
BELS NEWSLETTER

ALABAMA BOARD OF LICENSURE FOR
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS AND LAND SURVEYORS



Established 1935

April 2026 Edition

INSIDE:

Recent Board Opinion

NCEES Paks Study Request

Front Cover:

BELS



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 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: robert.herbert@bels.alabama.gov

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.

OFFICE CALENDAR

Mar 31st Board Meeting

May 25th Holiday / Office Closed

Jun 9th Board Meeting

Jun 19th Holiday / Office Closed

Do You Need Assistance?

If you have questions about how to fill out a new licensure application, register as a new firm, print your pocket card, reset your password or email address, change your name, renew a certificate of authorization, request a retired title..etc.

You can visit our website at www.bels.alabama.gov and click the “**How To**” icon. Under this section you will find step by step instructions that will address many of your questions and help you with the online process.

If you still have questions please call our office at 334-242-5568 and speak to a BELS Staff member. We will be glad to assist.

SEND QUESTIONS ABOUT

- ◆ **PE & PLS Applications, Structural Roster Designation Requests, and the ALSS Exam** to Bonnie Kelly at bonnie.kelly@bels.alabama.gov
- ◆ **Public Records Request, Renewals & Reinstatements** to Rick Huett at rick.huett@bels.alabama.gov
- ◆ **Certificates of Authorization** - Applications, Amendments, or Renewals, and **Engineer Intern and Land Surveyor Intern Applications** to Pam Faison at pame-la.faison@bels.alabama.gov
- ◆ **License Verification Requests.** The majority of states use the electronic verification system available on the NCEES website. Just login to your MYNCEES account and request the verification. If the jurisdiction requires a paper verification contact Rick Huett at rick.huett@bels.alabama.gov.

BOARD TECHNICAL ADVISORS

Board Technical Advisors (BTA) serve a vital role in the investigation of competency based complaints regarding professional engineers and land surveyors. Their expertise is a tremendous asset to the Board's investigative committee in determining if probable cause exists that a violation had occurred.

Understanding the amount of time necessary to provide an examination of documents submitted for review the Board limits the amount of reviews assigned to a BTA each year. If at all possible the BTA is also selected from a different geographical area of the State than where the violation occurred.

Also — Board Technical Advisors can earn up to ten (10) PDH's a year for their service to the Board in review of documents.

If interested, please contact Chief Special Investigator Bob Herbert at 334-242-5089 or email: robert.herbert@bels.alabama.gov.

REQUIREMENT TO REPORT

The Board's Administrative Code, Rules of Professional Conduct (Code of Ethics) was amended December 10, 2024 and became effective February 14, 2025. It now includes the following:

Section 330-X-14-.06 Ethics (Canon V)

The engineer or land surveyor shall contribute to the maintenance, integrity, independence and competency of the engineering or land surveying profession as follows:

- (h) The engineer or land surveyor must provide written notification to the Board within **30 days** of a disciplinary action taken against them by other licensing boards.
- (i) The engineer or land surveyor must provide written notification to the Board within **30 days** of a conviction, a plea of guilty, or nolo contendere to any felony crime, or misdemeanor directly related to the practice of engineering or land surveying.

NCEES - EXAM SURVEYS

“NCEES is seeking industrial and systems engineers to participate in a series of two anonymous online surveys: one for the FE Industrial and Systems exam, and one for the PE Industrial and Systems exam.

Every 6–8 years, NCEES reviews its exam content for each exam we offer. This year, the FE Industrial and Systems exam has entered into a knowledge content review, and the PE Industrial and Systems exam has entered into a PAKS (professional activities and knowledge study) at the same time.

NCEES requires a cross section of engineers practicing industrial and systems engineering including those working in industry, consulting, the public sector, and academia to complete the surveys. Specifically, the FE Industrial and Systems exam survey is open to licensed engineers as well as non-licensed faculty members, while the PE Industrial and Systems exam survey is open to licensed engineers only. Each survey is estimated to take 20–30 minutes. It is important that we have as much participation as we can in both surveys and would appreciate your input..

FE Industrial and Systems Exam Survey Link: <https://ncees.org/FEcontentreview>

PE Industrial and Systems Exam Survey Link: <https://ncees.org/IndustrialPAKS>

The FE Industrial and Systems survey will be open until April 6, 2026, while the PE Industrial and Systems survey will be open until **June 12, 2026**. Please help us spread the word about these important studies by sharing this email with colleagues who are industrial and systems engineers. NCEES sincerely thanks you for your contribution to ensure that the FE Industrial and Systems exam and the PE Industrial and Systems exam are reflective of the current practice of industrial and systems engineering.

The Institute of Industrial and Systems Engineers (IISE.org) has agreed to award a professional development hour (PDH) for time spent taking the surveys. The survey results will remain anonymous, but each survey will allow you to opt in by entering an email address where your PDH certificate can be sent.

For more information, contact NCEES Exam Development Engineers Cheryl Warren, Ph.D., P.E., for the FE survey, or William Bowen, P.E., for the PE survey at help@ncees.org.”

LEGAL COMPLIANCE AND SUNSET AUDITS

The Alabama Department of Examiners of Public Accounts recently conducted a “Legal Compliance Audit, and a “Sunset Review” of the Board’s operations. The report will be provided to the Sunset Committee of the Legislature, and a hearing will be held later this year. Once the review and hearing have been completed, the committee will determine the recommendation it will make to continue or sunset the Board in the 2027 legislative session.

Typically if continued, the time period would be from one to four years.

NCEES NEWS RELEASE - PAKS SURVEY

“NCEES is seeking engineers working in the nuclear field to participate in a professional activities and knowledge study, or PAKS, for the PE Nuclear exam. The results of this online survey will be used to update the content of the PE exam, a process that occurs every six to eight years. NCEES requires a cross section of engineers practicing in the nuclear field—including those working in industry, consulting, the public sector, and academia—to complete the survey. The survey is estimated to take 20–40 minutes and is open to licensed and non-licensed engineers. Click here for access to the online survey: <https://ncees.org/NuclearPAKS>

The survey will be open until **June 8, 2026**. Please help us spread the word about this important study by sharing this email with engineering colleagues who work in the nuclear field. NCEES sincerely thanks you for your contribution to ensure that the PE Nuclear exam reflects the current practice of nuclear engineering.

The American Nuclear Society (ANS.org) has agreed to award a professional development hour (PDH) for time spent taking the survey. The survey results will remain anonymous, but the survey will allow you to opt in by entering an email address where your PDH certificate can be sent. For more information, contact Don Colman, P.E., Manager of Exam Development at help@ncees.org.”

FY 2025-2026 CREDENTIALS ISSUED QUARTERS 1 AND 2

Credential	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	Total
Engineer Intern	38	65	103
Surveyor Intern	3	1	4
Professional Engineer	399	321	720
Initial	65	50	115
Comity	334	271	605
Professional Land Surveyor	11	8	19
Initial	4	3	7
Comity	7	5	12
Engineering Company	90	78	168
Land Surveying Company	5	19	24

ENFORCEMENT NEWS

Our investigators are 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. 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

Bobby G. Bailey, PLS12502 - Complaint 2025-47

The investigation determined Bobby G. Bailey, PLS12502 provided a survey that failed to indicate an encroachment on the complainant's property. A Board Technical Advisor's review of the survey also determined it contained violations of the Standards of Practice for Land Surveying. Mr. Bailey agreed to a consent order that required him to pay a \$4,500 fine to the Board, to pay \$328 to the Board for the cost of the investigation, his PLS license to be suspended for one year, and the Consent and Final Order to be a public record.

Alex Lott, unlicensed - Complaint 2026-02

The investigation determined Alex Lott offered to provide land surveying services without being issued a professional land surveyor license. A formal hearing was held and the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) provided a recommendation to the Board. At its March 31, 2026, meeting the Board accepted the recommendations of the ALJ and issued an Order that required Mr. Lott to pay a \$1,000 civil penalty to the State of Alabama General Fund, and to pay \$1,072 to the Board for the cost associated with the hearing.

Manouchehr Hakhamanesh, PE40327 - Complaint 2026-06

The investigation determined Manouchehr Hakhamanesh was disciplined by various other State Boards which caused his professional engineer licenses in those states to be, revoked, surrendered, and /or reprimanded. He agreed to a consent order that required the revocation of his Alabama professional engineer license, compliance with all State Board Orders before his license could be reissued, and the Consent Order and Final Order to be public record.

C H David Tan, PE 23998 - Complaint 2026-09

The investigation determined C H David Tan was disciplined by the West Virginia Board of Registration for Professional Engineers which included the requirement to pay a fine. When completing his Alabama professional engineer license renewal application he indicated "No" to the question: "Have you been subject to disciplinary action by any other licensing board since your last renewal? Mr. Tan agreed to a consent order that required him to pay a \$500 fine to the Board, to pay \$127 to the Board for the cost associated with the investigation, that his 2026-2027 license renewal application would be audited, and the Consent Order and Final Order would be public record.

ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINIONS

MUNICIPAL BUSINESS LICENSE

A question was recently raised regarding if professional engineers and professional land surveyors are required to purchase business licenses in municipalities where they do not maintain a physical place of business, but do provide professional services. An Attorney General's Opinion AGO 95-00135 was issued in 1995 that concluded:

“A municipality may not impose a municipal license tax on engineering and/or land surveying firms not having a place of business in the municipality, but providing professional services there, unless it can be shown that a sufficient nexus with city has been established. Stated differently, providing professional services in a city on a regular and continuing basis establishes sufficient nexus for the imposition of a business privilege license.”

INCIDENTAL PRACTICE

In 2003 a request was submitted to the Attorney General regarding the following question: “May a professional engineer perform architecture incidental to the practice of engineering, and may an architect perform engineering incidental to the practice of architecture? The Attorney General issued Opinion # 2003-009 which gave the following answer:

“Based on the incidental practice clause in Section 34-2-32(d) of the Code of Alabama and the decision of the Supreme Court of Alabama in *State Board for Registration of Architects v. Jones*, 289 Ala. 353,267 So. 2d(1972), licensed professional engineers may perform architectural services incidental to their engineering practice, and registered architects may practice engineering services incidental to their architectural practice.”

ENFORCEMENT—Cont.

Tourney Consulting Group, ECA51677 - Complaint 2026-16

The investigation determined Tourney Consulting Group offered engineering services prior to being issued a certificate of authorization (CA) by the Board. The firm provided engineering design plans for one project in Alabama before obtaining a CA. Tourney Consulting Group agreed to a Consent Order that required the firm to pay a \$500 civil penalty to the State General Fund, to pay \$86 for the cost of the investigation and the Consent Order and Final Order to be public record.

BOARD OPINION

VENDOR DESIGN vs PRESCRIPTIVE MEMBER SELECTION

QUESTION

Is it in keeping with Alabama law for an unlicensed individual to interpret construction documents for the purpose of determining the proper loads to be applied to the building's structure, and then to design the structural elements that comprise the roof or floor system, and then to prepare and issue drawings for use in the purchase of the materials, the layout of the structural elements, and the installation of bracing, blocking, web reinforcement, and member stabilization?

If this individual performs this work, is he or she practicing engineering without a license?

FACTS, LAW, AND ANALYSIS

Section 34-11-1.(13) defines the PRACTICE OF ENGINEERING as any professional service or creative work, the adequate performance of which requires engineering education, training, and experience in the application of special knowledge of the mathematical, physical, and engineering sciences to such services or creative work that includes evaluation, planning, design and design coordination of engineering works, products, and systems.

The work described involves the interpretation of construction documents, engineering design of structural systems, and the preparation and issuance of drawings for construction purposes. Under Alabama law, the performance of tasks that involve determining loads, designing structural elements, and preparing official construction documents are recognized as elements of engineering practice.

The Alabama regulatory framework for practicing engineering—including the licensing requirements set forth in Code of Ala. 1975 and the accompanying Administrative Code—clearly reserves these activities for licensed professionals. This is done to ensure that public health, safety, and welfare are maintained through proper professional oversight.

As reflected in related Board rules and prior opinions on similar matters, an unlicensed individual carrying out such work would be deemed to be engaging in the practice of engineering without a certificate of licensure. This would be contrary to the statutory and regulatory provisions governing professional engineering in the state.

CONCLUSION

It is not in keeping with Alabama law for an unlicensed individual to perform the described activities. All tasks that include the interpretation of construction documents for load determination, design of structural components, and the preparation and issuance of construction drawings must be carried out by an individual holding a valid engineering license.

Based on the context provided regarding the definition and scope of what constitutes the practice of engineering, performing the work described—interpreting construction documents for proper load determinations, designing structural elements, and preparing the associated drawings—would be considered engineering work. Therefore, if an unlicensed individual performs this work, they would be practicing engineering without a license, which is not permitted under Alabama law.