



FBPE
FLORIDA BOARD OF
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

Connection

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April 2022

From the Executive Director: 2022 Legislative Update

By **Zana Raybon**, FBPE Executive Director & FEMC President

The 2022 Florida Legislative Session ended on Friday, March 11, with one bill of interest to Professional Engineers being passed by both houses.

[HB 375](#), titled Structural Engineering Recognition Program for Professional Engineers, was enrolled on March 4, and is awaiting the governor's signature.

This legislation establishes the Structural Engineering Recognition Program for Professional Engineers and requires the Board of Professional Engineers to recognize licensed Professional Engineers who have passed specified examinations. The new statute provides that application must be made to the Board with no fee assessed for such application. Engineers who have met the requirements of the Recognition Program will be authorized to identify such recognition in their professional practice, as well as in marketing and advertising materials. It is important to note that this new statute is not a title act and, therefore, recognition by the program is not required to practice structural engineering or use the title structural engineer.

The FBPE Rules Committee has already met to discuss preliminary rulemaking for this statute, 471.055, Florida Statutes, which if signed will go into effect on July 1, 2022.

Legislation that did not pass and leaves the state's uneven condominium inspections laws in place was [HB 7069](#), titled Condominium and Cooperative Associations. The House proposal would have required condominium associations to conduct reserve studies every decade to make sure they have the resources to finance needed structural improvements. They also would have also been barred from waiving a requirement that they put money in reserve to make structural improvements, although they could continue to waive collecting reserve funds for other improvements.

The bill would have also required that condos be recertified after 30 years if they are three stories or higher or are 25 years old, and within three miles of the coast. They would have to recertified every 10 years after that.

Under the Senate version, if a condo was within three miles of coastline and was 20 years old by July 1, 2022, it would have had to undergo a "milestone" inspection, by a Florida-licensed architect or engineer, of the structural components of the building to determine its general safety. Subsequent inspections would have been required every seven years. For all other condos, the inspection would have been



required by January 2025 if a building's certificate of occupancy was issued on or before July 1, 1992, and every 10 years thereafter.

Because there are an estimated 2 million people living in more than 912,000 condominium units that are 30 years old or older, legislators hoped to encourage condominium associations to be intentional in repairs and stave off structural issues, in the interest of public safety.

Under current law, only Miami-Dade and Broward counties and several cities require regular structural inspections of condos. The proposed legislation would have expanded that.

It is expected that this proposed legislation will return next year.

Chair's Corner: PE Licensure by the Numbers

By Scott Drury, PE, FBPE Chair (2022)

A few weeks ago, a former co-worker of mine, Bricey Rhodes, passed away. Bricey, who received his Professional Engineer license in 1965, had a license number in the mid-7,000s.

I remember the first time I worked with Bricey and had to put his license number on a document. I asked, "I only see four digits, what is the fifth number in your license?" Pretty soon, I realized that fifth digit was a zero that preceded the rest of the numbers.

Bricey worked as a PE for more than 45 years and was greatly respected in the industry. I always appreciated having a chance to work with him. He is also the only PE that I have ever known that had only four digits in his license number.

This got me thinking about how engineering licensure has changed since Florida began issuing licenses in 1917.

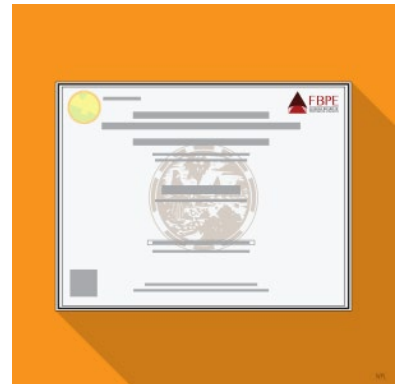
A friend of mine recently received his engineering license with a number in the low 93,000s. So, in the past 105 years, there have been more than 93,000 licenses granted to Professional Engineers serving Florida. Even as I write this article, more licenses numbers are being issued.

Some people might do some quick math and figure out this would be an average of almost 900 licenses a year. To me, it is interesting to see how the rate has changed over the past 105 years.

When Bricey received his mid-7,000s license number in 1965, the average number of licenses issued between 1917 and 1965 was about 155 a year.

Between 1965 and 2009, when I received my license number in the upper-69,000s, the average was a little more than 1,400 new licenses per year. In the past 12-and-a-half years, there have been about 24,000 new licensees in Florida, which averages more than 1,900 a year (about 160 a month, or about 5 a day).

Advances in technology (such as computers and the internet) and increased access to higher education have been major factors in the increase in engineering licensure. The change by the Legislature in 2019 to the [Engineering Practice Act](#) (Chapter 471, Florida Statutes) allowing people with engineering technology degrees to be eligible for licensure in Florida has also been a recent contributing factor.



I really enjoy being a Professional Engineer and getting to serve the people of Florida. I am also excited to see that more people each year are wanting to be [Professional Engineers](#) in this great state.

At some point in the next few years, we are going to pass 100,000 licenses issued to Florida engineers. I imagine what it will be like 20 to 30 years from now, and if a young engineer will ever ask me, “What is the sixth digit in your license?”

A CE Course Can Only Be Counted Once

Just like you don't dip your chip back into the guacamole, you don't double-dip when it comes to your [continuing-education credits](#).

Hours that you earn in a continuing-education class can only be counted once.

Florida Professional Engineer licenses are valid for two years beginning March 1 of each odd-numbered year. During that two-year period, or biennium, PEs must complete 18 hours of continuing education. The deadline for completing your continuing education is Feb. 28 of each odd-numbered year, when licensure renewal closes.



During the online renewal process, PEs must legally attest to completing all 18 hours by the last day of the renewal period.

After each renewal period, 3 percent of Florida's licensed engineers are randomly selected for a continuing-education audit.

If you fail an audit, you are automatically re-audited the next period.

Anytime a PE is ordered to take continuing-education courses to fulfill the requirements from a previous renewal, those CE credits cannot be used again to meet the current renewal requirements, even if they are taken within the same biennium.

For example, a PE failed to complete the Florida laws-and-rules and ethics courses in the 2021 audit, and was required to complete those courses late to bring them into compliance. When it is again time to renew their license in 2023, the PE may not use those same CE certificates to meet the current continuing-education requirements.

In addition, if disciplinary action ordered by the Board requires a PE to complete a professionalism and ethics course, that course cannot be used to meet CE requirements.

Here are tips for providing proof of continuing education when asked by the Board:

- When responding to a CE audit, supply only certificates for courses that are completed.
- Service as a member of the Legislature or as an elected state or local official meets requirements for the laws-and-rules and ethics courses.
- To claim CE credit for teaching a college course, a PE must provide a letter from the university or college that lists the name of the course, the dates taught, and the first time that the course was taught by the PE. You may only use the teaching of a college course once, regardless of whether you updated the course materials. Also, full-time faculty may not use the teaching of college courses as substitute CE credit.

- To claim CE credit for a peer-reviewed paper, a PE must supply the paper and include the date of the peer review and who conducted the review.
- To claim CE credit for a patent, a PE must supply documentation from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office assigning the patent number.
- To claim CE credit for making a presentation at a “lunch and learn,” a PE must provide a letter from whomever requested the presentation, with the topic, date, and length of time of the presentation.
- To claim CE credit for presentations to professional or technical societies, a PE must provide a letter from the organization with the topic, date, and length of time of the presentation.
- To obtain CE credit for serving as an officer of a professional or technical society, a PE must supply a letter from the organization that indicates what office was held and the term of the service. CE credits are not earned until the end of each calendar year of completed service.

For complete information on demonstrating compliance with continuing-education requirements, please see [Rule 61G15-22.006, Florida Administrative Code](#).

Protecting Your PE Investment

As a professional engineer, you worked hard for that distinction.

You graduated with an engineering degree, spent years working under an experienced engineer, and took two grueling exams to become licensed.

As your career winds down or you decide to stop practicing engineering in Florida, don't disregard the importance of that PE license. There are scammers out there eager to take advantage of your good reputation and your license number.

Similarly, unscrupulous people have unlawfully used a deceased PE's license number and seal.

Here are some steps you can take to secure your PE license:

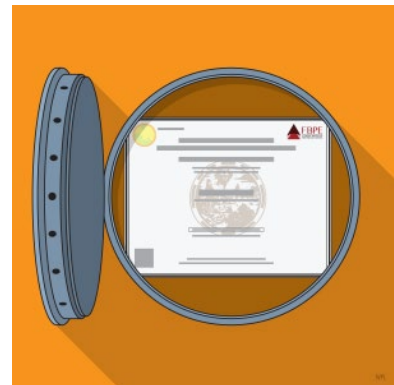
Retiring?

If you have retired from practicing engineering and never plan to again sign and seal engineering documents, you should ask the Board to place your license in retired status. It requires you to fill out a short form and submit it to the Board.

When your retired status is approved, you are entitled to use the title “PE, Retired” after your name.

You also should destroy any PE seals that you have to prevent them from being used by unscrupulous persons to sign and seal engineering documents in your name.

Once you have had your PE license retired, you can no longer offer engineering services without applying for a new license. If you think you may want to resume offering engineering services in Florida, you should consider letting your PE license go null and void. A null-and-void license can be reinstated following [the steps listed on our website](#).



Null & Void?

Say that you no longer need to have a PE license in Florida, and you have chosen to let your license go [null and void](#). At that point, you may no longer offer engineering services in Florida, and you may no longer use “PE” after your name or call yourself a professional engineer or any other [protected title](#).

This extends to business cards, telephone listings, websites, LinkedIn or other social media, or any other public expression. Be sure to update them accordingly.

Should you choose to resume offering engineering services in Florida, a null-and-void license can be reinstated following [the steps listed on our website](#).

Estate Planning?

If you are a PE, you should consider estate planning that includes instructions to your heirs regarding your license and seal.

After a PE has died, a family member or co-worker should [notify the Board](#) and provide documentation, such as an obituary, so that the PE licensee can be labeled deceased. When that happens, the PE’s license number and personal information is removed from the listings at [myfloridalicense.com](#). This helps prevent anyone from fraudulently assuming the deceased’s identity as a Professional Engineer.

Special Recognition: Congratulations, Examinees

FBPE applauds everyone who 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](#).

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](#).

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](#).

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