



**FBPE**  
FLORIDA BOARD OF  
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

# Connection

*Linking You With the Florida Board's Latest Engineering News and Information*

October 2019

## From the Executive Director: Changes Have Arrived

By Zana Raybon, FBPE Executive Director, FEMC President

Our October 2019 newsletter is going out later than usual this quarter. Changes from House Bill 827, which Gov. DeSantis signed into law in June, went into effect on Tuesday, Oct. 1, and we wanted to make sure they rolled out as smoothly as possible.



Extensive updates to the FBPE website were needed to explain:

- New education requirements that allow those with Bachelor of Science degrees in engineering technology from ETAC-ABET-accredited programs to pursue licensure;
- Decoupling of the PE exam from required engineering experience;
- Adding engineering experience requirements for engineering technology graduates;
- Changes involving how registration for the FE and PE exams is now directly with NCEES;
- How to register and qualify an engineering firm now that Certificates of Authorization have been eliminated; and
- New applications for licensure, which now include the ability to reinstate a null-and-void PE license.

Refer to [my July 2019 column](#) for a closer look at the changes brought about by HB 827.

The *Licensure* section of FBPE's website needed the most updating. In fact, we threw out the old pages regarding applying for the Fundamentals of Engineering exam, the Principles & Practice of Engineering exam, NCEES exam information, licensure options, and Certificates of Authorization, and started from scratch.

Leading off the revised section is the [Licensure Process](#) page, which provides an overview of the three E's required for obtaining a Professional Engineer license in Florida: education, examinations, and experience. This page also includes links to education evaluation providers, for those who don't have an engineering or engineering technology degree from an ABET-accredited program, or have a foreign degree.

Next up is the [Engineering Exams](#) page. There are separate sections for the FE and the PE exams. Since you no longer apply with FBPE to take either exam, there is information on registering directly with the [National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying](#) (NCEES), which administers both exams.

The [Engineer Interns](#) page has a link to the *Application for Engineer Intern Certification*, information on fees, and a set of commonly asked questions about the application. Similarly, the [Professional Engineers](#) page lists requirements that have to be met before you can apply for licensure in Florida, a link to the *Application for Licensure as Professional Engineer*, and commonly asked questions about the application.

This page also includes applications for adding an additional PE discipline or for temporary licensure in Florida.

The [Engineering Firms](#) page explains the new registry of qualified business organizations that replaces the old Certificates of Authorization, and the essential requirements for maintaining the ability to provide engineering services in Florida. There's a link to the registration page at [myfloridalicense.com](http://myfloridalicense.com). Along the right side of the page are links to a couple of instructional pages. The first page gives [step-by-step instructions for registering](#) your engineering business and qualifying it with a Professional Engineer who is licensed in Florida. [Another step-by-step guide](#) shows how to remove a qualifying engineer for a firm.

These are a lot of changes, not just to our website, but to the practice of engineering in Florida. If you have any questions regarding the changes, please contact us at [board@fbpe.org](mailto:board@fbpe.org) or [\(850\) 521-0500](tel:(850)521-0500). We would be happy to help.

## Chair's Corner: 2019 NCEES Annual Meeting Report

By **Kenneth Todd**, PE, FBPE Chair

In August, several FBPE members and I attended the 2019 annual meeting of the National Council of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors (NCEES) in Washington, D.C. All state and territorial engineering and surveying boards are members of NCEES. As a reminder to all, NCEES was formed in 1920 to promote licensing of engineers with the understanding that licensing of competent individuals helps protect the public from the practice of engineering by unqualified individuals, who potentially could place the public at direct risk of harm.



This article serves to update Florida engineers on what other states have been doing and what potential changes by NCEES could be forthcoming to the Model Law that state and territorial engineering boards may review when contemplating revisions to their own rules.

NCEES is looking to accomplish three things:

- Complete the transition to computer-based testing (CBT) of all PE licensure examinations as quickly as possible;
- Encourage mobility of engineering licenses by having states increase their ability to issue licenses through comity to applicants from other states or territories wherever possible; and
- Have all states and territories recognize engineering technology degrees as a pathway to licensure.

So, what is NCEES doing to try to accomplish these goals?

NCEES has numerous committees working to convert all exams for the various PE disciplines from pencil and paper to CBT by 2024. FE exams have already converted to CBT. CBT for most PE exams will be held year-round at approved testing centers. Results will be available to examinees within seven to 10 days. The exams will be taken on computer with different formats available for test questions, such as multiple choice, multiple select points, click on a spot or area of a drawing to answer the question, drag & drop, and drag tokens onto a drawing. There will still be some fill-in-the-blank questions. Examinees must use an approved calculator; all reference materials will be supplied via a website. The tests are still considered

eight-hour exams, and the examinee can use all eight hours to take the exam. However, if they take a break, they must turn in part one of the exam before starting part two.

The nuclear, environmental, and chemical engineering exams are now CBT. The following CBT exam transition schedule is set for the other disciplines:

- Petroleum engineering exam will start October 2019;
- Mechanical engineering exam in April 2020;
- Fire protection, industrial, and systems engineering exams in October 2020;
- Electrical engineering exam in 2021;
- Architectural engineering and naval engineering exams in 2022;
- Civil engineering exam in 2023; and
- Structural engineering exam in 2024.

It should be noted that disciplines with fewer examinees will be offered only once a year.

Regarding structural engineering, some states and territories have a structural engineering designation. Licensing of structural engineers has usually centered on the term “significant structure,” which means something different to each state or territory, and there has been no resolution to date. NCEES plans to create a committee to discuss this designation.

NCEES is encouraging state and territory engineering boards to do what they can to increase mobility of licenses. The NCEES Board of Directors understands that state and territory engineering boards can only do what their legislatures allow them to do. However, they believe it is good for the profession and the public to increase mobility of licenses.

Historically, applicants with engineering degrees accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission (EAC) of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) were the only degrees allowed to sit for the PE exam. There has been a trend by states in the past decade or so to also allow applicants with engineering technology degrees to sit for the PE exam. Engineering technology programs may be accredited by an associated entity: ABET’s Engineering Technology Accreditation Commission (ETAC).

NCEES also believes that engineering technology degrees obtained from programs accredited by ETAC/ABET are a viable pathway to licensure. Only 15% of PEs have historically come from an ETAC/ABET program. Many states continue to discuss putting this in the Model Law without changing the criteria for a Model Law engineer. To date this has not occurred. Currently, each state is left to accept or reject engineering technology degrees.

In case you were unaware, the Florida Legislature passed a law earlier this year (Chapter 2019-86, Laws of Florida) that revises Chapter 471, Florida Statutes, the engineering registration law, to now allow PE applicants with engineering technology degrees to sit for the PE exam if they meet the minimum criteria spelled out in the FBPE rules. The FBPE spent this summer rewriting the rules in Chapter 61G15, Florida Administrative Code, to address the new law.

## Law Enforcement Forum

Additionally, during the NCEES annual meeting, a Law Enforcement Forum was held, with approximately 100 in attendance. Forum participants were presented with two actual legal cases, each from a different state, that potentially could impact the way laws and rules in other states or territories are interpreted.

The first case discussed was *Express Oil Change, LLC v. Mississippi Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Surveyors*. The details, history, and outcomes of the case were presented by the Mississippi Attorney General's Office.

This case looks at the question of how far a board can and should go in issues of protected titles. An oil change company used the title "tire engineer" for its technicians who changed tires as part of its service. The Mississippi Board felt the title was misleading in the nature and technical expertise of the service the public was receiving. Although a U.S. District Court initially ruled in the Board's favor, the decision was later overturned by the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals.

A second presentation was made by the Oregon Board counsel regarding *Mats Järnlström v. the Oregon State Board of Examiners for Engineering and Land Surveying*. This case looked at efforts to protect the term "engineer" while also preserving First Amendment rights.

The forum also discussed several topics including regulation of conduct, what affect criminal history has on licensure, and engineers practicing beyond their level of competence and areas of experience. It also included an interesting discussion about expungement, and when engineers should be permitted to purge discipline from their professional records.

Finally, several states announced programs they have implemented to enhance the professional practice of engineering disciplines. For example, Rhode Island has developed cross-discipline responsibility guidelines and provided them to local building officials. Kansas has developed core competency criteria for fire protection. Alabama provides training to building department plan reviewers. Alaska has developed a guidance memo they give to building officials; and Illinois has developed a manual for code enforcement of building design.

## Engineering Firms Moved to Registry

As of Oct. 1, 2019, engineering firms must register with the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation in order to offer engineering services in the state.

Firms that held active Certificates of Authorization on Sept. 30 were automatically rolled over into the online registry. FBPE recommends that all firms and their qualifying engineers log into [myfloridalicense.com](http://myfloridalicense.com) and confirm that the firm is registered as a qualified business organization and that the qualifying engineer is linked to your business.

Any new business that wants to offer engineering services in Florida must be registered with the name of the firm as it is listed with the Florida Secretary of State, and a Professional Engineer licensed in Florida must qualify the business.

There is no fee to register, and engineering firms no longer have to renew their registration. Since this is a registration, there is no license or certificate to be printed.



To maintain their registration, engineering firms must comply with requirements regarding their qualifying engineer in [Section 471.023, Florida Statutes](#):

- A qualifying agent who leaves an engineering firm must notify the Board within 24 hours.
- The qualifying agent of a firm must notify the Board within 30 days of any changes to information in the firm's initial registration application.
- If the qualifying agent leaves the firm and was the only qualifying engineer for the business, the firm may no longer provide engineering services in Florida and must be qualified by another Professional Engineer within 60 days if it wishes to resume offering engineering services. FBPE or the Florida Engineers Management Corporation may authorize a temporary qualifying engineer for no more than 60 days in order to proceed with incomplete contracts.

The qualified business organization registration also applies to out-of-state firms seeking to temporarily perform engineering services in Florida.

To assist with registration, FBPE has created an [online, step-by-step guide](#). Keep the guide open in a separate window so you can refer to it as you register and qualify your engineering firm.

If you have any questions regarding registered engineering firms, please contact the Board office at [\(850\) 521-0500, ext. 110](#) or [kanderson@fbpe.org](mailto:kanderson@fbpe.org).

## 2019 FEMC Annual Report Highlights

The [Florida Engineers Management Corporation](#) produces an annual report as required by [Section 471.038, Florida Statutes](#).

The report is submitted to the Secretary of the Department of Business and Professional Regulation, the Florida Board of Professional Engineers, and the Florida Legislature by Oct. 1 each year. It reports on the status of the corporation, including information concerning FEMC programs and funding, as well as information regarding licenses and complaints handled by FEMC.

A copy of the [2019 FEMC Annual Report](#) is available for download on the [Annual Reports page](#) of the *Corporate* section of the FBPE website.

Below are some highlights from the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2018-19 (July 1, 2018-June 30, 2019):

- 50** – Number of FBPE Board, FEMC Directors, and committee meetings administered
- 40,444** – Average number of licensees and others receiving FBPE's [Connection newsletter](#) each quarter
- 1,689,924** – Number of pageviews of the FBPE website
- 2,100** – Number of engineering students reached by **14** outreach visits to universities to discuss engineering exams and licensure

### LICENSURE STATISTICS

- 36,526** – Number of PE licenses renewed
- 5,729** – Number of Certificates of Authorization\* renewed
- 6,136** – New applications received for licensure



- 3,728** – Applications for licensure approved
- 1,387** – Examinees passed the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) exam
- 1,169** – Applications approved for the Principals & Practice of Engineering (PE) exam
- 589** – Certificates of Authorization\* issued for firms to provide engineering services in Florida
- 672** – Certifications of Threshold Special Inspectors issued
- 54** – Days to issue a license on average.

### **LEGAL STATISTICS**

- 195** – Complaints regarding engineering practices received, of which **140** were found to be legally sufficient
- \$104,528.60** – Fines and Costs imposed
- 30** – Administrative Complaints filed in cases where the Probable Cause Panel found reason to believe a violation of the Florida Engineering Practice Act had occurred
- 92** – Final Orders issued against Professional Engineers
- 16** – Cases dismissed with a finding of No Probable Cause
- 13** – Cases dismissed with a Letter of Guidance
- 4** – Licenses revoked
- 6** – Licenses suspended
- 1** – License restricted
- 1** – License voluntarily changed to inactive
- 8** – Reprimands issued
- 4** – Probations issued
- 4** – Project reviews
- 6** – Engineers ordered to successfully complete course in Engineering Professionalism and Ethics
- 6** – Engineers ordered to successfully complete the Board’s Study Guide on Laws and Rules
- 4** – Voluntary Licensure Relinquishments

In addition to [FEMC Annual Reports](#), copies of [FEMC’s Quarterly Reports](#) are also available online.

\* Certificates of Authorization were replaced with a registry of Qualified Business Organizations. For more information, please see the [Engineering Firms](#) page.

## **Ringle Begins Term as NCEES President**

By [NCEES](#)

Dean Ringle, PE, PS, began his term as 2019–20 NCEES president at the conclusion of the organization’s annual meeting, held Aug. 14–17 in Washington, D.C.

A resident of Columbus, Ohio, Ringle serves as a member of the Ohio State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Surveyors. He replaces outgoing president James Purcell, PE, of New Jersey, who will remain on the NCEES board of directors as immediate past president.

Also during the annual meeting, NCEES members elected Christopher Knotts, PE, president-elect for the 2019–20 term.



*Dean Ringle, PE*

NCEES welcomed Christopher Duhamel, PE, PS, of Rhode Island, and Timothy Lingerfelt, PLS, of Tennessee, to its board of directors as well. Duhamel and Lingerfelt will serve two-year terms as vice presidents of the Northeast Zone and Southern Zone, respectively.

Rounding out the board of directors are three members serving the second and third years of their terms: Timothy Rickborn, PE, of South Carolina, returns as treasurer for 2017–20; Marlon Vogt, PE, of Iowa, returns as Central Zone vice president; and Brian Robertson, PE, of Colorado, continues as Western Zone vice president.

## Former FBPE Chair Eugene Bechamps, PE: 1929-2019

Former FBPE and FEMC officer Eugene N. Bechamps Jr., PE, died July 5, 2019, at his home in Cape Coral. He was 89.

Born Oct. 7, 1929, in Flushing, N.Y., Mr. Bechamps attended the University of Miami, where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering in 1953. He received his Florida Professional Engineer license in 1960, and worked as a Head Highway Engineer at Dade County Public Works for several years before joining Carr Smith & Associates in 1969. He ran his own civil engineering firm from 1981-2005.

Mr. Bechamps was on the Florida Board of Professional Engineers from 1968-69 and 1973-86, serving terms as both chair and vice chair. He was instrumental in moving the FBPE office from Orlando to Tallahassee in 1979, and in a major rewriting of Chapter 471, *Engineering*, Florida Statutes.

He was among the first board of directors for the Florida Engineers Management Corporation, serving from 1998-2003. During that time, his efforts as chair and vice chair helped ensure a smooth transition from public to private management by contract with the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation.

Mr. Bechamps served as president of the Florida Engineering Society from 1971-72. He was FES Engineer of the Year in 1973, and received its award for Outstanding Service to the Engineering Profession in 1975.

He also served on the board of the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying, was NCEES Southern Zone vice president in 1978-79, and was NCEES president from 1980-81. NCEES presented him with a Distinguished Service Award in 1983, and a Distinguished Service Award with Special Commendation in 1990.

Mr. Bechamps was preceded in death by his wife of 62 years, Beverly Jean (Allen) Bechamps, and daughter Theresa (Bechamps) Seeley. He is survived by children Eugene Jr. (Patty); grandchildren Jessica (Danny) Fraguela, and Eugene III "Geno," Ashley, and Brittany Bechamps; great grandchildren Alyssa and Ashley Fraguela; siblings Beatrice Hennington and Rose Carol Bechamps.



*Eugene Bechamps Jr., PE*

## Legal Department: Latest Engineer Discipline

Pursuant to Rule 61G15-37.001(11), Florida Administrative Code, the Florida Engineers Management Corporation is required to post all Final Orders involving active disciplinary cases to the website until the terms of the final order are completed, or until the licensee becomes inactive, retires, relinquishes the license or permits the license to become null and void. Included in this section are the most recent cases

in which final action has been taken by the Board, a brief description of the licensee's violation and discipline as well as a link to the final order. [View actions.](#)

## Special Recognition: Congratulations, Examinees

FBPE applauds all of the candidates that successfully passed engineering exams in the past quarter. We wish them much success as they move towards the next step in their engineering careers. [See the complete list online.](#)

## Mark Your Calendar

We regularly update our calendar to ensure you stay up to date with the latest FBPE and FEMC events. [Check out the calendar on our website.](#)

## FBPE Board Members & FEMC Directors

### FBPE Board Members

*Kenneth Todd*, PE, CFM; Chair  
*Babu Varghese*, PE, SI, CGC, CCC; Vice Chair  
*Dylan Albergo*, PE  
*Scott Drury*, PE  
*C. Kevin Fleming*, PE  
*Pankaj Shah*, PE  
*Vacancy*, Education  
*Vacancy*, Engineering  
*Vacancy*, Engineering  
*Vacancy*, Public  
*Vacancy*, Public  
*Zana Raybon*; Executive Director

### FEMC Directors

*Stephen Kowkabany*, PE; Chair  
*Barney T. Bishop III*; Vice Chair  
*Safiya Brea*, PE  
*Donald L. Goddeau*, PE  
*Satya Lory*, PE  
*Art Nordlinger*, PE  
*John R. Stewart*  
*Zana Raybon*; FEMC President  
*John J. Rimes III*, Esq.; FEMC Vice President  
*Rebecca Sammons*; FEMC Secretary  
*Michele Morris*; FEMC Treasurer