

TBPELS Agency Merger Webinar



August 1, 2019

PRESENTERS

- **Lance Kinney, PhD., P.E.**, Executive Director TBPE
 - Lance.Kinney@engineers.texas.gov
 - **LeAnn Catron**, Executive Director TBPLS
 - LeAnn.Catron@txls.texas.gov
 - **Rick Strong, P.E.**, Director of Licensing and Registration
 - Rick.Strong@engineers.texas.gov
 - **Michael Sims, P.E.**, Director of Compliance and Enforcement
 - Michael.Sims@engineers.texas.gov
- Note: Emails - @pels.texas.gov as of Sept 1

Welcome



Lance Kinney, PhD, P.E.

- Executive Director
- Lance.Kinney@engineers.texas.gov
- Lance.Kinney@pels.texas.gov





WEBINAR INFO

- Webinar audio can be through your computer speakers.
- All attendees will be in Listen-only mode.
- During the presentation, use the Question feature in the webinar software, not the chat feature or the hand raising feature.
- If there are questions, not addressed, please email the presenter.
- We will be using Polls during the presentation.
- A pdf of the slides is available on the TBPE website.
- *****This is NOT an approved Ethics or Continuing Education Presentation for Surveying *****

Website and Social Media

<http://engineers.texas.gov>

Sept 1 – <http://pels.texas.gov>

- Facebook: Texas Board of Professional Engineers 
- Twitter: TBPE_Exec 
- LinkedIn: Texas Board of Professional Engineers 
- RSS Feed on our website: <http://engineers.texas.gov> 
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCm0YTnjR3StveBxWhCT4MiA> 

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PURPOSE OF WEBINAR

- Introduction to TBPELS Staff
- Summary of Board / Agency Functions
- TBPE / TBPELS Activities
- Merger Update
- Open Lines of Communication

TEXAS BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS & TEXAS BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYING

Nine Members - Appointed by Governor

- 6 Licensed Professionals
- 3 Public Members
- Standard term is 6 years



TEXAS BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS AND LAND SURVEYORS

Nine Members - Appointed by Governor

- 5 Licensed Professional Engineers
- 1 Registered Professional Land Surveyor
- 3 Public Members
- 1 Ex-Officio Representative from GLO
- Standard term is 6 years



TBPELS MISSION

Public Safety & Welfare

Our mission is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the people of Texas through the licensure and registration of qualified individuals as professional engineers and land surveyors, compliance with applicable laws and rules, and education about engineering and land surveying.



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Presenter



Rick Strong, P.E.

- Director of Licensing
- Rick.Strong@engineers.texas.gov
- Rick.Strong@pels.texas.gov

History of TBPE

- Created by Texas Legislature (45R) in 1937
- New London School Explosion
 - 300 students and teachers killed
 - Result of improperly designed mechanical and electrical devices
- Established a Board to regulate the practice of engineering through licensing and rules of practice



1937

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BOARD PRIMARY FUNCTIONS

Since 1937 -

- **License** Qualified Engineers
- **Enforce** Engineering Practice Act

Since 2003 – Requiring Firm Registration

Since 2005 - Requiring Continuing Education

Now

- **Educate** – PEs, Officials, Potential PEs,
Public



TBPE LICENSING HISTORY

Over 136,000 Texas licenses granted since 1937

Currently over 67,000 licenses



PROFESSIONAL LICENSING

- Protection of the Public
- Ethical expectations
- Competence
 - Initial Qualifications
 - Education, Experience, Examinations
 - Staying Current
 - Continuing Education
- Professionalism

PROFESSIONAL LICENSING

System to Protect the Public:

- Sets the minimum standards for licensure as a Professional Engineer / Surveyor
- Sets continuing practice and competence standards
- Sets ethical and professional standards
- Compliance with these standards of professional practice
- Standards for indicating competence (titles, seals, etc.)
- Prevents unqualified individuals from offering or practicing where it could endanger the public



Licensing Competence

- 3E's: Education, Experience, Exams
- Competence is gained by **Education** and **Experience**
- Measured by FE/FS and PE/PS/RPLS **Examinations**
- Maintained by Continuing Education

Presenter



Michael Sims, P.E.

- Director of Compliance & Enforcement
- Michael.Sims@engineers.texas.gov
- Michael.Sims@pels.texas.gov



Ethics

- Protection of Public Health, Safety, Welfare
- Ethical responsibilities and expectations
 - Avoid Conflicts of Interest
 - Be a Faithful Agent
 - Be prepared to have a dissenting opinion, if necessary
 - Obligation to be aware of violations of the Act

How does this protect the public?

- We are expected to do the right thing, at the right time, for the right reasons.

Professionalism

- Protection of Public Health, Safety, Welfare
- Communication
 - Honesty
 - Clarity (not misleading)
 - Respectful of all parties
 - Maintain Public Trust
 - Timely communication with the TBPE

How does this protect the public?

- We are expected to be complete and correct in the practice of engineering and surveying.



COMPLIANCE & ENFORCEMENT

Technical / Ethical / Professional

TBPE - Approximately 600 Cases opened each year

– 67,000 licensed PEs

- About 65% resolved with Voluntary Compliance
- Board action includes range of action up to revocation
- Less than 10% Dismissed



Enforcement - Filing A Complaint

- Mail, email, phone, facsimile – all are acceptable for initial contact
 - Anonymous complaints are accepted
- A complaint form or detailed letter/email is needed to cover all the bases
 - Forms can be found Online
- Provide specific instances of violation
- Provide evidence to show probable cause

Engineering Renewals

- Annual by Quarter
 - March, June, September, December
- \$40 for PEs
- CE is by attestation
- 90%+ is online

- Surveying Renewals will remain same for 2019
- Consider New Schedule and Fees

TBPE Automation

- Online PE applications
- Online EIT Applications
- Online Application Tracking
- E-newsletters Quarterly
- Board Meeting Recordings (not streaming)
- Customer Service Ratings 95-98%
- Customer Feedback/Surveys

Continuing Education

- NCEES system for Continuing Professional Competence (CPC) tracking and reporting
 - No fee to register and create an account
 - Upload documentation
 - Report as needed for different Boards
- <http://ncees.org/cpc/>

Outreach

Fiscal Year	Attendees	Presentations
2014	14,866	155
2015	19,751	150
2016	19,429	138
2017	23,004	150
2018	22,954	161

- Quarterly Webinars
- eNewsletters



Merger Update

HB1523 – TBPLS Sunset Bill

- Results of Sunset Review Process
- Passed and Signed by Governor
- Effective Date **Sept 1, 2019**
- Creates Texas Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors (TBPELS)
- Merges TBPLS operations into TBPE
- 1 year for completion of transfers



HB1523 – TBPLS Sunset Bill

- Board Composition: 9 total; 5 PE, 1 Surveyor, 3 Public
 - +1 GLO (non-voting)
- Mandatory Surveyor Advisory Board – Rules and Technical Issues
- Education changes – Associates Degree
- Possible exam migration
- Adds CHRC to Surveyor License (new and renewals); due 2020

TBPELS Merger

- **GOALS:**
- Effective and Efficient Merger
- Transparent and Open Communications
- Same or better customer service
- Two distinct and separate areas of practice / one agency
- One team handling both professions
- Optimize processes and services
- Budget and staff scale



TBPELS Merger

- TBPE and TBPLS staff already working together
- Staff Transfer
- Attending Board Meetings
- NCEES Meetings
- Rules stay in place until changed / updated / merged



TBPELS Merger

- Working on operations transfer teams and tasks
- Enforcement Case Processes
 - TBPLS working down backlog
- Licensing / Registration Processes
- December 2019 Renewals Remain Same
- RPLS / LSLS exam continuity
- Call for Technical Experts for Cases



TBPELS Merger

– Milestones / Events:

- Outreach – Presentations; FAQ; Webinar Aug 1; TSPS Annual Meeting -October
- Education – RPLS Class / Visit to GLO
- Agency Merger / Move: Week of Sept 2
- Exams: October 2019
- TBPELS Board Meeting – November 2019
- Surveying Renewals – Nov/Dec 2019



FAQs

- **Merger Date:** Sept 1, 2019. 1 year to transfer obligations. But combined operations starting that week.
- **Office Location:** Moving to the TBPE offices – 1917 South IH 35, Austin
- **I am currently an RPLS and/or an LSLs, or I have a registered surveying firm with the TBPLS. Will my license or registration change when the boards merge?**
 - Licenses and registrations stay in effect
 - Numbers stay the same
 - Renewal date and requirements stay the same for 2019
 - Online and Paper renewals
 - Paper mailing address will be new TBPELS Offices
 - Not issuing new certificates



FAQs

- **Will the registration, exam, or renewal fees change?**
 - For 2019, all fees will remain the same. Once the boards merge, they can consider fee changes.
- **Will the continuing education requirements remain the same for my 2019 license or registration renewal?**
 - Yes, including pre-approved courses. Continuing Education requirements are set out in the rules and can only be changed by an action of the board.
- **Will the Texas RPLS exams still be given in October 2019?**
 - Yes. The next exam is scheduled for October 18, 2019, in Austin. The registration deadline was July 15. Apps received after this date will go toward the April 2020 exam.



FAQs

- **Will I have to re-apply for my license or registration, or will I have to take the surveying exams again when TBPELS takes over?**
 - No. You will not have to re-apply for your license or registration and will not need to retake the surveying exams.
- **Will NCEES or other states recognize my professional land surveying registration or state land surveyor license when the boards merge?**
 - Yes. NCEES and other states will continue to recognize your professional land surveying registration or state land surveyor license.



FAQs

- How will I file a complaint against a surveyor with the new agency?

- The complaint process will be similar to the Texas Board of Professional Land Surveying's process. Starting September 1, 2019, complaints will be sent to the TBPELS at its address - check the website for those updates as they are available. Some forms may change, and these will be updated on the website as well.

- I have a complaint currently pending (as the complainant or the respondent) with TBPLS. What happens to that complaint?

- All currently open complaints will be transferred to the TBPELS and will follow the standard complaint process.



Questions and Answers

Thank You

1917 S Interstate 35, Austin, TX 78741

Phone: 512-440-7723

Lance.Kinney@engineers.texas.gov



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