

City Business
by Michael Leamons

At the Regular December Council Meeting, Local Electrician Licensing Ordinance #121211B was adopted. Anyone holding a Local Electrician License under the previous local electrician licensing ordinance needs to renew his/her license prior to March 1, 2012 to avoid having to be re-tested. Prior to license renewal, the applicant will need to provide proof of having obtained 4 hours of continuing education for electricians as approved by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) during the previous 12 months. Traditional classroom courses or on-line classes are available to satisfy the continuing education requirement at a nominal expense.

Anyone holding a valid TDLR issued electrician license is not required to obtain Hico's locally issued license.

With good cause, the State of Texas is rather particular in requiring electrical, plumbing and mechanical (heating and air conditioning) work be performed by skilled, licensed tradesmen. The City will not issue permits for work associated with those trades unless the correct licenses are presented. There is, however, one major exception: homeowners working on their personal homestead. Even in that instance, however, a permit is still required. Prior to the issuance of a permit, the homeowner will be required to sign a simple "homeowner's affidavit" certifying the property at which the work is being performed is his/her legal homestead.

The basic intent of permitting, licensing of tradesmen and inspections is to ensure the systems being installed are safe and functional. Some of the work done in Hico in previous years doesn't comply with the various codes, creating challenges today for the City, businesses and property owners. How much of the old work gets a pass? As much as some might like to do so, we can't afford to go from building to building throughout Hico bringing everything up to the today's advanced code requirements. So, where exactly do you draw the line?

Guidance can be found in two simple questions, "Will it work? And, is it safe?" If you are doing minor repairs, like replacing a faucet or a defective light switch, a permit isn't required. However, when making those repairs if you see something that causes concern, don't hesitate to call City Hall. Even when no permits are required, we want to be available to help make sure when you examine the various components of your plumbing and electrical systems you will be able to answer the questions, "Will it work? And, is it safe?" with a resolute, "Yes!"

May you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and may God bless the City of Hico.