

To: Blasting Industry
From: Jim Hightower, Director of Permits & Licensing
Gary Farley, Assistant Commissioner of Fire Prevention
Date: May 18, 2020
Subject: Temporary Blaster Registration due to Covid-19

On March 19, 2020, the Department of Commerce and Insurance was notified by its testing Contractor that many of its testing locations, located at schools around the State, were shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. On March 19, 2020, Governor Bill Lee also signed Executive Order 15 which gave the Commissioner of the Department of Commerce and Insurance the discretion to suspend provisions governing the initial issuance and renewal of licenses, permits, and certifications issued to reasonably extend the deadline for obtaining the required education, continuing education, or in-service credits as necessary to respond to the effects of COVID-19.

The Department of Commerce and Insurance, State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO) determined that any blaster that is currently licensed or certified in good-standing in another state may be eligible for a temporary blaster certification. If a blasting applicant that is currently licensed, certified, or registered in good standing in another state meets all of the registration requirements (Tenn. Code Ann. § 68-105-108 and Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 0780-02-15-.03), except passage of an examination prescribed by the Department, the applicant may qualify for a temporary blaster registration.

In lieu of the examination, any applicant meeting the above criteria for a temporary registration would be required provide a letter of good standing from *each* state that the applicant is licensed, certified, or registered in as a blaster. The applicant would need to provide the letter(s) of good standing to the SFMO along with the application fee set out in Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 0780-02-15-.03(2) for consideration for a temporary blaster registration.

Any blaster granted a temporary blaster registration will be required to take and pass the required examination no later than October 1, 2020, to maintain registration as a blaster in the State of Tennessee. If a temporary blaster takes the required examination and fails the examination, the temporary registration will be considered invalid from the date of failure and the blaster would be required to re-apply for registration. If the temporary blaster passes the examination, the temporary blaster will need to submit the registration fee to the SFMO to obtain a full blaster registration. The date of registration will start at the date of issuance of the temporary registration and extend for a full three (3) years from that date.

As of May 18, 2020, the new provisions listed above will take effect and will extend through June 30, 2020, pursuant to Governor Lee's Executive Order 36. No temporary blaster registration will be granted after June 30, 2020.

Questions about SFMO's regulations of temporary blaster registration may be directed to Tiffany Burleson at 615.741.6839 or Tiffany.Burleson@tn.gov, or to Jim Hightower at 615.532.5811 or Jim.Hightower@tn.gov.