

## AN EVENTFUL SUMMER



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President

WHILE THE SUMMER months often provide organizations some downtime, this certainly has not been the case at PEO this July and August.

During the lead-up to the provincial byelections on August 1, several of our chapters reached out to candidates in each of the five ridings involved and held all-candidate debates in four, including London West, Ottawa South, Scarborough-Guildwood

and Windsor-Tecumseh. The goal was to raise awareness of issues that affect regulation of the engineering profession in Ontario—including bringing attention to our dissatisfaction with the Ontario government's abrupt decision to put on hold the implementation of its three-year legislative commitment to repeal section 12(3)(a) of the *Professional Engineers Act*. This decision authorizes engineering work in a manufacturing setting to continue without requiring oversight by professional engineers, potentially putting workers at risk. Our chapter representatives also posed questions to candidates on infrastructure and energy cost and supply. Responses from the candidates were posted on PEO's website for reference prior to the byelections. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to all of our chapter members and Government Liaison Program representatives who successfully staged these important events so quickly, and educated participants on PEO's role in protecting the public. Our work will continue until we secure an implementation date for the repeal.

Also in August, Phase I of the Elliot Lake Inquiry concluded. As the regulator of professional engineering in Ontario, PEO requested, and was granted, standing in the first stage of the inquiry, which dealt with events prior to the collapse of the Algo Centre Mall. As part of our involvement, PEO was provided the opportunity to recommend changes or additions to applicable legislation, regulations, standards and codes in relation to professional engineers and engineering, in areas relevant to the events leading up to the tragedy. The evidence presented during Part I of the inquiry spoke to several areas of concern, namely:

- the lack of legislative requirements or standards for structural engineering inspections of existing buildings, such as the Algo Centre Mall;

- the apparent unavailability of prior engineering inspection reports;
- the inaccessibility of comprehensive information concerning the licensing and discipline history of professional engineers;
- the qualifications of the professional engineers conducting or supervising inspections of large structures, such as the mall; and
- the applicable standards for supervision by professional engineers of work carried out by non-licensees, or people whose licences have been suspended or revoked.

PEO's 11 recommendations to the commissioner are publicly available on both the commission's and PEO's websites. They are intended to address the issues and serve as a starting point for further discussion at an upcoming policy roundtable session that will give PEO, the commission, and other participants the opportunity to fully develop the ideas set out in our submissions.

At the end of June, your council gathered for a full day of strategic review. Specifically, we reviewed our latest strategic plan from 2009 to discuss what work had been completed and what objectives should be kept, modified or created. Following the executive and council meeting in September, I look forward to posting our latest plan on the PEO website.

The search for a PEO registrar is well underway with interviews scheduled. I look forward to getting this role filled as a busy fall for PEO approaches.

I hope all of our licence holders have had a pleasant summer and are refreshed for the autumn season! Σ

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