



# The Drawingboard

## Queens Chapter

New York State Society of Professional Engineers

April 2008

Volume 8, Number 4

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### President's Message

*By Brian Flynn, P.E.  
President*

The pace of change is speeding up into a frenzy as the new Building Code is implemented on July 1st, 2008 for an optional one year period. The new Code is based on the International Building Code and it utilizes national standards and rules as part of its requirements. It will also be updated on a three year cycle. This means that we all need to take a crash course to learn the new codes that affect our work. Fortunately the Building Department is presenting many aspects of the new code as part of its Fourth Annual Construction Safety Week seminars. I urge all of my colleagues to attend.



Many administrative changes are also occurring at the Building Department that will affect us directly. Special Inspectors will be required to register and provide proof of professional insurance. The Building Department is also trying to quantify the type of training and experience necessary. Unfortunately it goes beyond the requirements of the NYS licensing law for Professional Engineers and cites training that is not available here and certifications for technicians that is not applicable to engineers. Also as part of the administrative effort is the Special Enforcement Plan that has already been creating headlines.

### Drywell Audit Program comes to Queens

Starting April 21, 2008, all Queens site engineers must notify the Buildings Department 48 hours prior to digging a sand

*(continued next page)*

*(President's Message Continued)*

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column and installing a drywell. Site engineers must call (212) 227-4416 to inform the Department of this pending work.

The Buildings Department will review drywell design drawings during plan exam to confirm Code compliance. The Department will impose Stop Work Orders if construction has already begun on drywell designs not approved.

The Buildings Department will have its inspectors randomly audit drywell sites to verify the completion of proper boring and/or percolation tests, sand column installation when specified, that the installation complies with the submitted plans; and that the drywell and piping installation comply with all applicable laws.

The Buildings Department's drywell review and site audits are part of an exploratory program to better assess proper installation and compliance. This program does not relieve registered architects or professional engineers of their responsibility to certify installations are done according to the Building Code when submitting a TR-1 Form to the Department.

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**Construction Safety Week - April 28th to May 2nd, 2008**

The Building Department is hosting its 4th Annual Construction Safety Week - an annual program of events and educational seminars held to advance safe construction practices. From safe concrete operations to how to legalize an illegal conversion, you will find a variety of free programs to choose from. Seating is limited - RSVP now and reserve your seat today!

*(Continued next page)*

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**Schedule of Events**

**4/28 - Scaffold Safety**

The Buildings Department will be holding scaffold worker training in conjunction with the Latin American Workers Project. The training will focus on safe scaffold practices and the first 200 workers to arrive with a valid Certificate of Completion Training Card will be issued a free safety harness! Training will be delivered in English and Spanish.

**4/29 - Performing Safe Excavations**

This seminar will examine the issues surrounding excavation work in New York City, including those presented by the different boroughs and the technical difficulties of excavating certain lot layouts. The presentation will also review best practices and how to properly maintain the health, welfare, and safety of workers and the public.

**4/29 - Construction Site Safety and the New Code**

Code experts from Buildings will discuss "Construction Site Safety and the New Code" at a dinner lecture hosted by the NYS Society of Professional Engineers. \$45 for members, \$60 for non-members. Seating is limited. RSVP to Gina @ 212-879-7300 [gina@aecengineeringdesign.com](mailto:gina@aecengineeringdesign.com) or Lester Karstadt, P.E. @ 212-689-8652

**4/29 - Home Owner's Night**

Gut Renovations to be held at the Brooklyn Building Department. Legalizing Illegal Conversions to be held at the Queens Building Department.

**4/30 - Safety in the New Construction Codes**

Buildings Department experts will provide an in-depth, technical discussion on Chapters 9, 10, 16 and 33 in the New NYC Construction Codes.

Chapter 9 - Fire Protection Systems

Chapter 10 - Means of Egress

Chapter 16 - Structural Design

Chapter 33 - Safeguards During Construction and Demolition

*(Continued next page)*

#### **4/30 - Safety First: Urban Demolitions**

Experts from the NYC Department of Buildings and Fire Department will present key demolition concepts, applicable rules and regulations and best practices for demolishing structures in urban environments. Professional course credit is available for completing this seminar.

#### **5/1 - Crane Safety: New Regulations You Must Know**

The Buildings Department will host a seminar to discuss new regulations in tower and mobile crane operations.

#### **5/2 - Safe Concrete Operations**

Buildings experts will address current trends for concrete design, safety systems and City regulations. Don't miss your chance to find out about new initiatives for safe, effective concrete operations. Professional course credit is available for completing this seminar.

For more information, visit [www.nyc.gov/buildings](http://www.nyc.gov/buildings)

#### **ENR Award of Excellence goes to a Queens Engineer**

Engineering News-Record magazine named Clyde N. Baker, Jr., P.E., Hon.M.ASCE the winner of its annual Award of Excellence, citing his vast skills and experience in "firming up the science of soil to support the skyscrapers of tomorrow." Mr. Baker is a Queens native who grew up in Flushing.

Over the past 50 years Mr. Baker has served as the geotechnical engineer on the major portion of high rise construction built in Chicago. He has also served as geotechnical engineer or consultant on seven of the 16 tallest buildings in the world, including the three tallest in Chicago – Sears, Hancock, and Amoco – and the current three tallest buildings in the world – the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and 101 Financial Center in Taipei, Taiwan.

This experience has earned Mr. Baker an international reputation in the design and construction of deep foundations. He has been a leader in using in-situ testing techniques correlated with past building performance to develop more efficient foundation designs. In the Chicago soil profile this has facilitated economical use of belled caissons on hard pan for major structures in the 60- to 70-story height range, such as Water Tower Place, 900 North Michigan, and AT&T buildings, which normally would have required extending caissons to rock at significant cost premium.

## Upcoming Meeting Information

### Our Next Chapter Meeting

Date: **Thursday April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2008 – 6:30 PM**

Sponsor: International Geotechnical /Structural Laboratories, Inc.

Presenters: Michael Karantinidis, M.C.E., P.E.  
Kamal Bandyopandyay, Ph.D., P.E.

Topic: "Geo-technical Challenges in New York City"

The topics of discussion will include soil exploration, data analysis, settlement, liquefaction, earthquake, excavation, foundation and limitation of helical piles - all in the context of the subsurface features and regulations in New York City. Both raw data and engineering interpretation will be presented. Time will be allowed for questions from the audience.

#### ***Location:***

***422 Weaver Ave., Fort Totten, New York***

## Legislative Update and Op-Ed Commentary

*By George Tavoulareas P.E.  
First Vice President*

### **Update**

At the NYSSPE conference in Rensselaerville, NY, Brian and I were told that Senate bill S3255 sponsored by **Sen. Maltese** of Queens and co-sponsored by **Sens. Morahan, Padavan and Volker** has been introduced into the NY State Senate. This bill, if enacted into law, would direct the NYC Dept. of Buildings to revoke the self certification privilege of any professional engineer or registered architect who files PROFESSIONAL SELF CERTIFICATION plans with the DOB that contain false information or are found not

to be in compliance with all applicable provisions of law.

Currently, the NYC DOB has the authorization to revoke the privilege of any licensed professional who provides false information or is found not to be in compliance with all applicable provisions of law in his documents. This non mandatory revocation was made into law last year during the last days of the legislative season. This year's bill, S3255 will make it mandatory for NYC DOB to revoke the prof. certification privilege.

*(Continued next page)*

**The Queens Chapter of NYSSPE is against this bill.** You may ask what we, the Society, are doing about this proposed legislation and helping to protect your license from politicians who haven't got a clue? This legislation is in its infancy and we are currently setting up meetings with several politicians in the Assembly and the Senate, including the sponsors of this bill (if they can face us) to better educate them and explain to them that this is a silly bill. Our Albany lobbyists and the State Chapter know our position and they are closely monitoring the progression of this bill. We are also in consultation with the AIA and the other NYSSPE chapters and we will soon discuss how to approach our options most efficiently. What can you do? Call your Assemblyman and Senator and tell them you are against Senate bill S3255.

### **Commentary**

(The following commentary reflects my personal views and does not reflect the views of the Chapter:)

I don't know if the legislators of S3255 have noticed the other significant "issues" affecting the citizens of NY State that deserve their IMMEDIATE attention but I would tell the legislators this:

1. Gasoline is more than \$3.60 per gallon and affects so many people in so many different ways, from the clothes we buy to

the food we eat, high gasoline prices has a **Negative effect** on the NY economy, and our purchasing power as consumers. I would ask them, the legislators: *What are you doing about it?*

2. Exorbitant real estate taxes in Long Island and the rest of the State are driving people out of the county. Young people cannot afford homes in NY State and there are homeowners who have lost their homes through bank foreclosures. *What are they doing about it?*

3. Our infrastructure is deteriorating, our roads and bridges are a mess. Congestion pricing is being revived again and again probably because of the windfall that will be received from the federal gov't and another Minnesota catastrophe is imminent. *What are they doing about it?*

4. NY State is one of the highest tax states in the country. NYState is not a business friendly state due to high taxes and the cost of living in this region. *What are they doing about it?*

There are numerous other issues that can be listed but the answer to the four questions above is NOTHING-ABSOLUTELY NOTHING. The legislators have more important issues to pontificate and legislate.....such as professional self certification. What a joke!!!!!!

Call your legislators and let your voice be heard.

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## Help Wanted

All respondents should contact George Tavoulareas, PE at 347 387.1649 if they are interested in any of the following positions.

### **Electrical Inspector**

Work Scope:

- Field Testing Oversight
  - Typically 3rd shift work
  - Will require weekend work
- Responsible for QA oversight for field/site testing
- Responsible for documenting QA records of all test oversight/witnessing and reporting results to the LM QA office
- Verify that all tests conducted comply with document processes, test results are documented and test report reflects the actual performance and outcome of the testing.
- Verify any test equipment that requires calibration complies with calibration requirements. Assure personnel certifications are valid.
- Some field testing will be performed by LM subcontractors who are required to provide their internal QA staff to oversee testing. In these cases, our role is to verify that the subcontractor QA staff is performing all verification and oversight required.
- Examples of testing and inspection that will require QA witnessing and certification include;
  - Megger,
  - Cable pulling,
  - Fiber Optic cable splicing and testing, and
  - Equipment installation and performance testing.
- Local travel across the New York City, Metropolitan/Five Borough area and possibly White Plains, NY

### **Site Safety Manager**

Wanted- full time

S3255 MALTESE No Same as

ON FILE: 01/09/08 New York City Administrative Code

TITLE....Imposes sanctions on professional engineers and registered architects that certify false or noncompliant building permit applications or plans in NYC

**Currently on Senate Committee Agenda**

Senate Standing Committee on Housing, Construction, and Community Development

Senator John J. Bonacic, Chair

1:00 PM, Monday, March 31, 2008

Room 816 LOB

03/01/07 REFERRED TO HOUSING, CONSTRUCTION AND COMMUNITY  
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01/09/08 REFERRED TO HOUSING, CONSTRUCTION AND COMMUNITY  
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MALTESE, LANZA, MORAHAN, PADAVAN, VOLKER

Add S27-143.1, NYC Ad Cd

Imposes sanctions on professional engineers and registered architects that certify false or noncompliant building permit applications or plans in New York City.

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**NEW YORK STATE SENATE  
INTRODUCER'S MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT  
submitted in accordance with Senate Rule VI. Sec 1**

BILL NUMBER: S3255

SPONSOR: MALTESE

TITLE OF BILL:

An act to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to imposing sanctions upon professional engineers and registered architects that self-certify false or noncompliant building permit applications or plans

PURPOSE:

Imposes sanctions on professional engineers and registered architects that certify false or non compliant building permit applications or plans in NYC.

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS:

Section 1: Adds a new section 27-143.1 to the Administrative Code of the city of New York to define self-certification as the submission to the department of a personal verification made by a professional engineer or registered architect that accompanies an application for approval of plans not containing any false information and in full compliance with the law. Therefore, allowing the department to forgo a full examination of any portion of such application or plans prior to approval.

B. Permanently revokes self-certification privileges for each professional engineer or registered architect that has submitted an application for approval of plans found by the department to contain false information.

JUSTIFICATION:

In efforts to reduce over development and continuing corruption in the construction industry, this legislation will prevent professional engineers from verifying their own plans. This legislation will tighten controls to eliminate any motivation to abuse the professional certification privilege. This privilege was once created to aide in the certification of minor plans. Self-certification was created to support homeowners that wanted to complete small plans on their homes, not for the creation or demolition of complete structures.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

New bill.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

None.

EFFECTIVE DATE:

Immediately.

## STATE OF NEW YORK

3255

2007-2008 Regular Sessions

## IN SENATE

March 1, 2007

Introduced by Sens. MALTESE, MORAHAN, PADAVAN, VOLKER -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Housing, Construction and Community Development

AN ACT to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to imposing sanctions upon professional engineers and registered architects that self-certify false or noncompliant building permit applications or plans

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1     Section 1. The administrative code of the city of New York is amended  
2 by adding a new section 27-143.1 to read as follows:  
3       § 27-143.1 Self-certification of application and plans. a. For the  
4 purposes of this section, "self-certification" means the submission to  
5 the department of a signed, personal verification made by a professional  
6 engineer or registered architect that accompanies an application for  
7 approval of plans which attests that such application, plan or portions  
8 thereof do not contain any false information and that such application,  
9 plan or portions thereof are in full compliance with all applicable  
10 provisions of law, thereby allowing the department to forgo a full exam-  
11 ination of any portion of such application or plans prior to approval.  
12       b. The department shall permanently revoke self-certification privi-  
13 leges for each professional engineer or registered architect found by  
14 the department to have self-certified one previous application for  
15 approval of plans that were found by the department to contain false  
16 information or found not to be in compliance with all applicable  
17 provisions of law.  
18       § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[-] is old law to be omitted.

LBD09250-01-7

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