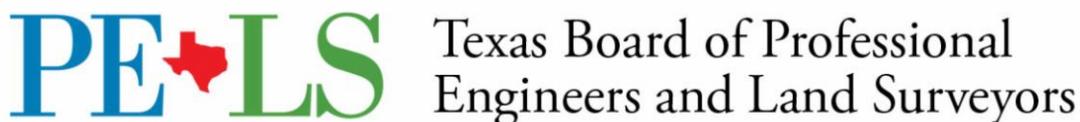


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December 21, 2022



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Focus on Compliance

Continuing Education

Continuing education is an integral part of being a professional engineer or land surveyor. The goal of the continuing education program is to stay current in advances and developments in your field.

As a reminder, for professional engineers, 15 hours of continuing education, at least one hour of which must be in ethics, are required for each renewal cycle. For registered professional land surveyors, 12 hours of continuing education, at least three hours of which must be ethics, are required for each renewal cycle. Studying the Acts or Board rules may count as ethics hours.

Keep in mind that hours are based on your renewal cycle, not specifically on the calendar year. For example, for a December 31, 2022 renewal date, your renewal cycle would be January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022, and for a June 30, 2023 renewal date, your renewal cycle would be July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023. Please keep in mind

that when you renew your license you are certifying that you met the continuing education requirements, or you are exempt.

The most common way to earn continuing education is through attending conferences, courses, or webinars where there is a set topic to be discussed at a set time. Documentation of your attendance is needed to get continuing education credit for these activities. The ideal documentation for tracking formal continuing education courses or conferences is a certificate issued by the provider. The certificate should detail the organizer of the course or conference, the content of the course, the number of PDHs offered, and the date the event took place. Other acceptable documentation could include a self-certification form, a sign-in sheet, receipt, agenda, or conference flyer.

You can also earn continuing education hours for self-study and various other activities such as engaging in K-12 or higher education outreach, participating in a leadership role of a technical society, or publishing a technical paper or article. Board Rules 137.17 for engineers and 138.17 for surveyors, detail the requirements of the continuing education program. There is also a helpful webpage detailing common questions about continuing education which can be found at <https://pels.texas.gov/CEPInfo.htm>.

Keep in mind that the intent of continuing education is to ensure you remain competent in engineering and surveying. Any content that has educational, technical, ethical, or managerial content that will benefit your individual practice can count toward your yearly continuing education requirements.

As part of our ongoing commitment to education and outreach we are adding a new section to our eNewsletters related to compliance, enforcement and ethics issues. We will cover a different topic each newsletter as a reminder and example of the importance of different aspects of your professional practice.

If you have suggestions about a topic for us to consider addressing in a future issue, please email your idea to the Board at: info@pels.texas.gov



Board and Committee Meetings

November 16-17, 2022, Board Meeting

Meetings were held virtually. Agendas, minutes, and recordings are available at

<https://pels.texas.gov/boardmeetings.htm>

Changes to Exam Requirements to Become a Registered Professional Land Surveyor in Texas

At the November 17, 2022, meeting of the Texas Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors (TBPELS), changes were approved to the examination requirements to become a Registered Professional Land Surveyor (RPLS) in the state of Texas. Starting in May 2023, the current RPLS exam will be replaced with a combination of the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) Principles and Practice of Professional Surveying (PS) exam and a new Texas State Specific Exam (TSSE).

[Official Announcement with Background and More Information](#)

Board Approves Two New Responses to Policy Advisory Opinion Requests

At its November 17, 2022 meeting, the Board approved responses to two new Policy Advisory Opinion requests regarding the use of third-party regulatory reviewers by cities and the use of third-party pictures or videos in the forming of an engineering opinion.

For reference, the Policy Advisory Opinion process allows the Board to develop formal guidance on engineering issues that may not be clearly addressed by the Texas Engineering Practice Act or Board rules. Note, an equivalent provision is not currently in place in the Professional Land Surveying Practices Act. A library of all Policy Advisory Opinion responses, including the two new ones approved in November, can be found at <https://pels.texas.gov/policy.htm>.

Disciplinary Actions

All enforcement actions approved in the Board meeting are posted on the TBPELS website. Enforcement actions are reported based on the date of the Board meeting at which the actions were taken. <http://pels.texas.gov/disciplinary.htm>

Future Meetings

The next meetings will be held from February 15-16, 2023. Refer to our website for agendas and links to attend the meetings. <https://pels.texas.gov/boardmeetings.htm>

Previous Meeting Recordings

The meeting recordings have been posted on the agency's YouTube Channel. Viewing these recordings or attending the live stream qualifies for continuing education credit under the category of self-directed study. A maximum of five credit hours may be accrued for engineer self-directed study. The maximum credit for surveyors is four hours.

<https://pels.texas.gov/recordings.htm>

Exam News

Engineer Exams

- F.E. P.E. and F.S exams are all computer-based except structural exams, which are still paper-and-pencil.
- Refer to NCEES for specific exam dates and deadlines - <https://ncees.org/exams/schedule/>



Outreach Highlights

On December 1, 2022, TBPELS staff presented a workshop to over 100 registered professional land surveyors and licensed state land surveyors. The workshop focused on recent Board activity specific to the surveying profession and an in-depth discussion on the Professional Land Surveying Practices Act and Board rules related to surveying.

The workshop was part of the 2022 Surveying Education Foundation of Texas (SEFT) Seminar at Tyler Junior College. SEFT is a non-profit foundation that supports surveying education in Texas with an emphasis toward students at Tyler Junior College, the University of Texas at Tyler, and Stephen F. Austin University.



Pictured from left to right, are Willace Johnson, R.P.L.S., Chair of the Surveying & Geomatics Department, Tyler Junior College and Board Member, SEFT; Michael Sims, P.E., Director of Compliance & Enforcement, TBPELS; Lance Kinney, Ph.D., P.E., Executive Director, TBPELS; Steven Freeman, R.P.L.S., Board Member, SEFT; and Rick Strong, P.E., Director of Licensing & Registration, TBPELS.

Webinars and Outreach

TBPELS provides online outreach presentations at no charge to license holders, associations, societies, and companies.



The following guidelines are used in reviewing outreach requests:

- The default method of presentation is via webinar.
- A minimum of 50 attendees is recommended for a face-to-face presentation request.
- All requests are subject to review and approval.
- Request processing can take up to 14 working days.
- Please submit your request at least three (3) weeks prior to the proposed date of the event.
- Rescheduling will require a new request.
- Presentations are typically 1 hour in length.

Request an event by clicking on the link below.

<https://pels.texas.gov/outreach.html>

Engineer and Surveyor Ethics Webinars

The Board is offering these one-hour, free ethics webinars to assist license and registration holders with meeting their ethics requirements. Each webinar provides an up-to-date overview of agency activities, case studies, and a review of professional ethics topics.

The next ethics webinar is January 19, 2023 at 10 a.m. CDT each day. Registration is open. Please note that each registration is capped at 1,000 attendees per webinar and will close when this cap is reached.

<https://pels.texas.gov/webinars.html>

Agency Vacancies

We have openings for an Investigator IV. For job descriptions and instructions to apply visit:

<https://pels.texas.gov/employment.htm>



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Catherine Norwood, P.E.
Dr. Marguerite McClinton Stoglin

Texas Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors
1917 S. Interstate 35, Austin, TX 78741
<https://pels.texas.gov>
info@pels.texas.gov
Phone: 512-440-7723