PROFESSIONAL ETHICS
For Engineers

Defining Ethics

Ethics Codes Are Dynamic

• Reevaluated when ethical dilemmas arise
• Must be applicable
• Change over the years:

Early Years
• Advertising
• Competitive bidding
• Self promotion

Today
• Signing and sealing work
• Whistleblowing
• Conflict of interests

Obligation to protect PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY
**FUNDAMENTAL CANON 1**

Hold paramount health, safety, and welfare of public.

**FUNDAMENTAL CANON 2**

Perform services only where competent.

**FUNDAMENTAL CANON 3**

Objective and truthful in public statements.
FUNDAMENTAL CANON 4
Act as faithful agents

FUNDAMENTAL CANON 5
Avoid deceptive acts

FUNDAMENTAL CANON 6
Enhance reputation of profession
Tests for Use

Consider:
• The Golden Rule
• No special gains
• News headline

We Can Ask Ourselves...

• Long Term Impact?
• Right Thing to do?
• Reflection of My Organization’s Values?

For Advice:
Arthur Schwartz, Legal Counsel
National Society of Professional Engineers
aschwartz@nspe.org

Review Cases:
• www.nspe.org - National Society of Professional Engineers
• www.niee.org - National Institute of Engineering Ethics
Is it ethical for Engineer A to offer engineering information, observations and advice to engineering colleagues and members of the public?
It is ethical

Must be accurate and complete, limit to areas of competence, conform with state licensing requirements

May not reveal sensitive information without consent of client/employer

Act with care and discretion – an extension of their own professional activities

BER Conclusions 17-5

NSPE Code of Ethics References

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BER Case 17-10

Would it be ethical for Salomon to serve as an expert for both the insurance company and the deceased employee’s estate?
• Not ethical
• Representing multiple and adverse parties in litigation raises potential for a serious conflict of interest
• Could be breach of confidentiality

BER Conclusions 17-10

NSPE Code of Ethics

References

I.4  II.4.a  III.4.b
II.1.C  II.4.b
II.4  III.4

BER Case 17-2/12
In the future, can he get back into services he performed at LPE?

• Can he contact his 15-year client, the relationship established while at LPE?
• Can he list his work on the new company’s website?

**NSPE Code of Ethics**

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**BER Conclusions 17-2/12**

• Must not engage in any misleading or deceptive actions
• Website must make clear that the work was performed under the auspices of LPE
• Must not to use any proprietary information, intellectual property, etc. from LPE

**NSPE Code of Ethics**

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**Case 16-8**
Was it unethical for Jackie to fail to disclose to the City of Chesterton the unanticipated site conditions that she encountered from her previous project?

Case 16-8

NSPE Code of Ethics References:
- II.3
- II.3.a
- II.4
- II.5
- III.1.b
- III.3.a

Unethical for Jackie to fail to disclose site conditions on previous project.

Professional Ethics
For Engineers