
THE STANDARD



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Time to Renew.



INFORMATION

- BELS is comprised of nine members. Five professional engineers, two professional land surveyors, and two public members.
- All members are vetted by specific nominating committees. The committees then submit a list of three names to the Governor who makes the appointment.
- Board meetings are held every two months beginning in January and are open to the public.

THE STANDARD

THE STANDARD is a publication of the Alabama Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors. Digital Editions are posted on our website.

Staff Contact Information can be found by using the following link:
<https://bels.alabama.gov/about/staff/>



NEED A SPEAKER?

We cover the following:

PDH / CEU topics include:

- Enforcement Case Studies
- Ethics
- Law and Rules

If interested please email:
rick.huett@bels.alabama.gov

COMMUNITY NEWS



John Averrett, PE

2023-2024 Board Officers

At its July 18, 2023, meeting the Board elected officers for the 2023-2024 year. John Averrett, PE will serve as Chair, Nanette Baldwin, Public Member Vice Chair, and Greg Robinson, PE as Secretary.

Board Calendar

October 9, 2023	Holiday
October 10, 2023	Renewals Start
November 10, 2023	Holiday
November 14, 2023	Meeting
November 23, 2023	Holiday
December 25, 2023	Holiday
January 23, 2024	Meeting



Nanette Baldwin



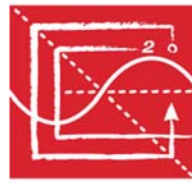
Greg Robinson, PE

COMMUNITY NEWS

OUR MISSION

The Alabama Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors was established by legislative action in 1935. Its charter is to protect the public by helping to safeguard life, health, and property, and to promote the public welfare by providing for the licensing and regulation of persons in the practices of engineering and land surveying.

This purpose is achieved through the establishment of minimum qualifications for entry into the professions of engineering and land surveying, through the adoption of rules defining and delineating unlawful or unethical conduct, and through discipline for those individuals or entities who violate the applicable laws or rules.



NCEES
*advancing licensure for
engineers and surveyors*

NCEES STRUCTURAL EXAMS

The NCEES Structural exams are moving to a computer based format by 2024.

The following dates are the last scheduled pencil and paper exams.

	Year	Date
Structural Vertical	2023	Oct 26
Structural Lateral	2023	Oct 27

EXPERTS WANTED

BELS relies heavily on the expertise of professional engineers and professional land surveyors serving as Board Technical Advisors to assist the investigative process when complaints are received that concern the competency of a professional engineer or professional land surveyor. These reviews generally involve the review of a questioned document for compliance with engineering and/or surveying standards.

A Tech Advisor can earn up to 10 PDH per year for conducting these document reviews. If interested, please contact Bob Herbert by telephone at 334-242-5089 or email: robert.herbert@bels.alabama.gov.



RENEWALS

We hope you will consider renewing your license as soon as possible to avoid the rush at the end of the year. A quick note: 60% of licensees renew their license from mid-December to December 31st. Also something to keep in mind, this year December 30th and 31st are on a weekend. No staff will be available to answer questions on those days.

Carry Forward Hours

You can find your carry forward hours in your MyBELS account. You can also see the date you were licensed, date you renewed, date your license expires and download a copy of your pocket-card.

Continuing Education Log

You are not required to list your continuing education courses during the renewal process unless selected for audit. The Log is a convenient place to store your PDH course information and certificates. See the next page for links for “How To” instructions:

Audit

Five percent of both professional engineers and professional land surveyors are selected for audit of their professional development hours. If you are selected, you are required to list your courses and upload your certificates during the renewal process. Your listed courses and certificates must be reviewed and approved by staff prior to finalizing the renewal.

New Email Address

If you’ve changed your email address, and the new email address is not in your MyBELS account, you will be unable to log in. You can access your account by clicking on “Forgot Password” then - Start Account Recovery and enter your date of birth, social security number and the email address you want the reset password to go to. Once you get in, you can change your email address.

Separate Emails Required for Multiple Licenses

You must have separate emails if you have multiple licenses. If you have both a PE and PLS license, and/or a Firm certificate of authorization you currently are required to have a different email address for each account. We are continuing to work with the vendor to change this requirement and allow one email address for multiple accounts.

Help Renewing

Check the website under “How To” for renewal instructions and check “Staff” to determine who you would need to contact for help with a question.

RENEWAL “HOW TO” LINKS

This page contains links to the **My BELS Account Login** page and the **How To** area of our website.

My BELS Account Login Page

[\[LB: BELS\] Login \(learningbuilder.com\)](#)

BELS How To Webpage

[HOW TO – Alabama Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors](#)

How to Reset Your Password

[How-to-Set-Reset-BELS-Account-Password.pdf \(alabama.gov\)](#)

How to Print Fee Receipt, PocketCard, or Emails

[How-to-Print-Receipt-Pocket-Card-or-Emails-in-BELS-Account.pdf \(alabama.gov\)](#)

Continuing Education Log

[How-to-Use-the-Continuing-Education-Log-Professional-Engineer.pdf \(alabama.gov\)](#)

[How-to-Use-the-Continuing-Education-Log-Professional-Land-Surveyors.pdf \(alabama.gov\)](#)

How to Change Address, Email Address or Phone Number

[How-to-Change-Address-Email-Address-or-Phone-Number-in-BELS-Account.pdf \(alabama.gov\)](#)

How to Renew Your PE License

[How-to-Renew-Your-Individual-PE-License.pdf \(alabama.gov\)](#)

How to Renew Your PLS License

[How-to-Renew-Your-Individual-PLS-License.pdf \(alabama.gov\)](#)

How to Renew Your Certificate of Authorization

[How-to-Renew-Certificate-of-Authorization.pdf \(alabama.gov\)](#)

STAFF CONTACTS

Link to Staff Contacts

[STAFF – Alabama Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors](#)

ENFORCEMENT NEWS

Jason Quinnelly, Quinco Inc, - Complaint # 2022-24 & 2022-28

An investigation determined Jason Quinnelly of Quinco Inc created design documents that contained the signature and seal of a licensed professional engineer without his knowledge. Mr. Quinnelly has been arrested for a different matter and is currently awaiting a trial date.

The Board determined that instead of waiting for the criminal case to reach a conclusion it would issue Mr. Quinnelly and his firm an Order to CEASE & DESIST all activities that require licensure as a professional engineer and a firm certificate of authorization for engineering. The Cease & Desist Order will be a public record.

Zeyn Uzman,PE - Complaint # 2023-11

An investigation determined Mr. Uzman failed to notify the Board of disciplinary actions taken against his professional engineer license in other states. Mr. Uzman was disciplined in 2016 by the AZ Board. He subsequently surrendered his Kentucky PE license in a disciplinary matter and his Ohio PE license was revoked.

Mr. Uzman agreed to a consent order requiring him to surrender his Alabama professional engineer license as if it was revoked, and the consent order and final order would be public record.

William Ole Ritola, PE - Complaint # 2023-21

An investigation determined Mr. Ritola placed his signature and professional engineer seal on documents that did not contain direction to the proper construction of an acceptable foundation system and therefore did not meet the Standard of Care.

Mr. Ritola agreed to a consent order that required him to pay a \$1,500 fine to the Board, to limit his practice to the area of engineering in which he is qualified by education, experience and examination, and the Consent Order and Final Order to be a public record.

Howard Yonge, PE - Complaint # 2023-18

An investigation determined Mr. Yonge placed his signature and professional engineer seal on documents that contained errors or violations of the standard of care for engineers.

The engineered design plans for the fire suppression system bearing the signature and seal of Mr. Yonge were reviewed by a Board Technical Advisor (BTA) who found numerous violations in the system design and commented "PE did not provide the standard of care expected of an engineer claiming fire protection as his area of expertise and applying his seal to those documents."

Mr. Yonge agreed to a consent order that required him to pay a \$2,500 fine to the Board, his PE license to be suspended for 2 years with the suspension stayed, and the Consent Order and Final Order to be a public record.

ENFORCEMENT NEWS

COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

	Professional Engineers	Professional Land Surveyors	Unlicensed Engineering	Unlicensed Surveying	Total
FY2023	13	10	16	4	43
FY2022	16	12	23	2	53
FY2021	11	6	14	2	33
FY2020	8	9	10	2	29

Complaints generally fall into one of three categories. Competency of the professional, Ethical Conduct of the professional, or unlicensed practice (either by an unlicensed individual or an uncertificated firm).

Our investigators not only conduct investigations of complaints, but they are also available to answer your questions concerning routine issues that occur and relate to compliance with the Code of Alabama and/or the Board's Administrative Code. These include various subjects such as continuing professional competency, PDH audits during the renewal process, and Qualification Based Selection (QBS) requirements. Please feel free to send them an email or give them a call with your questions or concerns.

Their Contact Information:

Chief Special Investigator Bob Herbert: robert.herbert@bels.alabama.gov, or 334-242-5089
Special Investigator Bill Hamil: william.hamill@bels.alabama.gov, or 334-242-5049

COMPLAINTS RESOLVED

	Professional Engineers	Professional Land Surveyors	Unlicensed Engineering	Unlicensed Surveying	Total
FY2023	16	10	19	4	49
FY2022	14	8	16	3	41
FY2021	8	9	10	1	28
FY2020	11	8	10	2	31

GOVERNOR IVEY



Bill Signing Ceremony

QBS Restoration Act AND Alabama's new Dam Safety Act

Legislators, Members of ACEC, ASCE & BELS Board Member attend Signing Ceremony

BOARD TURNS 88

The Alabama Board of Licensure for Engineers and Land Surveyors was founded many years ago. In the early 1900s, Wyoming was the first state to pass registration laws (1908), Louisiana followed a year later. Between 1917 and 1935, an 18-year span, 31 states passed regulation laws.

By the end of this boom, 33 states had formed and were operating engineering boards. Alabama, which falls into the latter end of that rush, passed the Alabama Registration Law (known as Act No. 271) in 1935 as a way to monitor and regulate the practice of land surveying and engineering throughout the state of Alabama. The act was approved Sept. 2 of that year and then Governor Bibb Graves took nominations presented by the state's engineering societies

The first application was received June 1, 1936, and a total of 627 applications were indicated in the first report the Board submitted to Governor Graves. Of that 627, 508 were approved for registration, 34 had been rejected and 85 were pending.

LIABILITY INSURANCE DISCLOSURE

On September 1, 2023 a bill that was introduced and passed in the 2023 legislative session became effective. The new law requires design professionals to have professional liability insurance or to notify their clients that they do not.

Act #2023-477 states in part: “Before entering into a verbal or written agreement to provide services, a design professional, as defined in Section 41-9A-3(a), who is not covered by professional liability insurance, shall disclose that fact in writing to the client. The disclosure shall be signed by the client and notarized before the design professional may perform any work for that client.”

A quick look at Section 41-9A-3(a) defines a design professional as “a person or entity who is licensed or authorized in this state to practice architecture, landscape architecture, surveying, engineering, interior design, or geology.”

Since this disclosure is now required by law, during the meeting with the client to sign the document to be notarized would be a perfect time to also discuss the scope of services required to bring the project to a successful conclusion.

Without going into more detail than you care to read, generally a scope of services describes the objectives of the work to be performed, timelines, deliverables, work activities, costs, and the acceptance of the scope by the client.

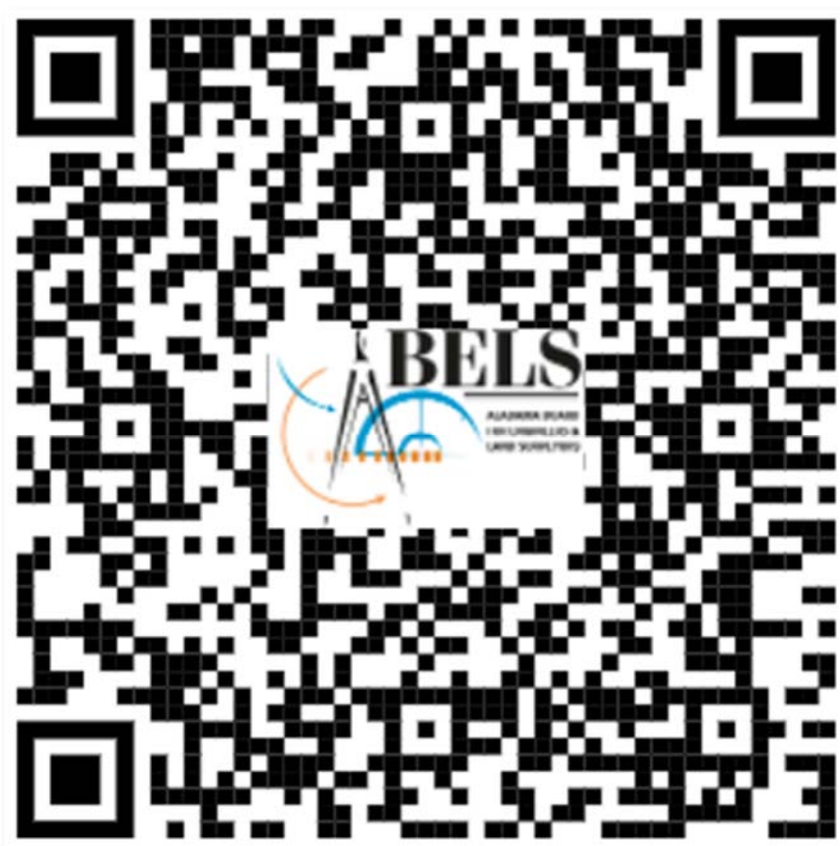
A common complaint we hear from the public is that no scope of services was discussed and the complainant and professional just had a verbal agreement relating to the requested services. This often leads to a very he said, she said kind of back and forth, especially when the client doesn't have a clear understanding of the amount of effort and time needed to complete the job.

For example in a recent investigation the complainant spoke with the professional on the phone, was unaware the professional had started working when he arrived at the property, and the cost quoted verbally was much less than the price on the invoice he received. A scope of services provided to, and agreed upon by the client, could easily stop most of these type complaints.

CREDENTIALS ISSUED

<u>Credential</u>	<u>1st</u> <u>Quarter</u>	<u>2nd</u> <u>Quarter</u>	<u>3rd</u> <u>Quarter</u>	<u>4th</u> <u>Quarter</u>	<u>Total</u>
Engineer Intern	55	53	82	59	249
Surveyor Intern	7	0	2	3	12
Professional Engineer	311	329	292	232	1,164
Professional Land Surveyor	7	13	12	13	45
Engineering Company	82	78	74	47	281
Land Surveying Company	6	8	9	8	31

Use the camera on your phone, to scan the below code to have direct access to our Facebook page.



The Alabama Board of Licensure for
Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors
PO Box 304451
Montgomery, AL 36130-4451