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State regulators grant three licenses; fine 11 firms; and seek to regulate Smith and Jones

CHARLESTON – State regulators on Thursday issued retail manufactured housing sales licenses to three companies, fined 11 manufactured housing industry firms a total of \$5,000 and issued cease and desist orders against seven others.

The West Virginia Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Board (State Board) also levied \$2,100 in fines against 28 others for failing to file quarterly reports on time and ordered the industry-created fund formed to protect consumers to aid seven families hurt when three companies went out of business.

Retail licenses were issued to: Express Homes, doing business as Willow Home Brokers of 1586 Winchester Ave., Martinsburg; Boone Homes, Inc., of PO Box 56, Madison; and T&C Investments, LLC, doing business as Tri County Manufactured Homes of 2106 Middleway Pike, Bunker Hill, Jefferson County.

Many of the fines were levied against companies that have gone out of business, are inactive or are in bankruptcy. The largest fine – \$1,000 – was against Oakwood Mobile Homes, Inc., which has not been operational for some time. The fines were mostly for failing to make proper installations or failing to fulfill warranty obligations.

The board spent considerable time discussing Smith and Jones Mobile Home Movers, Inc., of Belle. The State Board issued a cease and desist order against the company and fined it \$1,000 for operating without a state license.

Mitch Woodrum, director of manufactured housing for the state Division of Labor, said this is the fifth cease and desist order issued against the firm, which previously was convicted in Fayette County of violating state law.

Woodrum said his agency has been unable to close down the company, but would continue its efforts to force Smith and Jones to halt its unlicensed operations.

Others told to halt operations in West Virginia included: Daily Electric & Heating of East Liverpool, OH; J. Dalton Co., Inc., of Minerva, OH; Luv Homes of Bristol, VA; Roger Myers of Weston; Paul Gillispie of Madison; and and Kevin Gillispie of Foster.

Of the seven cases sent to the recovery fund for assistance to consumers, five were the result of Adkins General Repair Service of Eleanor, Putnam County, going out of business. The others were Rock Solid Sets of Harper; and Four Seasons Housing, Inc., of Middlebury, IN.

Woodrum said the recovery fund has \$1.5 million.

The State Board meets against at 10 a.m. June 18.