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I've been working in the construction community since I moved to Vermont in January of 2000. Additionally, I've worked in New York, New Hampshire, New Jersey, and Connecticut. All are states with either adopted building codes and/or contractor regulation, this is in comparison to Vermont which is proposing a more simplified general registration.

Over the course of my career, I have had the privilege of working with very professional homebuilders. Unfortunately, I have also experienced many bad actors as well. I will add that my experiences with most of the trades and contractors have been positive.

Through my work, it became apparent that many contractors were concerned about how the general population of potential consumers viewed construction professionals as a community. The bad actors, those that either defrauded customers, built something structurally inferior, or didn't finish a job, were weighing down the overall reputation.

The laments of the building trades led to the organization of folks that wanted a way to differentiate themselves. Thus, was the nascent stage of BTAV, The Building Trade Association of Vermont. This organization was started by contractors and opened to anyone in a building trade to add a higher level of professionalism to the industry. The original intent was to complete the Sunrise review, however, consumer complaints to the AG's office superseded the application by our members.

The top complaints by the building community were things such as

- Leveling the playing field
  - professional builders carry the correct insurances, workman's compensation, business, and liability insurances.
  - Homeowners can be sued if a contractor is hurt on their property if they don't carry insurance, which would include themselves or any subcontractors.
  - A Vermonter should not be the one to vet that a contractor carries the appropriate insurances, and they can also be misled by bad actors that will not disclose their insurance status.
- Vermont currently has codes in place that contractors do need to comply with. Currently, there is no vehicle to get updates out to the general population.
  - The onus is on the contractor to follow the codes. But with revisions, building science and safety updates there is not a singular way to get this specific information to the community. (Additionally, these are all handled by different departments within the state.

- RBES (since 1997) (Vermont Public Service Department Planning and Energy Resources Division)
- Lead and asbestos abatement
  - Essential Maintenance Practice (Vermont Lead Law) (Vermont Department of Health Environmental Health)
  - Asbestos Abatement Contractor Abatement
- Accessibility - Adaptable for Dwellings 2012 (Vermont Department of Public Safety Division of Fire Safety)
- Creating a consumer database where Vermonters can view contractors in good standing,
  - This would boost consumer confidence. Prospective customers would rely on a regulatory entity to assure that contract specifications and insurance requirements are met, or overall work is completed. Getting a recommendation from a contractor isn't often reliable, as they aren't willing to give out names of folks that they've had problems with.
  - Consumers lack the knowledge needed to properly vet these requirements.
  - The database will include voluntary certifications. The consumer could easily see the additional experience and education a contractor has pursued. Thereby, if they are looking for any specialties, they can find a business qualified for their specific needs. It is also a very good way for a contractor to market their unique abilities.
  - Some additional Certifications that are relevant -
    - Passive Haus Certified Builder (PHIUS)
    - Certified Green Professional (NAHB/USGBC)

- Master Certified Green Professional (NAHB/USGBC)
- Certified Graduate Remodeler (NAHB)
- Certified Master Remodeler (NAHB)
- Certified Graduate Builder (NAHB)
- Certified Master Builder (NAHB)
- Building Performance Institute GoldStar Contractor (BPI)

Lastly, I can share any number of “horror” stories with regards to building failures that I have seen over the years. But the ones that are the most upsetting to me, are the ones that could have been prevented by getting the latest code updates out to the contractors when needed. Building Science is a continual experiment. As we attempt to make our homes as efficient as possible. We have often had to update assemblies to conform to higher standards or fix a problem that has disclosed itself after a few years of practice. Vermont is at the forefront of this science and we have been very progressive when updates are available. However, it has stopped with code updates because that information is not passed along to those that must comply. Homeowners often find out about the specific regulations second hand.

(Soccodato failure explanation.)