



Secretary Carol Aichele

PENNSYLVANIA STATE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS, LAND SURVEYORS AND GEOLOGISTS



www.dos.state.pa.us

December 2013

[Disciplinary Actions](#)

From the Desk of the Board President

Elizabeth A. Catania, P.E., F.NSPE

Greetings! This Newsletter is provided to share information concerning events and issues facing the Board. We are just completing the license renewal deadline of September 30, 2013 and are beginning a new cycle. We remind you that continuing education is a requirement of the license renewal. Keeping current with new technologies in our field is paramount. For further information, visit our website http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/state_registration_board_for_professional_engineers_land_surveyors_and_geologists.

A new era of testing is about to begin. As of January 1, 2014, all FE and FS exams will be completed as computer based testing. There is an article in this newsletter discussing the exciting changes. Please share this information with those you know who may be preparing for the first step of licensure.

In this newsletter are also articles on the new Retired License Status and Coursework Requirements for Approval to sit for the Professional Geologist License.

The Board is currently working on new regulations with regard to electronic seals. Drafts have been sent to various interested parties for comment. If at any time you have questions concerning licensure or would like to see an article on a certain topic, please feel free to contact us.

[Contact Us](#)

[Report Unethical Activity](#)

[Renew Your License](#)

[Meet the Board](#)

State Board of Engineers, Land Surveyors and Geologists

P.O. Box 2649, Harrisburg, PA 17105-2649

(717) 783-7049

Important information for candidates for the Fundamentals of Engineering and the Fundamentals of Surveying Examinations

October will be the last administration of the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) and Fundamentals of Surveying (FS) examinations in a pencil and paper format. The National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) will begin offering the FE and the FS examinations in a computer based testing format (CBT) beginning in January 2014. NCEES will not begin registering applicants for either examination until November 4, 2013.

The examinations will be given eight months out of the year and an applicant may take the exam three times in a 12-month period. The examinations will be given in the following months: January, February, April, May, July, August, October and November.

FE Candidates

FE examination candidates who have completed at least two years of an ABET accredited engineering degree will apply directly to NCEES for approval and registration for the examination. Candidates who are applying without an ABET accredited degree will need to apply to the Pennsylvania Board for approval prior to registering with NCEES to take the examination.

FE candidates with an ABET accredited degree, or who have completed at least two years of an ABET accredited degree program, may begin registering directly with NCEES for the examination on November 4, 2013.

Candidates who have graduated from an ABET accredited program AND have passed the FE examination will need to apply for the Engineer

in Training Certificate. Applications are available for download from www.pcshq.com. The Board contracts with Professional Credential Services, Inc. for some of its application and examination services.

FE candidates without an ABET accredited degree may begin applying for examination approval from the Board at any time. Applications are available for download from www.pcshq.com. Candidates without an ABET accredited degree who have been approved by the board and have passed the examination will be issued an Engineer in Training Certificate.

FS Candidates

FS examination candidates will apply to the Board for approval before registering with NCEES for the examination.

FS candidates may begin applying for examination approval from the Board at any time. Applications are available for download from the board's website:

http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/state_registration_board_for_professional_engineers_land_surveyors_and_geologists/12510/licensure_information/572026 . Candidates who have successfully passed the FS examination and have met all the requirements will be issued a Surveyor in Training certificate.

Do you have Coursework to Qualify for the ASBOG Examination to become a Professional Geologist?

State Registration Board for Professional Engineers,
Land Surveyors and Geologists

The Board has the power to provide for, to regulate, and to license persons to engage in the practice of engineering, land surveying or geology (Section 4(b) of the Engineer, Land Surveyor and Geologist Registration Law (Law), 63 P.S. §151(b)). The Board may grant a license to practice geology to a person of good moral character and repute who speaks and writes the English language if that person complies with the education and experience criteria and successfully completes the examinations process for licensing as a professional geologist as set for in section 4.4 of the Law (*See* Section 4(b)(3) of the Law, 63 P.S. §151(b)(3)).

The Board has the authority and the obligation to review and evaluate educational curricula, in accord with Section 4(a) of the Law, 63 P.S. §151(a). An applicant for licensure as a professional geologist must be a graduate of an accredited institution of higher learning with a major in geology, geophysics, geochemistry or engineering geology with a minimum of 30 semester or 45 quarter hours in geology, geophysics, geochemistry, engineering geology or their subdivisions to sit for the fundamentals examination (Section 4.4(b)(2) of the Law, 63 P.S. §151.4(b)(2) and, Section 37.36(1)(i) of Board regulations, 49 Pa. Code §37.36(1)(i)). Alternatively, a graduate of an accredited institution of higher learning that does not grant semester or quarter hours in geological science courses leading to a major in geology and who has completed 30 semester or 45 quarter hours or an equivalent amount of geological education, of which at least 24 semester hours or an equivalent are in third or

fourth year undergraduate courses or graduate courses, may sit for the fundamentals examination (Section 4.4(b)(2) of the Law, 63 P.S. §151.4(b)(2)).

An applicant for the geologist-in-training certificate shall provide satisfactory evidence of graduation from an approved geology curriculum of four or more years (Section 4.4(c)(1) of the Law, 63 P.S. §151.4(c)(1)). A graduate of an approved program in geology who has satisfactorily completed the fundamentals of geology examination shall be certified as a geologist-in-training and may retain that certification until the applicant becomes licensed as a professional geologist (Section 4.4(d) of the Law, 63 P.S. §151.4(d)). A candidate or applicant for licensure as a professional geologist must complete the fundamentals of geology examination and provide the Board with satisfactory evidence of experience that would have prepared the applicant for the practice of geology (Section 4.4(a) of the Law, 63 P.S. §151.4(a)).

Initial licensure applicants need to be aware that over the last decade many colleges and universities have modified their curricula and have assigned new program names for educational courses, as well as having amended or merged education departments and degree designations. It is the responsibility of the applicant to submit documentation substantiating that coursework completion and requisite degree attainment was acquired in accord with Section 4.4 of the Law, 63 P.S. §151.4.

The Law, at Section 4.4(b)(2), 63 P.S. §151.4(b)(2), is not specific about what courses in the geological sciences need to be completed in order to adequately prepare an applicant for the examination process, and ultimately the experience in preparation to practice geology. The ASBOG examination, in essence, assesses the examinee on proficiency in fundamental areas of geologic

knowledge, and consequently the Board considers the following courses or educational coursework appropriate: Physical Geology; Historical Geology; Mineralogy; Petrology; Stratigraphy; Sedimentology, Paleontology; Structural Geology; Field Geology; Geochemistry; Geophysics; Engineering Geology; Hydrogeology; Soil Mechanics; Tectonics, Geologic Hazards, Environmental Geology; and Rock Mechanics. For more information see 49 Pa. Code §37.36(1).

The application of geology requires three-dimensional conceptualization skills and field techniques, which must be learned in order for geologic features to be recognized and quantified in the field. The Board, therefore, looks for applicants to demonstrate education in both Structural Geology and Field Geology, as these two courses are considered essential to qualify an applicant to sit for the fundamentals of geology portion of the ASBOG examination and will greatly enhance practical experience competency (*See* 49 Pa. Code §37.36(2)).

It is imperative that all applicants or candidates for licensure be prepared through education and experience in order to safeguard life, health and property and to promote the public welfare of the consumer citizens in our Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Continuing Education is Important!

The State Registration Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors and Geologists ("Board") has the duty and authority to suspend, revoke or otherwise discipline under the Engineer, Land Surveyor and Geologist Registration Law (Section 4(g)), which is the professional licensing Law (63 P.S. §§148 *et seq.*). Although there are a variety of professional

situations for which the Board may take formal action, one such circumstance is the failure of a licensee to timely complete acceptable continuing education or Professional Development Hours ("PDH") as outlined in the Law at Section 4.5 (Continuing Professional Competency Requirements, 63 P.S. §151.5 and Board regulations at Section 37.111, 49 Pa. Code §37.111). Section 4.5(b) of the Law, 63 P.S. §151.5(b), specifically provides for PDH-CPC as a condition of licensure.

The purpose of continuing education is to maintain, improve or expand skills and knowledge of licensees obtained prior to initial licensure, and is necessary to develop new and relevant skills and knowledge applicable to the profession. It is imperative that acceptable PDH-CPC be timely completed in order to safeguard life, health or property and to promote the general welfare of consumers of professional services.

A licensee may be subject to disciplinary action if an overall total of acceptable PDH is not completed in the biennial reporting period. That is, a licensee may be censured or reprimanded, or be required to complete continuing education hours or to undergo other remedial action, or to having the current professional certificate and license revoked, suspended or otherwise restricted, for failure to comply with the Board's statutory and regulatory Laws. Under Section 11, 63 P.S. §158, a violating licensee is subject to being assessed a civil penalty in accord with the Act 48 schedule of civil penalties (49 Pa. Code §43b.13a.), and further, as part of any disciplinary sanction, to pay the costs of investigation in the matter. (*see* Section 5(b) of the Act of July 2, 1993 (P.L. 345, No. 48), 63 P.S. §2205(b)). In determining a sanction, the Board weighs the seriousness of the violation and any mitigating facts.

Completion of continuing education is required to maintain competence to practice the credentialed profession in our Commonwealth. A licensee who fails to recognize, at the time of application to renew or reactivate licensure, a deficiency in obtaining the necessary PDH-CPC may result in being issued a license for a period for which a licensee is not eligible. The Board considers it essential that any licensee cure the continuing education deficiency and also the Board considers it appropriate to assess a civil penalty as a means of impressing upon a licensee and other credentialed professionals the importance of strictly adhering to the PDH-CPC requirements that are a condition of maintaining current licensure in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The maintenance of a current license is the most basic requirement under the Registration Law to engage in professional practice, and it is the responsibility and duty of our professional licensees to follow our statutory and regulatory Laws for the protection of our citizen consumers.



P.E., P.L.S. & P.G.

PRACTICING TEMPORARILY IN PENNSYLVANIA

A professional engineer, land surveyor or geologist licensed in a jurisdiction other than Pennsylvania may obtain a temporary permit to practice in Pennsylvania for a total of not more than 30 days in a calendar year. The Engineer, Land Surveyor and Geologist Registration Law (63 P.S. §148 *et seq.* hereinafter “Law”) empowers the Board to permit, subject to regulations promulgated by the Board, a professional licensed in another state or territory of his/her residence to practice in Pennsylvania, if the other state or territory maintains a system and standards of qualifications at least equal to those required in Pennsylvania and

the applicant pays the current fee and submits appropriate evidence satisfactory to the Board (63 P.S. §152(b), 63 P.S. §151(b)(1), *see* 63 P.S. §151(l)).

In accordance with the Law, the State Registration Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors and Geologists has adopted regulations at 49 Pa. Code §37.61 (relating to practice by out-of-State/Territory professionals) that place the 30-day limit on the practice in Pennsylvania and require the applicant to obtain a temporary permit by submitting proof that (1) the applicant neither resides nor has a place of business in Pennsylvania, (2) the applicant is legally qualified to practice the profession in the jurisdiction of his/her residence, and (3) the standards for authority to practice the profession in that jurisdiction are at least equal to those of the Commonwealth (An out-of-state professional who fails to comply with these regulations is subject to civil and criminal fines). The professional temporary permit holder will use the seal of the home jurisdiction and will affix the signature and a copy of the temporary practice permit to work performed in this Commonwealth.

If the out-of-state professional anticipates a need to practice in Pennsylvania more than 30 days in a calendar year, the professional must obtain a Pennsylvania registration and license that will be valid for up to two years (depending on the application date) and may be renewed biennially. Applications for both the temporary permit and for a full licensure may be obtained from the Board’s web page at http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/state_registration_board_for_professional_engineers_land_surveyors_and_geologists/12510 or by contacting the State Registration Board at 1.717.783.7049.

The applicable statutory and regulatory law on temporary practice is as follows:

Section 5. Exemption from Licensure and Registration. [63 P.S. §152(b)]

Except as specifically provided in this section, this act shall not be construed to require licensure and registration in the following cases: (b) The practice of engineering, land surveying or geology, **not exceeding thirty days in the aggregate in one calendar year, by a nonresident not having a place of business in this Commonwealth, if such person is legally qualified to engage in the practice of engineering, land surveying or geology in the state or territory of his residence:** Provided, That standards of such state or territory are at least equal to the standards of this Commonwealth;

§ 37.61. Temporary practice. [49 Pa. Code §37.61]

- (a) A professional engineer, professional land surveyor or professional geologist who holds a valid license to practice engineering, land surveying or geology **from a licensing board of the state or territory of the person’s residence** may practice engineering, land surveying or geology in this Commonwealth for a period not to exceed 30 days in the aggregate in a calendar year if the person neither resides nor has a place of business in this Commonwealth and the standards for licensing engineers, land surveyors and geologists in the other state or territory are at least equal to the standards of the Commonwealth; (b) **Applications for temporary permits shall be made on forms provided by the Board;** (c) Applications shall be accompanied by a nonrefundable fee in the amount prescribed by § 37.17(b) (relating to

schedule of fees). Incomplete applications and applications not accompanied by the proper fee will be returned to applicants with a statement of the reason for return; (d) When the Board, after consideration of an application, is satisfied that the applicant is eligible for a temporary permit to practice engineering, land surveying or geology, the Board will issue to the applicant a temporary permit to practice in this Commonwealth. If an application is rejected, the Board will advise the applicant of the reason for rejection.

It is the responsibility of all licensed professionals to follow our registration laws for the protection of our citizen consumers.

NEW Retired-Status License Now Available

With Governor Corbett’s signature of House Bill 1054 on April 12, 2012, Act 24 of 2012 created a new retired-status license for Pennsylvania’s professional engineers, land surveyors and geologists. The Act is now effective following the expiration of the 60-day implementation clock and the board office has developed the application form necessary to request this status. Any currently-licensed professional in good standing may request this status change and those with expired licenses may request the new retired status by completing the necessary form and becoming current with their registration dues if their license has lapsed. Continuing education credits are not required to obtain or maintain a retired license. Once issued, a retired licensee must correctly represent their retired status on all signatures and letterhead by use of the word “retired” or abbreviation “ret.” Following the PE, PLS or PG designation on their signature.

Professional practice or use of the professional seal by a retired status licensee is expressly prohibited although work outside of professional practice such as teaching, speaking engagements, and offering of expert testimony are permitted and encouraged. As professionals we recognize the tremendous accomplishments achieved by the senior members our professions in creating and building our great society and are proud that we can continue to recognize our professional members through the use of the title and the code of conduct that define us and our life's work.