



Sheet-metal board OKs new rules

By Christine McConville
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As the state's sheet-metal licensing board adopted controversial industry licensing regulations yesterday, board critics said they aren't done with their protests.

They plan to sound off at public hearings on the regulations later this year.

"Having sheet-metal installers be licensed will raise the standards and increase professionalism, and that's good," said Greg Beeman, president of Associated Builders and Contractors of Massachusetts, whose members are mostly non-union shops.

But he said a clause in the regulations that requires future sheet-metal jobs to have three experienced installers for every one on-site apprentice will hurt his members' companies, because the cost of sheet-metal jobs will soar.

The state established the board after two Boston firefighters were killed in a Chinese restaurant fire when improperly installed sheet metal crashed down. The seven-member board also has been criticized because all five of Gov. Deval Patrick's board appointees are union affiliated.

Non-union sheet-metal installers say that most sheet-metal jobs in Massachusetts are done by non-union shops, but they have no representation on the state board.