

WHAT DOES FSPA DO FOR ME?

By Mike Esmond, Pensacola Pools

We have all asked ourselves, “What does FSPA do for me?” I want to make everyone aware of what happened in our Northwest Florida Chapter recently.

It was brought to my attention that a pool was being built in one of our best pool production counties in northwest Florida. The permit was issued to a home building contractor to build a pool for an existing home, not a new home he was building. I drove to the house and sure enough, there was a pool in the backyard and an electrician was wiring the pool at that point. The decking had not been poured yet. I called the building department to inquire as to how a home building contractor could pull a swimming pool permit to build a pool. I was told he could pull a permit to build a pool structure only and had to sub out everything else.

At this point I called Jennifer Hatfield, FSPA Director of Government & Public Affairs, and she explained to me only a general contractor could pull a permit to build only the structure of a pool. After hearing what was happening, Jennifer got involved. The next thing we heard from the building department was that because a pool is an accessory structure and this pool is listed as an accessory structure, the building contractor could legally build the pool.

After weeks of phone calls and e-mails between Jennifer and the building officials, an e-mail was received from the county building officials. It said they found an attorney general opinion on the issue of division one contractors pulling pool permits and it clarified that only a general contractor (not a building contractor) can do pools and when they do, it is the structure only.

I will never again question if the money we spend to be a member of FSPA is worth it. I experienced it and believe that if it were not for Jennifer and FSPA, home builders in northwest Florida would be adding “pool contractor” to their signs. Not to mention we would still be putting wire mesh in our decking. Your membership fee is hard at work defending your livelihood.