

**The Texas Board of Professional Engineers
Quarterly e-Newsletter**

Professional Engineer (P.E.) Edition

December 20, 2017



We wish you a safe and happy holiday season!

Board Meeting Update

The Texas Board of Professional Engineers Quarterly Board and Committee Meetings were held November 15-16, 2017. Highlights include the following:

Proposals

The amendments are proposed pursuant to the Texas Engineering Practice Act, Occupations Code §1001.202, which authorizes the Board to make and enforce all rules and regulations and bylaws consistent with the Act as necessary for the performance of its duties, the governance of its own proceedings, and the regulation of the practice of engineering in this state.

Proposed Board Rules

- The proposed change to §131.15 would remove an unrequired restriction on the way Committees of the Board are established.
- The proposed change to §131.43 would clarify that public comment at open meetings may be restricted to prevent ex parte communication prohibited under Texas Government Code section 2001.061.
- The proposed additions of §131.87 and §131.113 would put statutory requirements regarding alternative dispute resolution into Board Rules as mandated by Texas Occupations Code section 1001.215.
- The proposed change to §133.13 would add Welding as a recognized discipline of engineering. The Board has received requests to add it from several customers.

- The proposed changes to §§133.21, 133.23, 133.25, 133.27 and 133.93 would clarify in rule that the Board, the Licensing Committee and staff may ask for additional information or documentation to ensure eligibility of an applicant and make the rules more consistent with current practice.
- The proposed change to §133.43 would clarify to ability to claim experience credit for an advanced engineering degree from an accredited if the applicant has another prior engineering degree and make it more consistent with current practice.
- The proposed change to §133.83 would clarify the expectations for applicants regarding the review and processing of an application and make it more consistent with current practice.
- The proposed change to §133.97 would eliminate a reference to a fee that is no longer collected.
- The proposed change to §133.99 would put into rule the currently used Board-approved policy regarding how the Board and staff will handle and process applications when the applicant has a reportable criminal incident on his or her record.
- The proposed change to §137.7 would clarify that only an International Temporary license issued by the Board is covered by this rule. Emergency temporary licenses issued by the Board may not be renewed.
- The proposed change to §137.15 would remove the reference to a fee that is no longer collected by the Board.
- The proposed change to §137.17 would clarify the continuing education exemption and credit that may be claimed by licensees for passing the Principles and Practice of Engineering exam.
- The proposed change to §137.57 would clarify the rule to reemphasize that an engineer must be objective and truthful in the practice of engineering. The changes also clarify the wording regarding expected actions when the potential for a conflict of interest exists.
- The proposed change to §137.63 would clarify that engineers are expected to be honest and ethical in the practice of engineering, which is more consistent with statutory limits and current practices.
- The proposed change to §139.19 would clarify that alternative dispute resolution is an option to resolve Board enforcement matters in accordance with Texas Occupations Code section 1001.215(a)(2).
- The proposed change to §139.35 would update rule references in the table of proposed sanctions to match the proposed rule revisions in other chapters.
- Refer to the proposed rule page at: <http://engineers.texas.gov/proposed.htm> for rule language and instructions to respond. Any comments to the rule changes may be submitted by January 15, 2018, to David Howell, P.E., Deputy Executive Director, Texas Board of Professional Engineers, 1917 S. Interstate 35, Austin, Texas 78741, faxed to his attention at (512) 440-0417 or sent by email to rules@engineers.texas.gov.

Proposed Policy Advisory Opinion

- The Board is required to issue an advisory opinion about interpretations of the Texas Engineering Practice Act in regard to a specific existing or hypothetical factual situation if requested in writing by a person and to respond to that request within 180 days. Upon a written request, the Board has researched and authored a Policy Advisory Opinion Regarding a Texas Real Estate Commission licensed inspector providing a draft opinion on a residential foundation and its relation to the practice of engineering.
- Any comments to the policy advisory opinion may be submitted by January 15, 2018, to David Howell, P.E., Deputy Executive Director, Texas Board of Professional Engineers, 1917 S. Interstate 35, Austin, Texas 78741, faxed to his attention at (512) 440-0417 or sent by email to rules@engineers.texas.gov.

Disciplinary Actions

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

NCEES Updates

- **FE Exam Fee Reductions** - Beginning January 1, 2018, NCEES is reducing the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) and Fundamentals of Surveying (FS) exam registration fees by \$50 from \$225 to \$175. The reduced fee will apply to registrations completed on or after this date; the new price will not be honored for registrations completed before January 1, 2018. For more information on the FE exam, visit <http://ncees.org/cbt>
 - **PE Chemical exam transitions to computer-based testing**

The NCEES Principles and Practice of Engineering (PE) Chemical exam is now offered exclusively via computer-based testing (CBT). CBT provides greater convenience for examinees, uniform testing conditions, and enhanced security. The exam is no longer available in paper-and-pencil format. Test results will be available through a MyNCEES account within 7 to 10 days.

 - **Registration** - Registration is always open and available through your MyNCEES account. Appropriate state licensing board approval information is provided during the registration process.
 - **Testing appointments** - Testing is provided year-round at approved Pearson VUE test centers. You will be notified to schedule your exam once you have been approved by your state licensing board. The first CBT appointments begin January 2, 2018. The total appointment time is 9 hours. The actual exam lasts 8 hours; the other hour allows time for administrative tasks, including a tutorial and an optional 50-minute break.
 - **Exam format, specifications** - The computer-based PE Chemical exam contains 80 questions. It is a supplied-reference exam. A searchable electronic PE Chemical Reference Handbook will be displayed on the monitor during the exam. No other material will be allowed in the exam room. For further information, please refer to: <https://ncees.org/engineering/pe/chemical/>
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Job Openings at TBPE

TBPE has several positions open currently. We are looking for a Director in our Compliance & Enforcement Division, a Program Specialist in our Licensing Division and a front desk receptionist in our Operations Division. Refer to <http://engineers.texas.gov/jobs> for job descriptions and instructions on how to apply.

Webinars and Outreach

TBPE continues to offer ethics outreach presentations both in person and in a webinar format for the convenience of our licensees. The free webinars have been so well received that we are now adding additional events as needed. If you are interested in scheduling a live TBPE ethics presentation at your workplace, please refer to our outreach page at: <http://engineers.texas.gov/outreach>.

- **Ethics Webinars**

These quarterly webinars provide an up-to-date overview of agency activities, case studies, and a review of professional ethics topics. Ethics webinars are held approximately one month prior to each quarterly expiration date.

Future webinars are scheduled for March 7-8, 2018; June 6-7, 2018; September 12-13, 2018; and December 5-6, 2018. Webinars will be held at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. each day. Registration links will be posted 30 days prior to the webinars at: <https://engineers.texas.gov/webinars.html>.



Dream Big: Engineering Our World

Dream Big is the first giant-screen film to answer the call of the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) initiative, which aims to inspire kids of diverse backgrounds to become the innovators who will improve the lives of people across our entire planet as we head into the 21st Century and beyond. For more information and to find a showing near you, visit <http://www.dreambigfilm.com/>.

And More:

Give us feedback on how we are doing by filling out our customer service survey. Please visit our website at <http://engineers.texas.gov/feedback> or call us for a paper survey. We want to hear your suggestions on how we can improve agency operations and delivery of services.

In keeping with our efforts to modernize and increase communication with our licensees and the public, you can now follow us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and via an RSS feed. Join today!

NOTE: This email was sent from an unmonitored mailbox; direct replies will not be read. To contact the Board, please visit our website at: http://engineers.texas.gov/staff_contact.htm.

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