

Texas Society of Professional Engineers Engineering Licensure Policy Statement

TSPE supports maintaining the integrity of the PE license in order to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. **TSPE, along with NSPE, endorses and supports the concept of licensure of engineers by a single designation, namely "Professional Engineer," and opposes licensure status by designated disciplines, branches, or specialties.**

Stratification of the engineering disciplines leads to confusion and requires additional bureaucracy to moderate overlap in areas of practice rather than focusing on ensuring the protection of public health and safety.

Background

Professional Engineering licensure in Texas protects the public by enforcing standards that restrict practice to qualified individuals who have met specific qualifications in education, work experience, and exam. To be considered for licensure in Texas a candidate must:

- Earn a degree from an ABET-accredited engineering program (typically four year Bachelors program and/or a Master degree)
- Pass the Fundamentals of Engineering Exam (seven exam variations available depending on degree program)
- Gain four years of acceptable work experience under the supervision of a P.E.
- Pass the Professional Engineers exam (twenty four exam variations available)

Engineering Practice in Texas

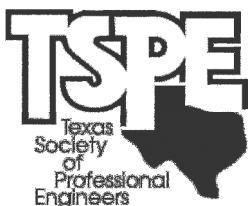
TSPE advocates the provision of all engineering services, including structural, under the current Texas Engineering Practice Act, requiring that all PEs practice within their areas of competence. Professional Engineers "shall not perform any engineering assignment for which the engineer is not qualified by education or experience to perform adequately and competently." (§137.59)

All PE's "shall be entrusted to protect the health, safety, property, and welfare of the public in the practice of their profession." Further all PE's shall refrain from performing "any engineering function which, when measured by generally accepted engineering standards or procedures, is reasonably likely to result in the endangerment of lives, health, safety, property, or welfare of the public." (§137.55)

As the design and analysis complexity of all engineering disciplines, including structural engineering, continues to increase, the Texas Board of Professional Engineer's (TBPE's) focus on competency is more important than ever. There has been no evidence presented that states with separate designations for various fields of engineering experience fewer engineering failures. Any concern regarding the competency of a PE in Texas to perform within a specific engineering discipline or aspect of that discipline should be reported to the TBPE. One of the TBPE's primary responsibilities to the public is to ensure compliance with the Practice Act through disciplinary enforcement actions up to and including revoking of licensure.

Protecting the Public

The Texas Engineering Practice Act (first passed in 1936) was put in place to protect the health, safety and welfare of the people of Texas. TSPE supports the sole authority and jurisdiction of the TBPE to enforce the Practice Act and provide oversight of professional engineers. Further, TSPE supports efforts to strengthen the TBPE's ability to enforce the Practice Act, especially provisions related to the competent practice of Professional Engineers within any specific discipline or engineering activity.



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