



# The Drawingboard

## Queens Chapter

New York State Society of Professional Engineers

April 2009

Volume 9, Number 4

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### President's Message

*By Chris Petallides, P.E.  
President*



With regard to our pending lawsuit against NYC for violating State Education Law by appointing a non-professional as NYC Department of Buildings (DOB) Commissioner, the City filed a motion for dismissal, as we expected they would do, citing that the licensed First Deputy Commissioner complies with the State Education Law. The next step is to file our own declaration of judgment and let the Judge decide on the correct interpretation. We plan to file our response within the month and, of course, we will keep you informed of any developments. If you haven't already contributed to our "Legal Fund", please consider a contribution at this time.

The problem of others muscling in on our profession is not a new one by any means. Starting from the train operator calling himself "engineer" to the NICET technician performing engineering work illegally, everyone seems to get into the act.

The current economic crisis appears to be encouraging yet another group of impostors, the so-called "expeditors", in becoming bolder than before. Reportedly, this enterprising group of individuals is now running rampant in the halls of the local DOB offices, offering professional services to the unsuspecting home owners at drastically reduced prices. Once they land the job, of course, these expeditors then need to go out to find a "rubber-stamper", to stamp and sign their shoddy work, since they, themselves, are neither qualified nor licensed to produce

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the plans and documents required for DOB filing and with the present economic environment, it may become easier for them to find rubber-stampers.

This illegal scenario carries obvious detrimental consequences for everyone involved, especially the professional.

The problem became increasingly acute lately and, as a result, our Chapter directors decided that we need to do something about it. After an extensive discussion, we decided on a possible course of action. We decided to proceed by first stealing a page from the book of another professional group, the attorneys, who seem to have it all together in terms of protecting their turf and, as a consequence, they get to enjoy their professional status and respect in society.

As everybody knows, it is common practice for attorneys to employ assistants, known in their industry as "paralegals", to help them with their daily activities, including researching case studies, preparing cases and running paperwork between the attorney's offices and the courts. When it comes to presenting a case in court, however, the attorney takes control and the paralegal is put aside. As a result, everyone knows their place and the public is not confused as to who does what? When someone needs legal advice or representation, for example, one automatically seeks out a "lawyer" (never a paralegal); a practice which is also supported by the system and, therefore, a paralegal would never dream of impersonating an attorney in front of a judge. In our case, however, not only does the system not recognize the difference between a professional and a lay person but it goes as far as allowing the publication of newspaper articles, as helpful (?) to the public, entitled "How To Expedite Your Search For An Expeditor"(???)

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In the meantime, we, PE's and RA's, seem to be obliviously content in letting uneducated, unqualified, unlicensed impostors steal our professions and, of course, "expeditors" are happy to oblige us. We believe it is time for us, engineers and architects, to take back our professions by demanding that "only professional engineers and registered architects" be allowed to sit with DOB plan examiners, to present applications of all types, to deal with objections and to receive job approvals. When that rule is strictly enforced, we would have reclaimed our professional status at the DOB as well as in society.

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This proposal will be the main agenda item for discussion at our next general membership meeting, Thurs., April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2009, 6:30PM at Fort Totten, therefore, we urge all of you to attend.

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## Upcoming Meeting Information

### *Our Next Chapter Meeting*

Date: **Thursday April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009 – 6:30 PM**

Sponsor: [L'Abbate, Balkan, Colavita & Contini, L.L.P.](#)

Presenter: [Martin A. Schwartzberg, Esq.](#)

Title: **Unprofessional Conduct under NYS Regents' Rules**

Description: An overview of the acts that in accordance with the Regents Rules constitute unprofessional conduct, the procedures of the Office of Professional Discipline when investigating a complaint of misconduct, including possible penalties that can be assessed and suggested course of conduct should the professional be contacted by the Office of Professional Discipline

Location:

**[422 Weaver Ave., Fort Totten, New York](#)**

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## Hilti Seminar Announcement

***By Ann Marie Bugler, P.E.  
NYC Field Engineer  
Hilti North America***

I just wanted to pass on this agenda for a 4 Hour 4 PDH Seminar Hilti will be holding at the NYC Seminar and Conference Center located at 71 W. 23rd St Manhattan on Thursday May 7th from 8am til 12pm.

The seminar will be on the topic of Designing Post Installed Anchors using Strength Design which comes at the perfect time since The New York City Building Code recently adopted the IBC 2003 for it's design bases and if you look in Chapter 19 Concrete under Section BC 1913: Anchorage to Concrete - Strength Design, you will see that it calls out using Strength Design in lieu of Allowable Strength Design for all post installed anchors.

Many engineers have expressed interest in learning more about this design method so they will be able to design as per the new code on future projects so I think this would be a great seminar for

them to attend and the 4 PDH's will be very helpful too!

Here is a web page that goes into greater detail what will be covered at the seminar:

[http://www.us.hilti.com/holus/modules/etrial/edit\\_singlepage.jsp?contentOID=146651](http://www.us.hilti.com/holus/modules/etrial/edit_singlepage.jsp?contentOID=146651)

If you wouldn't mind sending this around via email to the members of your organization to see who might be interested in attending that would be great!

Anyone that works for a state or city agency it is only \$35 dollars. They should register under "Building Official"

Anyone working for a private firm but is a member of SEAONY or ASCE it is only \$75 per person and/or if they have 3 or more people from their office sign up that

*(Continued next page)*

are not members of any organization, they can get 20% off the \$99 early registration fee which would make it \$79 per person.

To qualify for early registration they must register for the course by Thursday April 16th otherwise, it goes up to \$120.

Also lunch will be served.

# QUEENS COUNTY CHAPTER

OF

THE NEW YORK STATE SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

*(Member: National Society of Professional Engineers - NSPE)*

47-15 Marathon Pkwy, Little Neck Hills, NY 11362-1255

Tel. No. (718) 961 4342

Fax: (718) 321 3929

e-mail: [PetallidesPE@aol.com](mailto:PetallidesPE@aol.com)

website: [www.nspequeens.org](http://www.nspequeens.org)

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November 20, 2008

Dear Colleague,

The Queens Chapter – NYSSPE is soliciting contributions from Engineers and Architects in the NY area to help fund a lawsuit by the NY State Society of Professional Engineers (NYSSPE) against the City of New York. As you probably already know, the NY City Council recently passed a law changing the City Charter, at the insistence of Mayor Bloomberg, which removed the licensure requirement from the Commissioner of the Department of Buildings. The new law now states that the Buildings Commissioner need not be licensed. Presently, an unlicensed lay person is Buildings Commissioner.

The Queens Chapter is leading the fight in the NY Metropolitan area AGAINST the Mayor's irresponsible actions which endanger the public's health, safety and welfare while undermining and diminishing both the Engineering and Architectural professions.

The Queens Chapter leadership is asking all Engineers and Architects to contribute to a legal fund which will support the NYSSPE legal suit against the City of New York. Please make whatever contribution is within your means.

It's about time we stand up for our Profession and the people of New York!

Suggested contributions:

\$1,000 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 750 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 500 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 250 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 100 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: "Queens Chapter – NYSSPE"      Memo: "Legal Fund"

Mail to:

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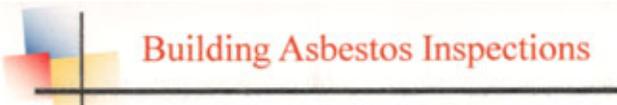
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