



# *The California Locksmith*

Newsletter 2009  
Volume 4

## Chapter Meeting Updates

**South Bay Chapter:** is meeting at Robert Skeels & Company on May 21<sup>st</sup> from 6–9 pm they are offering a Automotive Transponder class taught by Joy Skowron. Cost is **Free for South Bay Chapter** members \$30 for CLA Student and Regular Members, \$60 for Non-Members. The South Bay chapter recently separated from the Los Angeles chapter, if you have not updated your membership profile please do so now so that you can receive the South Bay Chapter rate. Log on to [www.cla4u.org](http://www.cla4u.org) and update your Chapter preference.

**South Orange County:** meets the second Tuesday of the month at Knollwoods at Sand Canyon and the 5 freeway in Old Town Irvine. We will meeting on the patio and our guest speaker for May 12 is Lisa Augerson, topic is GKL and LAB product updates.

**North Orange County:** Please join us for a presentation on Adams Rite products on Thursday, May 7 at **Keedex Mfg.** located at 510 Cameron Street, Placentia, CA.

**San Fernando Valley Chapter:** meets at Intermountain Lock Supply on the second Tuesday of the month the address is 14823 Califa St., Van Nuys, CA 91411 the meeting begins at 6:30 pm.

## New Jersey Consumer Affairs

### *Authorizes Online Locksmith Training & Proficiency Testing Program*

SecurityTechnicalInstitute.com (STI) has been approved for online training for locksmiths in New Jersey to meet continuing education and general education requirements administered by the New Jersey Board of Examiners.

STI provides locksmiths an option for distance learning as they obtain and maintain occupational education requirements and continuing educational credits required by New Jersey's locksmith regulations.

SecurityTechnicalInstitute.com is the original and leading provider of "blended learning" and online proficiency testing at a fraction of the cost of other programs. "We can provide repeatable content and online testing with instant results to clients worldwide," Tom Lynch, director of operations, said.

STI's program eliminates the need for locksmiths to travel long distances for training. "We believe the locksmith deserves an alternative that meets their needs," Lynch said.

## Contractors State License Board Arrests More Than 100 in Statewide Undercover Sting Operations

*Unlicensed operators targeted in simultaneous five-county "California Blitz"*

The Contractors State License Board (CSLB) has just completed simultaneous undercover sting operations in five counties throughout California. The "California Blitz" was conducted by 18 CSLB investigators over a two-day period on March 10 and 11, 2009. A preliminary total of 107 people were arrested, including a number of people with outstanding arrest warrants. An additional 23 were given administrative citations at stings, as well as during sweeps of construction sites in two counties. Consumers and legitimate contractors are threatened by operators in the illegal and highly profitable multi-billion dollar underground economy.

In the stings, CSLB investigators posed as homeowners and invited suspected unlicensed operators to houses to bid on various construction jobs, ranging from landscaping, fencing and concrete to cabinets, roofing and painting. The operations were conducted in Contra Costa, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside and Tulare Counties. Joining CSLB were various local law enforcement agencies and the Fraud Division of the California Department of Insurance.

"Many consumers don't realize the risk they take when they hire a phony contractor to work on their home," said CSLB Registrar Steve Sands. "With the tough economic times, unlicensed operators seem to be even more aggressive in their methods of going after business."

The sting also revealed the extent to which unlicensed operators will go to try and stop their unlicensed competitors. John Fiore, 43, of Farmersville, who goes by the name "Tree Trimming Monkey," was arrested Wednesday at the Visalia sting. Prior to the sting, Fiore allegedly called an unlicensed competitor, saying he was a consumer who would pay him \$1,000 to cut down five trees on his property. That competitor cut down the 80-year-old trees, then went to the consumer for payment. The consumer was completely unaware of the job arrangement. The value of the trees cut down was \$20,000. Fiore will now face felony vandalism charges with special allegations since it is believed he has served prison time for crimes that include vehicular hit-and-run that resulted in death, arson, and selling methamphetamines.

On Monday, March 9, 2009, CSLB conducted a sting on a phony contractor who is believed to have scammed at least two consumers in different parts of the state out of more than \$250,000.00. Gerald Thissen, 51, drove 275 miles from his home in Encinitas to Exeter, in Tulare County, to give CSLB undercover investigators a rough estimate of between \$300,000 and \$400,000 for a 20,000- square-foot building that would be used to restore classic cars. He was arrested and will face at least one felony charge.

Other notable arrests include a man with an arrest warrant for spousal abuse, and one who said he bought a fake driver's license, Social Security card and resident alien card at a flea market.

By law, all contractors who perform work that totals \$500 or more (labor and materials) must be licensed by CSLB.

## Optimism is Increasing

Renewed confidence in the economy is an important first step toward recovery, so two new surveys bring good news to small businesses, according to this blog post. The confidence of companies surveyed by Discover Financial Services' "Small Business Watch" was up 10 points in April to the highest point in more than a year. And a survey by Reuters and the University of Michigan shows consumer optimism increased in April for the second consecutive month. Click here to read complete article [Wall Street Journal, The](#) (04/28)

## 3 Time-Management Tips for Small-Business Owners

Gray Poehler, a counselor with the SCORE office in Richmond, Va., offers several time-management tips that can help small-business owners operate more efficiently. Poehler recommends using TimeTiger.com's online to-do list to help monitor projects, taking time to train staff so more tasks can be delegated and minimizing distractions. Click here to read complete article [Richmond Times-Dispatch \(Va.\)](#) (04/27)

## Five Common Financial Mistakes Small Businesses Make

Every new business starts off seeing blue skies ahead. But many small-business owners become the victims of common financial mistakes, says Alice Magos, a senior writer and small-business analyst at CCH in Chicago who runs the Click here to read complete article [Business Owner's Toolkit](#).

## Guide to HIPAA Changes in the Stimulus Package

It is old news that President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, popularly known as the Stimulus Package, into law last month. What has not made the news are the dramatic changes the law makes to HIPAAs (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) Security Rules. The changes subject business associates to the rules, requires notifications for breaches, expands who may seek damages and increases penalties for violations. Here are just some of the biggest changes to the HIPAA Security Rules

Arguably the biggest change is the expansion of who is covered under HIPAA. The law now places the same security requirements to business associates as covered entities. This includes the administrative, physical, and technical safeguards mandated by the Security Rule. This will require every business

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*HIPAA Continued from page 3*

associate to appoint a security official, develop written procedures, and train its workforce on safeguarding private health information. In short they need better data security from creation to [shredding](#). A business associate is now also subject to civil and criminal penalties under HIPAA.

A second major change to the law is the addition of a security breach notification requirement. Now covered entities and business associates must notify individuals of security breaches. A security breach occurs when protected health information is exposed through accidental exposure or theft. Notification must be in the form of mail or email depending on the preferences of the individual. For large security breaches, defined as more than 500 individuals, a "prominent media outlet" must also be notified. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) must also be notified. The law mandates a website run by HHS for public disclosure of breaches.

Penalties for security violations have also been significantly increased. The fine per violation grew from \$100 per individual with a cap of \$25,000 to \$1,000 per individual with a cap of \$100,000. There can also be a fine of \$10,000 for willful neglect that caps at \$250,000. Topping the list of fines is \$50,000 if problems are not corrected properly with a cap of \$1.5 million per calendar year.

The law expands who may bring suits for HIPAA violations. It is now possible for fines to go to individuals and their lawyers. This dramatically increases the incentives for lawyers to bring lawsuits. State Attorney Generals can also bring about action against covered entities and business associates on the behalf of their residents. This change is significant from the current system where only individuals could seek action by the HHS. It is not hard to imagine a land rush as lawyers and state attorney generals race to file suits against medical offices that violate the Security Rule.

But there is some good news for the medical industry. The HHS is now required to provide annual guidance for the most effective and appropriate information safeguards. The guidance must specify the technologies and methodologies that should keep private medical information secure. The goal is to reduce the confusion of what is and isn't acceptable electronic security.

Most of the new rules go into effective on February 17, 2010. However, some of the provisions have different effective dates that are unclear. Business associates and covered entities should examine each provision carefully to see which apply.

**SUPPORT YOUR ASSOCIATE FIRM MEMBERS****John Ream**

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## Event Calendar & New Members

### Events

Check the CLA website calendar of events for Chapter meeting dates, times, and locations at [www.cla4u.org](http://www.cla4u.org).

### Welcome New Members

Robert Frantz  
Jacob DeLosada

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California Locksmiths Association



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