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## **SPECIAL NOTICE CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS**

- ENGINEER BOARD CE GOES INTO EFFECT FOR 2009-2011 RENEWAL CYCLE
- 24 CREDITS MUST BE COMPLETED BY SEPTEMBER 30, 2011
- THE BOARD HAS DECIDED TO GRANT A MORATORIUM FROM DISCIPLINARY ACTION PROVIDED ANY CE CREDIT DEFICIENCIES ARE COMPLETED BY APRIL 1, 2012.

In its e-newsletter sent May 14, 2010, the State Registration Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors and Geologists attempted to update licensees on the upcoming requirements for mandatory continuing education to be set forth in regulations of the Board. THAT INFORMATION IS NOW OUT OF DATE AND SHOULD BE DISREGARDED. This special mailing is intended to provide licensees with the most current information concerning mandatory continuing education. Please accept our apologies for any confusion that may have resulted.

On May 12, 2010, the legislature enacted and the Governor signed into law Act 25 which amended the Engineer, Land Surveyor and Geologists Registration Law to clarify the requirements for mandatory continuing education (CE) and to make it easier to meet your requirements and provide more choice in CE courses, seminars, work shops and conferences.

Act 25 specifically eliminated the need for the Board to pre-approve CE courses. Now, the Board CE requirements are based upon the provision of the model law and rules of the National Council of Examiners in Engineer and Surveying (NCEES), which is the national organization of licensing boards. This change in the Law expands the number of CE courses and activities that will be acceptable for credit.

In addition, this new law specifies that the first CE cycle of 24 credits must be completed, **no ifs, ands or buts**, by the September 30, 2011 renewal cycle. This, of course, is a change from the prior directive. But the Board has come up with a way to smooth the transition for you so that no one is disadvantaged or is unfairly disciplined for any CE deficiencies that may result from the confusion over the CE deadline.

In order to accommodate licensees who are just now learning of this deadline, the Board has decided to grant a moratorium from disciplinary action for anyone who has not completed the 24 CE credits by the September 30, 2011 renewal date provided any and all CE credits short of the mandatory 24 are completed by April 1, 2012. If you fail to make up the CE deficit by the April 2012 deadline, you will be facing disciplinary action and you will not be permitted to double count CE collected after the September deadline for the following renewal cycle.

So, perhaps, the best course of action is to begin doing your CE today. Actually, any CE credits that you have earned as far back as October 1, 2009, will be acceptable at the time of renewal.

In fact, Act 25 provides wide latitude in the courses and other activities that will be acceptable for credit by the Board. The CE standard is **whether the course, workshop, conference, seminar, video course, college course or lecture, etc, maintains, improves or expands the skills and knowledge of a licensee's professional practice.** This CE standard would include courses dealing with the law and ethics of a practice but would exclude practice building or office management. You could receive CE credit under this standard for making a presentation at a professional conference and for even publishing a professional journal article or writing a book and obtaining a patent.

The Board would like to point out that, although it will not be pre-approving courses, it does have final authority of course approval and PDH values that will be applied to activities like courses that you teach, journal articles that you publish and patents that you have obtained.

Mandatory continuing education is not required for new licensees in their first renewal cycle. Licensees serving on active military duty for at least 120 days in a year are exempt from CE during that year. And the Board may waive the CE requirement for a licensee demonstrating illness or other extenuating circumstances. You will however be obligated to complete all delinquent CE, not to exceed 24 PDH, in order to reactivate an expired license.

In the end, the profession is entering a new era with this CE requirement. We ask you to take full advantage of the wide variety of CE course offerings and activities. We remind you to keep and maintain your CE course certificates in a safe place. We urge you to begin taking your CE today so that you have no problems meeting the September 30, 2011 deadline.

If you have any questions contact the State Registration Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors and Geologists. The recent provisions of Act 25 are reproduced on the attached page.

# **Engineer, Land Surveyor and Geologist Registration Law (Continuing Education Provisions)**

## **Section 2. Definitions.**

As used in this act –

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(o) “Activity” shall mean any qualifying activity with a clear purpose and objective which will maintain, improve or expand the skills and knowledge relevant to a licensee’s professional practice.

(p) “College or unit semester hour” or “college or unit quarter hour” shall mean credit for courses in programs approved by the Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology or the National Association of State Boards of Geology or other related college courses.

(q) “Continuing education unit” shall mean a unit of credit customarily used for continuing education courses.

(r) “Course” shall mean any qualifying course with a clear purpose and objective which will maintain, improve or expand the skills and knowledge relevant to a licensee’s professional practice.

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(t) “Professional development hour” or “PDH” shall mean fifty minutes of instruction or presentation relevant to professional practice or any equivalent.

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## **Section 4.5. Continuing Professional Competency Requirements.**

(a) In order to safeguard life, health and property and to promote the public welfare, the practice of professional engineering, professional land surveying and professional geology in this commonwealth requires continuing professional education.

(b) Each licensee shall be required to meet the continuing professional competency requirements of this section as a condition for licensure renewal. Continuing professional competency obtained by a licensee should maintain, improve or expand skills and knowledge obtained prior to initial licensure, including law and ethics applicable to the profession, or develop new and relevant skills and knowledge. No credit shall be given for a course in practice building or office management.

(c) Each licensee shall be required to obtain twenty-four PDH units during the biennial renewal period. If a licensee exceeds the requirement in any renewal period, a maximum of twelve PDH units may be carried forward into the subsequent renewal period. PDH units may be earned as follows:

- (1) Successful completion of college courses relevant to professional practice.
- (2) Completion of continuing education courses relevant to professional practice.
- (3) Completion of correspondence, televised, videotaped and other short courses or tutorials relevant to professional practice.
- (4) Completion of seminars, employer-sponsored courses, workshops or professional or technical presentations made at meetings, conventions or conferences relevant to professional practice.

- (5) Teaching, presenting or instructing in any of the activities listed in clauses (1), (2), (3) and (4).
  - (6) Authoring published papers, articles or books relevant to professional practice.
  - (7) Obtaining patents relevant to professional practice.
- (d) (1) Except as provided in clause (2), units of other types of credit shall be converted to PDH units as follows:
- (i) One college or unit semester hour shall equal forty-five PDH units.
  - (ii) One college or unit quarter hours shall equal thirty PDH units.
  - (iii) One continuing education unit shall equal ten PDH units.
  - (iv) One hour of professional development in course work, seminars or professional, technical presentations made at meetings, employer-sponsored courses, conventions or conferences shall equal one PDH unit.
  - (v) Each published paper, article or book shall equal ten PDH units.
  - (vi) Each patent obtained shall equal ten PDH units.
- (2) Teaching any of the activities listed in clause (1)(i), (ii), (III) and (iv) shall equal double the amount of PDH units provided for in those subclauses. Teaching credit shall be awarded for teaching a course or seminar but shall not be awarded to full-time faculty members in the performance of their duties at their employing institutions.
- (e) The board shall not require courses to be preapproved. The board may preapprove course providers. The board shall have final authority regarding approval of courses, credit, PDH value for courses and other methods of earning credit. Credit determination for activities listed in subsection (d)(1)(v) and (vi) shall be the responsibility of the licensee. The board shall accept credits earned in other jurisdictions if the activity otherwise complies with this section.
- (f) The licensee shall be responsible for maintaining records to be used to support credits claimed. Required records shall include all of the following:
- (1) A log showing the type of activity claimed, sponsoring organization, location, duration, instructor's or speaker's name and PDH credits earned.
  - (2) Attendance verification records in the form of completion certificates or other documents supporting evidence of attendance.
- (g) (1) A licensee may be exempt from the requirements of this section for any of the following reasons:
- (i) A licensee serving on temporary active duty in the armed forces of the United States for a period of time exceeding one hundred twenty consecutive days in a year shall be exempt from obtaining the professional development hours required during that year.
  - (ii) A licensee experiencing physical disability, illness or other extenuating circumstances as reviewed and approved by the board may be exempt. Supporting documentation must be furnished to the board.
- (2) An individual applying for initial licensure and registration shall be exempt from the requirement set forth in subsection (a) for the licensure period immediately following initial licensure and registration.
- (h) As part of the process to reactivate a licensee, a licensee must obtain all delinquent PDH units, except that under no circumstances shall a licensee be required to obtain more than the biennial renewal requirement.