board is to consider the changes and decide at a later meeting whether it will approve the proposals, which still must be taken to the Legislature for its approval before they would come into effect.

HUD ordered the state to make the changes after a private contractor doing businesses for HUD in states that do not have an authorized state regulatory program began looking into regulated state programs and decided changes should be made in them, too. It made several suggestions about West Virginia's program to HUD, when they ordered West Virginia to change its operations. HUD has not given West Virginia a deadline.

Under questions from the board, state Division of Labor Commissioner Mitchell E. Woodrum, who serves as chairman of the State Board, said the changes HUD has proposed do not have to be enacted this year, but could be delayed for additional study time. If they are approved this year, then that would have to be done promptly, since the changes would have to be released to the public for comment by June.

Elsewhere, the State Board is reviewing a rule change to eliminate a reporting requirement for businesses that set up and install manufactured housing. Currently, those businesses must file a report each three months to the DOL detailing the work performed during the previous three months. Oftentimes the reports are not filed, or are not filed on time. Members of the State Board fear that the reporting paperwork has helped dampen the interest of some companies in obtaining a set-up license that is specifically required when working on manufactured housing.

Once the rule changes are put into effect, then the retail sales center that hires a set-up crew will make the quarterly report on behalf of the subcontractor. Eliminating what has been in effect which duplicated paperwork on behalf of both. The set-up company would be required to file a so-called quarterly report only if the company contracts with a consumer and no retail sales center is involved. Woodrum believes the change can be made through the rule making process.

In other action, the State Board:

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--Delayed a vote on granting licenses to manufacturers from Alabama, Pennsylvania and Ohio until the three companies in question clarify paperwork on their applications. Each was given 45 days to submit additional material.

--Licensed four contractors: C&G Contracting LLC of Spencer; Giraffe Contracting LLC of Mannington; Hammonds Electric LLC of Spencer; and Robert Lemon, doing business as Robco Specialties of Charleston.

--Imposed \$700 in fines on 15 contractors for failing to file quarterly reports.

--Fined four retailers a total of \$1,500 and reprimanded two others over installation problems.

--Decided to meet again on at 10 a.m. on July 31 at the state Capitol.