



## **Wow! Rocket Lawyer's Mechanic's Lien Form** **Astonishingly Poor**

I recently visited Rocket Lawyer.com and toyed around with its form builder. Of course, I was particularly interested in how good of a job the service did in building a mechanic's lien.

I couldn't believe how poor the forms were.

I'm confident in saying that filing a Rocket Lawyer lien is about as good as not filing a lien at all. In a large majority of cases, the Rocket Lawyer lien form would be rejected by courts across the country because it simply does not meet statutory requirements. Users should take great caution in using RocketLawyer to prepare mechanic liens.

### **Disclaimer - We Don't Hate Rocket Lawyer**

Let me go on record to say that I fully support the [Rocket Lawyer](#) concept. The American legal system is a hot mess right now, and access to quality legal assistance and counsel is non-existent. Companies like Avvo.com, Rocket Lawyer, and may I say it - Zlien - are all positive steps to bridge the gap between expensive, unhelpful lawyers, and the bottom line type of law assistance companies all over the country require.

Further, I don't consider Rocket Lawyer direct competition to Zlien's services. Rocket Lawyer is a free legal document creation service. You tell the website what type of document you want, answer a few questions, and Rocket Lawyer prepares the document based on your answers. You can print and use the document from there as you want.

This is unlike the Zlien service.

Zlien uses a similar method to prepare your mechanic's lien and [preliminary notices](#) forms, but our service goes further by:

- Researching the legal property description
- Researching the property owner
- Calling the county recorder and getting the filing fees applicable
- Arranging for the filing of your document and paying all filing fees
- Arranging for the service of your lien upon applicable parties (i.e. the owner)

[Zlien](#) is a national mechanic's lien and preliminary notice filing service. Zlien also provides the LienPilot, a web based lien compliance manager and deadline calculator, and publishes mechanic's lien resources.

- Alerting you to deadlines when your lien is due / is expiring, etc.

There's plenty of room in the marketplace for companies like Zlien and Rocket Lawyer to co-exist. Sometimes, folks just need or want a form. Other times, companies are looking for a turn-key service. We're the latter.

This, in other words, is not an article warning you about [the dangers of using do-it-yourself forms when filing a mechanic's lien](#). This is specifically about using the Rocket Lawyer forms.

The problem with Rocket Lawyer is how astonishingly bad their mechanic's lien form is.

## Using Rocket Lawyer's Mechanics Lien Form Is A Mistake

If you want to draft a mechanic's lien form with Rocket Lawyer, you must go through the "Interview Process" for that particular form, which you can [access here](#). I went through this form to prepare mechanic liens in California, Washington and Louisiana, looking to compare the forms with one another.

Here is the first problem: the forms were *identical*.

I don't have time to go through all fifty states, but I'm pretty sure each state will use the same interview process to populate the exact same form. Anyone who knows anything about mechanic's lien laws and forms knows that this is a problem. Each state is very particular (and very different) about what must be contained within its mechanic's lien. Some states require certain specific statutory language in a certain font size (i.e. California), other states require specific information not requested within the pithy Rocket Lawyer interview, and other states have very specific verification and/or notarization requirements. (Oh, don't forget about the special and alternate requirements based on your role / tier in the project).

All of these unique requirements are not accommodated by the short and generic Rocket Lawyer form.

As someone who deals with mechanic liens everyday, I can tell you with confidence that the Rocket Lawyer form would be rejected in California, Washington and Louisiana.

Here is the second problem: the information it does request...sometimes isn't needed, and sometimes isn't allowed in the lien.

An example of unneeded information requested is the names and identities of folks below you (subs and suppliers) who you still owe money. The Rocket Lawyer form lists these parties within the lien. This is very, very rarely required in a mechanic's lien, and the inclusion of this information is superfluous.

A bigger problem is with information requested but not allowed in a lien - and that too happens within the Rocket Lawyer interview when it requests the interest percentage charged to your overdue account. Sure, you are sometimes allowed to add interest to the amount due your company and include that charge within the lien amount. However, that is not a universal rule. There are many states that do not allow this, and it could be fatal to your lien.

## The Bottom Line

Do-It-Yourself forms can be dangerous to use for a number of reasons, but they are a good fit for a lot of people and companies. By no means am I against do-it-yourself legal forms.

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However, the do-it-yourself form must at least be correct. The Rocket Lawyer concept is unique and could be a great service to the public and the legal system, but it really misses the mark with its mechanic liens form. Using these forms to file a mechanics lien could be a very big mistake.

Read this post on the Construction Lien Blog at:  
<http://constructionlienblog.com/?p=2700>