

What is a licensed professional?

Canada's self-regulated professions, engineering included, have worked hard to articulate and promote their concepts of professionalism. Each has grappled with issues surrounding delineation of duties and responsibilities, competency standards, licensure and autonomy. Websites of regulatory bodies and professional associations provide good insight and points of comparison between professions, where they currently stand and where they are headed. Here are two essential starting points for engineers, and a sampling of other professions.

Canadian Council of Professional Engineers (CCPE) <http://www.ccpe.ca>

CCPE's website contains a number of necessary documents that define professionalism, ethical conduct and the social contract that engineers share with the society they serve. At the blue navigation bar, point your mouse to "Guidelines and Policies" and choose "National Guidelines." The 17-page "Definition of the Practice of Professional Engineering" includes and interprets CCPE's definition of professional engineering and its model Code of Ethics. Self-regulation—a cornerstone issue for engineers—and the overriding duty to serve and protect the public interest, are described.

Professional Engineers Ontario <http://www.peo.on.ca>

P.Engs in Ontario will find several useful links here relating to ethics, responsibilities, and the benefits of licensure. Off the left blue navigation bar, choose "Ethics," then "Code of Ethics." This link leads to a summary and extensive quote from section 77 of Regulation 941, the Code of Ethics. Once again, the professional engineer's primary duty to public welfare is emphasized here. Returning to the left navigation frame, under "Publications," the "Professional Practice Guidelines" provide valuable specifics for licensed engineers facing a wide range of professional situations. Go to "Licensing and Registration," then "P.Eng. Licensing" for a definition of "profession-

al engineer" and an extensive FAQ on the appropriate use of the Seal.

Chartered Accountants of Ontario <http://www.icao.on.ca>

A key role of licensure and of licensing bodies is to set across-the-board standards on which the public can rely. In this vein, it is interesting to look at the work that the Ontario accountancy profession has been putting into this issue. *Bill 94, An Act Respecting Public Accounting*, is expected to be proclaimed into law this fall. The new act will enable a reconstituted body, the Public Accountants Council (PAC), to oversee Ontario professional accounting standards. As a result, Certified Management Accountants (CMAs) and Certified General Accountants (CGAs) will become eligible for licensure if their respective bodies demonstrate to the PAC that their qualifying and regulatory programs meet the current Chartered Accountants standard. Choose "News" from the horizontal navigation bar, then click "New Public Accounting Act." Look to the PDF links on the right for analysis and details. The "Statement from Brian Hunt" provides a synopsis and an analysis of recent efforts. You can also read Bill 94 or look at a "Chronology of Events."

Law Society of Upper Canada <http://www.lsuc.on.ca>

Lawyers in Ontario have been working through an extended exercise designed to enhance professionalism. The three-part action plan of this powerful profession is worth a closer look. So far, it has included two colloquia on professionalism, a working group to identify and define the components of professionalism, and a task force to investigate pre- and post-call advancement of the ideal of professionalism. From the top navigation bar choose "News," then scroll down the "Hot Topics" to "Chief Justice of Ontario's Advisory Committee on Professionalism." You will see links to papers from colloquia held October 2003 and March 2004. "Definition of professionalism" leads to an interesting 10-page document that lays out the building blocks of legal professionalism,

ranging from scholarship to collegiality and balanced commercialism. Alternatively, check the August 2004 News Archive on the right-hand side of the page.

Canadian Medical Association <http://www.cma.ca>

The medical profession's sheer success and power make its views on licensing and professionalism worth exploring. Two relationships are considered crucial: the relationship between a physician and a patient, and the social contract between physicians and society. Clinical autonomy, self-regulation and the ethic of service are seen as key features of medical professionalism. The CMA website contains a 2002 copy of its *Policy on Medical Professionalism*. In the search box, top right, type "medical professionalism." From the results page choose "Medical professionalism," then the "Policy Paper..." Alternatively, off the results page, "Ethics and Professionalism" leads to the CMA's Code of Ethics, as well as policy statements on such controversial topics as assisted human reproduction and the relationship between physicians and the pharmaceutical industry

Ontario College of Teachers <http://www.oct.ca>

The teaching profession in Ontario saw some basic changes with the 1996 creation of its new regulating body, the Ontario College of Teachers. The college has been working with its members to establish the foundations of self-regulation, and to this end has developed for its members several key documents. Off the left navigation bar choose "Foundations of Professional Practice." You will see *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* as well as *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*. The third document, *Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession* tackles another core issue of professionalism, ongoing professional development.

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