

**CITY COUNCIL  
COMMUNICATION:**

**ITEM \_\_\_\_\_**

**OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER  
CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA**

**00-131**

**SYNOPSIS -**

**AGENDA:**

APRIL 3, 2000

This is a change to Chapter 8, Subchapter 2 of the Des Moines Municipal Code (Electrical Code) to include an exception which would allow the Electrical Board to reinstate individuals whose certificates have expired without requiring them to re-examine.

**SUBJECT:**

CHANGE TO  
ELECTRICAL CODE

**FISCAL IMPACT -**

None.

**TYPE:**

RESOLUTION  
ORDINANCE  
RECEIVE/FILE

**RECOMMENDATION -**

**Approval.**

**SUBMITTED BY:**

JAMES GRANT  
COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT  
DIRECTOR

**BACKGROUND -**

The Electrical Board is responsible for the examination of licensed and certified electricians required in the Des Moines Electrical Code. Generally, any individual seeking to become a certified electrician is first required to take an examination administered by a recognized examination service (Experior/Block and Associates) and receive a passing score (75%). In addition, they are also required to demonstrate that they have a certain level of experience before the Electrical Board recommends the issuance of their certificate of competency.

During the process of qualifying an individual for a certificate, there are presently no statute of limitations as to when the applicant had taken and passed their exam. For example, if an individual had taken and passed a journeyman electrician's exam ten years ago and was licensed and worked in another community, they then apply to receive a certificate in Des

Moines and are not required to take a current exam to receive approval, as long as they can demonstrate they have practical experience in the trade. However, if a contractor has practiced and been certified in Des Moines and they allow their certificate to expire, our current ordinance requires them to re-examine. This seems to be an unfair requirement for our contractors that have chosen to work and be certified in Des Moines.

Presently, the provisions in Section 8-83 of the Des Moines Municipal Code requires Master or Journeyman Electrician Certificates of Competencies to be renewed every two years. These renewals are processed when the individual pays a fee and supplies evidence that they have received a minimum of eight hours of electrical code training. In the event these certificates are not renewed within a 90-day period of the expiration, based on the previously noted requirement, we are then forced to require the individual to re-examine before their certificate can be re-issued.

There have been several instances where certified electricians have failed to renew their certificates; as a result, their licenses have been revoked. This matter has been appealed to the Electrical Board, which presently has no authority to reinstate these certificates without re-examination regardless of the qualifications or experience of the individual.

This suggested ordinance change would place an exception in the renewal provisions of the code allowing the Electrical Board to reinstate certificates for individuals who were originally qualified by examination. There are some certified electricians, who qualified through a "grandfathering clause," that were not required to originally pass a written exam. The Board was not in support of reinstating these individuals if they let their certificate expire; however, they can and will be allowed to continue to renew their certificates without examination during the normal renewal process.