

Proactively engaged in setting standards

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José Vera's professional practice article on the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* ("A professional engineer's duties under other legislation," *Engineering Dimensions*, May/June 2019, p. 16) reminds us of our duties outside of *The Professional Engineers Act*; however, I was a little disappointed that 61 other acts and regulations that also specify participation by an Ontario P.Eng. were not mentioned.

Our government has identified hazardous conditions requiring a high standard of licensed engineering oversight. Therefore, should PEO not be actively engaged in formulating these standards and acting as a conduit to enforcing these regulations? Being proactive does not restrict accessibility but rather fulfills duties that government has already established.

Within PEO, much of this work is undertaken by volunteers, and there is always a need for new

insights. Even when a regulation does not specifically require a P.Eng. but rather adopts the lesser standard of "competent person," we as engineers need to ask ourselves, "Does this adequately protect the public?" It is true that we live and work across a very large province, but we have social media, including PEO's own forum, where issues can be discussed. Self-regulation requires active involvement. We should choose to provide solutions rather than being part of an unsolvable problem.

Some Blue Box history

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I was pleased to read "The problem with plastics" by Adam Sidsworth in the March/April 2019 edition of *Engineering Dimensions* (p. 28). I just wanted to recycle a bit of additional historical information that might be of interest.

Prior to the very successful launch of the Blue Box curbside recycling system in Kitchener, the Blue Box technique was first developed and tested by Jack McGinnis and his colleagues at the Is Five Foundation, working with us at Environment Canada (where I had been the project engineer) and with the Canadian Forces Base Borden officers. Credit is due to Laidlaw Waste Systems for recognizing the merits of the Blue Box approach to recycling and really putting it on the map in Kitchener.



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