



GLP Notes 17.0 – New Legislation; Strengthening the *Professional Engineers Act* After Elliot Lake Issued March 2018

For GLP info only. No action required.

Following the collapse of the Elliot Lake Algo Centre Mall in 2012, it was clear that more regulatory work needed to be done to protect the public.

The roof collapsed after the mall's rooftop garage caved in, the result of years of water and salt penetration.

On October 13, 2014, Justice Paul Belanger released a Commission of Inquiry Report with a list of recommendations for change.

Recommendations for the future

Belanger's recommendations included several that are important for the engineering profession:

- Properly qualified structural engineers should inspect buildings when sold; and more frequently if public safety dictates.
- Enforcement of standards should be straightforward and make public authorities accountable for their decisions and actions.
- Professional engineers and municipal building officials should be trained and certified, and information about them accessible to owners and the public.

PEO working in the public interest

Since the release of these recommendations, PEO has been working with Ontario's Ministry of the Attorney General on how to turn them into effective legislation.

As well, PEO has been reaching out to Cabinet Ministers and MPPs, explaining the role of PEO in regulating the profession in the public interest, and making the case for legislative action.

Enhancing the *Professional Engineers Act*

On November 14, 2017, Finance Minister Charles Sousa introduced amendments to the *Professional Engineers Act* as part of *Bill 177, the Stronger Fairer, Ontario Act*. These amendments reflect PEO's requests.

The amendments were debated in the Legislature, received words of support from all three political parties and was ultimately passed on December 14, 2017.

Key Points:

- These changes provide PEO with broad regulation-making authority to establish a continuing professional development program for engineers.
- They also require that disciplinary information about engineers be included in the register of licensed engineers and posted on PEO's website.
- The Registrar now has the authority to issue a notice of proposal to suspend a licence, where warranted by past conduct, subject to a hearing by the Registration Committee.
- Members of the public can obtain copies of disciplinary hearing materials, such as exhibits and transcripts.
- The Registrar can now release information about licensed engineers to the appropriate regulatory authorities.
- PEO now has continuing jurisdiction over suspended and revoked members.
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