



Glynda Reppond
Executive Director
Oklahoma Abstractors Board

JANUARY "MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD"

Happy New Year! I hope your families and businesses are doing well. The Board has made great strides this past year and I have several new processes and procedures to tell you about:

On-line licensing:

HB 1032: One of the most exciting changes this year is that House Bill 1032 mandates that all state agencies allow on-line applications and renewals by July 1, 2010. OK.Gov is the agency that is in charge of revamping our website to allow this procedure. Everyone who wishes to participate will be given a password and will be able to log in to a secure site. All original applications and renewals will be available to be processed on-line. For the documents that must be sent in as attachments to these applications, such as rate sheets, schedule of certificate holders, OESC reports, etc., you should be able to scan them in and forward them to us as well. If you have no scanner, you can e-mail or fax them instead. Just remember, there will be detailed instructions on our website for use of the portal as well as contacting our office and letting us help you through the process until you are comfortable with it.

There will be fees of \$2.00 per document as well as an approximate 2.1% estimated merchant fee on the total associated with these services which you will pay by credit card at the end of the process, along with the regular charges for your application or renewal. Visa and MasterCard will be the card types which are accepted by the OAB.

You **ARE NOT** required to utilize this service and all of our forms will still be on the website for you to download, print out and mail in with your fees if that is what you wish to do. As I said above, the State does require that we offer the service.

Rate Sheets: Beginning March 1, all rates sheets will be posted on-line and anyone can print off copies of the ones they are interested in. The agency office is receiving more and more requests for copies of all rate sheets and it has become very time consuming to respond to these requests. Rate sheets will be updated at the end of each month and the effective date will be on bottom left hand side of the first page. By the end of this year, all rate sheets will be on the forms approved by the OAB and much easier to compare. Please remember that all rate sheets **MUST** be sent in on the new approved rate sheet forms. If you send in your rate sheet on your old forms, it will be returned to you for re-submission.

New Rules: Copies of the proposed new Rules can be seen on our website at www.abstract.ok.gov. A public hearing will be held in the OAB office, 2401 NW 23rd, Suite 60B, Oklahoma City, OK, at 2:00 p.m. on February 16, 2010. If you have any comments on the rules, please send them to the above address

or to my e-mail address: Glynda.reppond@abstract.ok.gov. If passed, the rules will go into effect on May 6, 2010.

The new **Uniform Abstract Certificate** will also go into effect the same date the new rules take effect, although it may be used at this time for anyone who wants to make the change now. Copies of the new UAC can also be found on our website under "Forms".

Problems: As we begin our third year as an agency, we are finding that we are coming up against a few unexpected obstacles so we need to clarify two or three items. The first is the timeliness of sending in applications and renewals. Title One, Section 30 (B) provides...

"1. Applications for renewal shall be made ninety (90) days prior to expiration and shall be accompanied by a renewal fee in an amount determined by the Board not to exceed the original application fee;

2. Any individual, firm, corporation, or other entity holding a certificate of authority who fails to apply for renewal and pay the renewal fee shall be notified by the Board no later than sixty (60) days prior to expiration of the certificate of authority;

3. The individual, firm, corporation, or other entity shall have thirty (30) days from the date of notification to file a renewal application;....."

By and large, most companies are sending in the renewals at the 90 day mark or shortly after the 60 day mark. Please understand that it takes a minimum of 30 days to get your renewals ready for the Board's approval and if that can't be accomplished, then there is a chance that your certificate of authority could expire and a cease and desist order could be issued. Rather than shut down a company for non-compliance, I am asking that the Board institute a series of fines for late applications. Recommendations will be made by the Enforcement Committee to the Board at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting on February 11, 2010, and go into effect September 1, 2010, after notification of all certificate holders.

Another problem is certificate holders not sending in renewals of their county records bonds and errors and omissions insurance on a timely basis to the OAB office. In the past, the State Auditor's office allowed updated bonds and E&O to be sent in whenever the renewal application was sent in, even though SA&I's records showed they were expired. We are no longer able to allow this procedure. A current copy of the records bond and errors and omissions insurance must be in the agency office at all times.

Neither Title One nor the OAB rules address the issues of abstractor licensee renewal applications other than requiring them to be in 30 days previous to expiration. Please make sure your licensees have a copy of their license posted and are aware of their expiration date.

Our goal is to make sure that all companies and licensees are treated exactly the same way and follow all of the rules. Copies of Title One and our Permanent Rules, as well as our proposed rule changes, are on our website. Print off a copy and read them and if you have any questions, please give us a call.

Inspections: Approximately half of all certificate holders have been inspected this year and Terri Parrish, our inspector, expects that the balance will be inspected by the end of 2010. Inspections have been going well and most certificate holders have been very amenable to correcting any problems that have shown up.

License test dates: Testing will be held at 1:00 p.m on the following dates: March 4th, OKC; May 6th, Tulsa; July 1, OKC; September 2nd, OKC; and November 4th, OKC. Plant owners should remember that if you have at least ten applicants to take the test, accommodations can be made to come to your facility at a time of your choosing. We do require that the requesting party pay the expenses incurred with traveling to your location.

If you would like to attend a Board meeting, they are held on the second Thursday of each month at 10:00 a.m. Until further notice, they will be held at the Oklahoma Finance Authority, 5900 N. Classen Court, Oklahoma City, OK. The Board appreciates and values your input. If you are in the Oklahoma City area, we would love to have you drop in for a visit.

Sincerely,

Glynda Reppond
Executive Director