

# Legislative Update 2015

The Minnesota Legislature adjourned in May with as many questions as answers. While all the public's attention has been on education funding, other significant issues are still in limbo. To date the Governor and House Republicans have been meeting to resolve differences in the vetoed bills with the Governor continually renegotiating provisions he'd like to see put in or taken out of bills. Below are highlights of enacted laws or provisions the MNAES was able to stave off this year.

First, the last bill the Legislature passed was the Omnibus Jobs and Energy bill - literally in the last minutes of session. House DFL members instantly cried foul given they had no time to read the bill before passage. The bill was also criticized for a technical, but perhaps fatal, flaw given the House Clerk read the wrong bill number before the vote.

The most relevant piece to MNAES members was the provision prohibiting the mandate of fire sprinklers in new residential construction. To date, the Governor has not made removing the sprinkler prohibition mandate a priority for signing the Omnibus Jobs bill.

Second, the Construction Codes and Licensing bill contained the model code cycle language that MNAES worked on with BAM this session. The original bill was amended to move the full model residential and building (commercial) code updates prescribed by the ICC from three years to six years but allows the Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI) to provide amendments in the case of updated technology or for the health, safety and welfare of the public. An example of this is when the legislature passed a law requiring code changes for window fall protection. If there wasn't flexibility, the department wouldn't have been able to provide rule making mandated by the legislature. The bill also clarifies in federal law on energy codes which requires DOLI (as well as the other 50 states) to certify to the Department of Energy that the state has reviewed provisions of the energy codes and made a determination as to whether it is appropriate for the state to update its energy codes. This year DOLI reviewed the new energy codes and made the decision not to proceed with anything new.

The Department of Labor and Industry also has several clean up provisions in its bill this year.

1. Construction Contractor Registration dates have been changed. All registrations issues on or before December 31, 2015 expire on on December 31, 2015 in the odd numbered year. The previous date was June 30, 2015.
2. A residential roofer under 326B.86 must "give and maintain" a bond with a penal sum of \$15,000 to DOLI as a ground for sanctions for failure to "give and maintain" the bond.

The MNAES was also able to hold back bills that would have been detrimental to the industry. This includes attorneys fees against a contractor, insurance limitation on building code coverage and the regulation of insurance claims. These bills are still in the mix next year and the MNAES should fully expect them to surface as part of a legislative agenda.

Stay tuned for more special session information as well as new regulatory information on asbestos and lead.