

# The Journal

Fall/Winter 2024

## BOARD MEMBERS

Marjorie Lund, PE, SE  
Chair  
Seattle  
Term Expires 7/2026

Doug Hendrickson, PE  
Vice Chair  
Richland  
Term Expires 7/2027

David Peden, PE, SE  
Spokane  
Term Expires 7/2025

Aaron Blaisdell, PLS  
Snohomish  
Term Expires 7/2025

Mike Harney, PE,  
P.Eng, ENV SP  
Seattle  
Term Expires 7/2028

Maureen Jackson, PE  
Lynnwood  
Term Expires 7/2029

Matt Rasmussen, PE,  
PLS  
Kennewick  
Term Expires 7/2029

Ken Fuller, PE  
Director

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### From the Chair

OPINION: Marjorie Lund, PE, Board Chair

As the year comes to a close, I want to

share some of the issues the Board has been undertaking this year. It has been a surprisingly busy year for us. Some of these issues are discussed in more detail in the following articles. And, as always, we welcome your questions and correspondence.

### TITLE USAGE

Our year started off with a short questionnaire (our surveyors

don't like it when I say 'survey!') about the use of the word 'engineer' in a title. This questionnaire was sent to licensees and others in the industry on our email list. We had an overwhelming response, and, in general, there were two schools of thought. Many responses indicated that they believe the term 'engineer' should only be used by those with engineering licensure, with the explanation that they felt it carried an expectation that a person calling themselves such is knowledgeable in their field,

and that they have a certification indicating that knowledge, similar to a doctor or attorney. The other common response was an understanding that the word 'engineer' is frequently used by those whose field doesn't require a license or used to give prestige to a job position. In other words, it is difficult to regulate because it is already used so frequently by others.

BRPELS has been studying the concerns with the title usage, along with how it is used in our RCWs and WACs. Our laws do not regulate the title Engineer. They only

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### COA Registrations

Doug Hendrickson, PE, Board Vice Chair

**Attention corporate engineers and land**

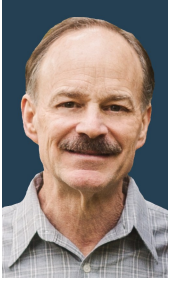
**surveyors!** Got your attention? Please accept this as my best attempt to get you to start reading and consider your corporate practice of engineering and surveying. We've observed it's not always at the front of practitioners' minds.

So, what's that corporate practice thing? Basically, corporate practice of engineering or surveying is offering engineering or surveying services as a company business, rather than as an individual. Believe it or not, this is still about ensuring public safety but with the twist of corporate responsibility. In reality, this is particularly relevant to public

safety, which is our job as a licensure board and why we have regulation of this under WAC 196-25.

As Professional Engineers and Professional Land Surveyors, you know about your responsibilities in practice, competency, representation, and individual licensure acquisition and maintenance. In corporate practice, each company offering engineering or

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## Land Use Requirements Change

Richard Wilkerson, BRPELS SME, Professional Onsite Wastewater System Designer

### *Engineers, Land Surveyors and On-Site Designers Involved in the Practice of Land Use, Developments and Subdivisions*

Substantial changes were enacted in the revised 246-272A-0320 WAC on **April 10, 2024**, in regards to developments, subdivisions, and minimum land area requirements.

Following are brief descriptions of some of the more notable changes to take effect on **April 1, 2025**.

- Omitted Table X listing Method I and Method II lot sizing criteria.
- Added Table XI “Minimum Land Area Requirement for Each Single-Family Residence or Unit Volume of Sewage and Minimum Usable Land Area”. Table XI increases the minimum land area requirement for lots on public water by 500 to 1000 square feet, depending on the soil type. It also increases the minimum lot size required from 12,500 to 13,000 square feet for lots on public water. It reduces the maximum unit volume of sewage per day, per acre (density) from 3.5 to 3.35 for lots served by public water using both Table XI and Table XII.
- Added “Minimum Usable Land Area” requirement to Table XI. This is a new requirement that states: “Minimum usable land area is free of all physical restrictions and meet minimum vertical and horizontal separations”. An example: pond square footage may not be included in minimum lot size calculations.
- Added Table XII with new methodology regarding “Maximum Allowable Total Nitrogen (TN) Load per Day by Type of Water Supply, Soil Type, and Land Area” for developments that do not meet Table XI requirements.
- Added option for water well protection zones (well radii) on new subdivisions to be located across multiple lots if a copy of a recorded restrictive covenant is provided to each affected property owner.
- Added clarifying language that LHJ’s may allow permitting of an OSS on a pre-existing lot of record that does not meet current minimum land area requirements only if it meets all requirements of chapter 246-272A WAC **without** the use of a waiver under 246-272A-0420 WAC.
- Updated language and structure within WAC for clarity and consistency.



Additional information regarding these rules and other changes in 246-272A WAC may be found at: <https://doh.wa.gov/community-and-environment/wastewater-management/rules-and-regulations>

# BRPELS Two New Board Members

## They're Matthew Rasmussen, PE, PLS and Maureen D. Jackson, PE

BRPELS announces two new Board members, Matthew Rasmussen, PE, PLS and Maureen D. Jackson, PE. Both were appointed by Governor Jay Inslee to a 5-year term.

Rasmussen has over 22 years as a registered Professional Engineer and Professional Land Surveyor in Washington.

- Current Deputy County Administrator for Benton County
- Former Benton County Public Works Administrator and County Engineer
- Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering, Geospatial, from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona



Jackson has over 30 years of experience and is a registered Professional Electrical Engineer in Washington, Alaska and Nevada. She is a Principal with Stantec in their Lynnwood office and involved in the design of electrical systems for buildings, particularly healthcare facilities. Maureen earned a Bachelor of Science in Engineering (BSE) from Tulane University.

Rasmussen replaces James Wengler, PLS CFedS who retires after serving two 5-year terms. He'll remain a Pro-Tem Board member, assisting with investigations.

Jackson replaces Ivan VanDeWege, PE, who retired, after serving two 5-year terms.

The Board has seven members and three pro-tem, who are a variety of experienced Professional Engineers and Professional Land Surveyors. Board members are appointed by Governor Jay Inslee to 5-year terms.

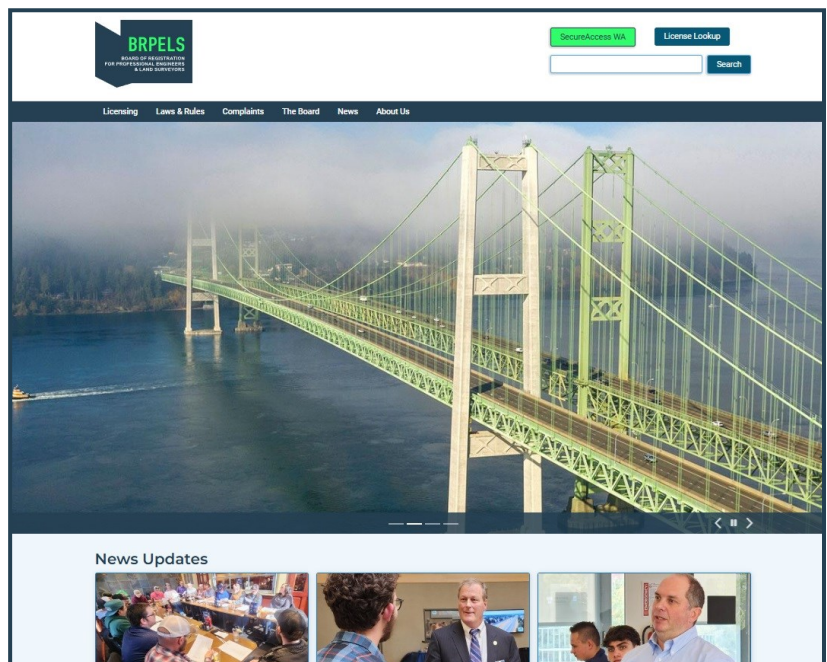
## New BRPELS Website

After many months of diligent work and development, by Board members, staff and consultants, they've created a new [BRPELS website](#) to better serve our licensees and the public.

"In addition to our popular LinkedIn presence, we are pleased that the new website is reaching more of our licensees," explained Board Chair, Marjorie Lund, PE, SE. "It has improved access for the public to reach us and quickly find important information about our professions. I'm personally very pleased with the updated layout, logo, and color theme."

"This is a significant achievement where teamwork resulted in meaningful improvements," said Ken Fuller, PE, Director. "Enhancing access for registrants and the public is no small feat— it's a testament to the dedication and expertise of our staff and consulting team. Congratulations to everyone involved!"

You'll find updated info for licensing, laws and rules, complaints, the Board, more news and details about our agency. Key goals included accurate and updated content, intuitive navigation, clear purpose, high security and mobile friendly.





# Seattle University Wins NCEES Award

Nirmala Gnanapragasam, PhD, PE, past Board Member

Seattle University Civil Engineering department has earned one of the eight 2024 NCEES Engineering Awards out of 38 blind submittals.

The award-winning capstone project created improvements to Camp Korey, in Skagit County, providing year-round programs for children with life-altering medical conditions. Degenkolb Engineers sponsored the project and three of their licensed engineers mentored a team of four civil engineering seniors throughout the academic year.

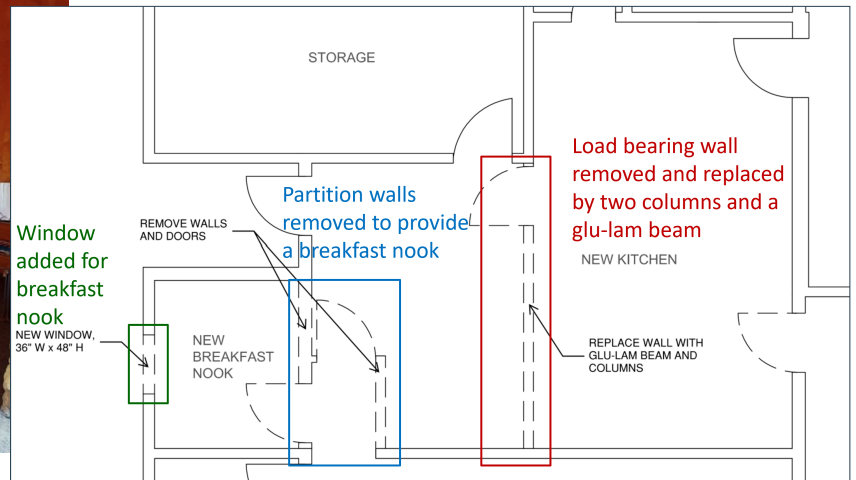
The team made seismic retrofit recommendations to the camp facility and made the bathroom and the main floor of the camp universally accessible. Furthermore, the kitchenette was converted into a full-size kitchen with a breakfast nook.



Pictured, from left: Bianca Casem (Degenkolb), Lucas Lazaga, Aaron Aguon-Africa, Huynh Huynh, Daniel O'Brien and Clare Cummins (Degenkolb)



As a licensee, if you are interested in mentoring engineering students, please contact one of the engineering programs at your local universities.



## Board of Registration for Professional Engineers & Land Surveyors

State of Washington agency, protecting the public through professional licensing, Recommends rules and regulations.  
Government Administration · Olympia, WA · 174 followers · 2-10 employees

## BRPELS is now on **LinkedIn**

Digital platforms like [LinkedIn](#) and our new [website](#) allow us to communicate more frequently with licensees and the public. Our latest news and information will be posted on both these sites as it happens, instead of months later in *The Journal*. Please, stay connected and like, follow and share!



# Gonzaga University “Meet & Greet”



Students, faculty, Board members, staff, local professional engineers and land surveyors gathered for a “Meet & Greet,” at Gonzaga University, School of Engineering & Applied Science in Spokane on Wednesday, October 16, 2024.

It was an opportunity for each group to interact with Board members and staff, and for students to meet professionals for internships and career possibilities. About 100 people attended the late afternoon pizza party.



## Meet "Blaze!"

Blaze is our new surveying mascot, partnering with “Get Kids Into Survey.” Blaze is designed to help attract grade school and middle school kids into professional survey careers. You'll be seeing lots more of Blaze in the future!



### Here’s our “Blaze the BRPELS Bigfoot Bio”

1. Agency Name – State of Washington, Board of Registration for Professional Engineers & Land Surveyors (BRPELS)
2. Location – Washington State (in the woods, usually!)
3. Why is it important for your agency/company to help Get Kids Into Survey? We help grow our profession and promote professional licensing for surveyors. We help kids who love the outdoors and technology, have fun learning about surveying.
4. What do you do? I roam the Northwest woods, searching for missing or buried survey monuments, measuring distances and mapping hills and valleys.
5. How long have you been in the survey industry? About five years, but my family has been surveying about ten million years.
6. How did you end up getting into the geospatial industry? I already love the outdoors, math and learning new things. Now, this great technology makes it even more accurate and it's fun!
7. State a funny fact about you ... I'm the reigning hide and seek world champion!
8. Favorite piece of equipment and why? The data collector because it does the math for me!
10. Your website: [brpels.wa.gov](http://brpels.wa.gov)
11. Why did you create this character? Our Bigfoot represents the Northwest, the outdoors, professional surveying and FUN!



# From The Chair

## continued from page 1

restrict the usage of Professional Engineer, Professional Land Surveyor, and Structural Engineer. A recent case in Oregon ruled that state law violates freedom of speech by regulating the use of the word “engineer”. The federal judge declared that certain parts of the state law violate the First Amendment. Oregon has since changed their laws and they are now more similar to Washington’s. BRPELS has received legal guidance that our definitions in RCW 18.43 for the term engineer are written defensibly for the purposes of the statute, but we have determined that some minor changes in the RCW will make the intent of the chapter clearer. These changes will not change the regulation of the word ‘engineer’.

As part of our interest in improving public perception of when an engineer is licensed and has authority, we have developed an outreach program to inform agencies and private companies that unlicensed individuals using a title that includes ‘engineer’ must be clear, in all public communication, that they are either working under the direct supervision of a professional engineer or that they are not giving any engineering opinions. This is the same for the use of the title ‘surveyor’.

### EXPERIENCE AND EXAMINATION DECOUPLING

Another significant topic for the board concerns the number of other jurisdictions that are allowing licensee applicants to go directly to NCEES to take their examinations prior to having their professional experience evaluated. This is referred to as decoupling. Over two-thirds of the licensing jurisdictions in the US have decoupled their experience requirement from examination for engineers and about half have decoupled for surveying. Licensing boards have indicated that they have approved decoupling since it has lowered their costs and sped up their application processing.

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### COA Registrations - from page 1

surveying services must also be licensed. We call a corporate license a “Certificate of Authorization” (COA). As our code notes, this is not your ‘business’ authorization through the Secretary of State but focused upon your practice affecting public safety through engineering and surveying. Corporations and LLCs must have a COA.

Circling back to safety and our observations, frankly, each time we receive a complaint we also verify that appropriate COAs are up to date. In general, new engineering and surveying businesses do the right thing in getting their COA and in identifying their designated engineer. That is right, each such business must define who the engineer

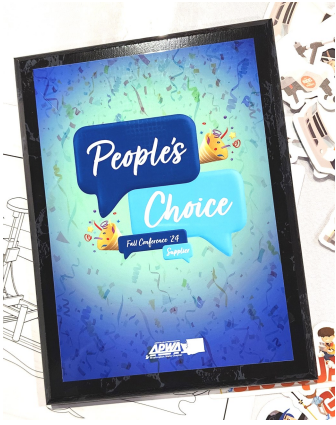
or surveyor in responsible charge of all engineering or surveying matters represents their business. The party in responsible charge has the authority to make all engineering or land surveying decisions pertaining to engineering or land surveying activities. When we look at the COAs of companies though and often when COAs are simply renewed, we find a disturbingly high frequency of failure to update the designated engineer or surveyor when there has been some transition. Transition is all about us, we live, we die, we change jobs. And our COA holders frequently forget to address that change.

How do we address this? When your designee leaves, choose and identify your new designee to us within thirty days. Pretty simple, but it is exceedingly important for your business, because without a designee, you are operating without appropriate licensure. Put these values into your personnel transition plans, it’s important for the protection of your business and critical for the protection of the public.

Thank you for your attention.



# Exhibition Booth Wins Award

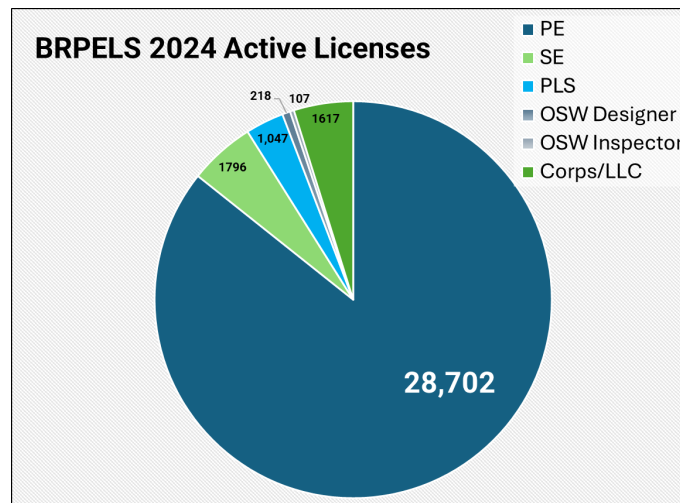


BRPELS was honored with a “People’s Choice” award for the agency’s exhibition booth at the American Public Works Association, Washington Chapter Fall Conference, held in Kennewick at the Three Rivers Convention Center, October 9 and 10, 2024. Attendees voted the BRPELS booth had the best materials, message and interaction with attendees, among the more than 70 booths at the conference. Board Vice Chair Doug Hendrickson, PE, joined Director Ken Fuller, PE, Deputy Director Kristina Horton, PLS, Regulatory Program Manager Shanan Gillespie and Communication and Outreach Manager, Greg Schief-erstein, as they connected with over

400 attendees. Topics discussed included survey monument preservation, Professional Engineer and Surveyor licensing, the new agency website and encouraging kids to get into surveying.



## Investigations, Enforcement and Licensing



### COMPLAINT SUMMARY BY PROFESSION

May 2024 to Oct 2024 Complaints			
	Filed	Closed	Active
Professional Engineers	13	15	9
Professional Land Surveyors	15	2	13
On-Site Designers	2	1	2
Unlicensed Engineers	1	4	0
Unlicensed Land Surveyors	2	2	2
Unlicensed On-site Designers	0	0	0



# Exam Results

## April 1, 2024 - October 20, 2024 Computer-Based Testing (CBT) Results

Exam	Total	Pass	% Pass
Fundamentals of Engineering (FE)	722	430	59.56%
Fundamentals of Surveying (FS)	20	11	55.00%
Principles and Practice of Surveying (PS)	21	15	71.43%

## Professional Engineering (PE) Exam Results April 1, 2024 - October 20, 2024

Discipline	Total	Pass	% Pass
Architectural	1	0	0.00%
Agricultural and Biological	2	2	100.00%
Chemical	3	3	100.00%
Civil	201	142	70.6%
Electrical	35	24	68.57%
Environmental	5	5	100.00%
Fire Protection	1	1	100.00%
Industrial	3	0	0.00%
Mechanical	53	37	69.81%
Metallurgical	1	1	100.00%
Naval Architecture and Marine	6	5	83.33%
Nuclear	1	1	100.00%

## Additional Specialized Examinations September 2024

Examination	Total	Pass	% Pass
On-Site Inspector	13	2	15.38%
On-Site Designer	6	4	66.67%
WA State 4-Hour Land Surveyor	38	21	55.26%

The structural engineering (PE Structural) exam started with a new format starting in April 2024. We contacted NCEES and received the following: "NCEES doesn't plan to provide individual structural exam results in parts as people pass them. The reporting of individual parts of the exam being passed has caused confusion for boards. In the past, boards have mistakenly made assumptions about what a passing part means versus passing the entire structural exam."



# Investigations and Enforcement

## Formal Actions

May 2024 to October 2024

### Professional Land Surveying

#### Robert Rogers

##### 2022-06-0883-00LSV

An investigation was opened, and charges were issued, based on a complaint alleging the Respondent, Robert Rogers, performed an erroneous survey and had several deficiencies on his original survey and three subsequent amended record of surveys, all of which were found to be in violation of Chapter 58.09 RCW and Chapter 332-130 WAC.

The Board and the Respondent agreed to the following terms:

Effective October 17, 2024, the Respondent's was assessed a \$5000 fine and the survey will be corrected to meet the standards of laws/rules and filed within 90 days.

See [link](#) for full details.

#### Kent Huxel

##### 2023-01-0098-00LSV

An investigation was opened based on a complaint of unlicensed practice of surveying.

The Board and the Respondent agreed to the following terms:

Effective October 17, 2024, the Respondent was assessed a \$5000 fine and will cease and desist the practice of land surveying; and will not seek licensure for a period of ten years.

See [link](#) for full details.

## Case Closures November 2023 – April 2024

### Engineering:

##### 2024-03-0624-00ENG

The complaint alleges that the respondent, a Washington State licensed professional engineer, violated WAC 196-27A-020 with specific regard to a registrant's obligations to the public. The complaint alleges this violation occurred when the respondent's firm, under the respondent's professional seal, misrepresented their qualifications and accreditations to perform laboratory testing of rock specimens taken as part of a city infrastructure project.

The Contractor for a city-area tunneling project encountered a boulder during tunneling operations that damaged the tunnel boring machine. To investigate the strength of the encountered boulder as it relates to a potential differing site condition claim, the Contractor core sampled the boulder and transmitted those cores to the respondent's engineering firm for strength testing. The Contractor subsequently issued a claim of differing site condition against the Owner, based on the tested strength of the rock core samples exceeding the

## Investigations and Enforcement - continued

maximum expected value provided in a project geotechnical report. The complainant alleges that the Owner's review of the testing report authored by the respondent's firm identified deficiencies in the testing, including lack of documentation of test procedures and lack of adherence to standardized test procedures. The Owner then investigated the respondent's firm's qualifications to perform the requested tests, and allegedly discovered that the firm was accredited by AASHTO for several tests and quality standards but was not accredited for the tests performed (ASTM D4543 or ASTM D7012). The Owner subsequently requested documentation that the respondent's firm was qualified to perform the testing and that the testing had been performed in adherence with the stated test standards. The Owner also requested documentation as to the respondent's firm's specific accreditation for the two test standards in question.

The respondent provided a letter to the Owner, stating that they were accredited by AASHTO for ASTM quality standards (ASTM D3740 and ASTM E329). The respondent's letter did not state that they were accredited for ASTM D4543 or ASTM D7012. The complaint alleges that the respondent's letter stated that these ASTM quality standards imply accreditation in the individual test standards (ASTM D4543 and ASTM D7012).

It is common practice for materials testing firms to hold general quality assurance accreditations for their testing facility. Further, it is common practice for AASHTO to perform the accreditation for a variety of test standards, including ASTM. It is not common practice for all materials testing laboratories to hold test-specific accreditation for all tests they perform. As to the facts presented with respect to the complaint that the respondent misrepresented their qualifications and accreditations, violating WAC 196-27A-020, I do not find evidence supporting this claim. In the evidence presented, the respondent did not – falsely or otherwise – claim that their firm was accredited in ASTM D4543 or ASTM D7012.

Based on the case manager's findings, the investigation was closed with no further action.

### 2024-04-0935-00ENG

The complaint alleges that the respondent, a Washington State licensed professional engineer, engaged in unprofessional conduct/practice during his role as the chair of an Engineering Panel of Experts (EPOE) for a dam project located in a foreign country.

The complaint alleges "unprofessional conduct/practice" on the part of the respondent, in that the respondent should have respected the complainant's opinion above those of the other panel members. The documentation provided by the complainant, including correspondence with the respondent as well as the panel's report, indicate that there was a clear difference of opinion between the complainant and other panel members on the risk associated with the rockslide. As a body, the EPOE panel was to issue a singular report, as is typical for such panels or boards. It is clear from the correspondence that the respondent offered the complainant multiple options for addressing their dissenting opinion in the panel's report. Further, when it became evident that the complainant was uncomfortable with the content of the report, their name was not only removed from the report, but a paragraph was included noting their dissent and to which specific items they disagreed.

Based on the case manager's findings, the investigation was closed with no further action.

### 2024-05-1023-00ENG

A complaint was received alleging the respondent was contracted to design a residence. Following completion of design and during construction by the Constructor, the owner of the residence passed with property ownership reverting to living spouse. Complainant is offspring on behalf of the new owner. The complainant and owner deemed there to be significant defects in the house design and construction and initiated court action for recovery from the Constructor.

## Investigations and Enforcement - continued

Extensive communications with the Complainant and open and forthcoming responses provided by the Respondent detail the Respondent had no involvement with the Constructor following completion of the design and the Respondent was requested to act as a SME upon design perspectives on behalf of the Constructor during the tort case. This position was accepted by the court and therefore no violation of truthfulness, compensation, or responsiveness.

Based on these findings, the case was closed with no further action.

### **2024-05-1305-00ENG**

A complaint was received alleging the respondent was in responsible charge of a soil contaminant investigation at a residence following removal of an underground heating oil tank at the request of the homeowner (Complainant). The Complainant believes that the soil investigation drilling fractured a 77-year-old French drain resulting in water intrusion into the home basement. The primary basis for communications and discord was related to homeowner insurance claim regarding the water intrusion. The complaint alleges the Respondent was practicing professional engineering without a license.

The primary point of contact in the conduct of on-site work was through this Respondent, who was not licensed until the day of inspection. It was verified the work was done under the direct supervision of a licensed professional engineer. No violations of law/rule were found; therefore, the case was closed with no further action.

### **2024-06-1415-00ENG**

Respondent was in responsible charge of a soil contaminant investigation at a residence following removal of an underground heating oil tank at the request of the homeowner (Complainant). Complainant believes that the soil investigation drilling fractured a 77 year old French drain resulting in water intrusion into the home basement. The primary basis for communications and discord were related to homeowner insurance claim regarding the water intrusion. The complainant alleged the respondent was practicing without a license and unprofessional conduct.

The respondent is a licensed professional engineer and was directly supervising the project even though he was not the point of contact. There were no findings of violation of laws/rules and the investigation was closed with no further action.

### **2024-02-0418-00ENG**

A complaint was filed alleging a licensed professional engineer was hired to provide structural drawings for a residence. The complainant stated the respondent falsely claimed to understand codes and requirements for the local jurisdiction. Following a review the case manager determined the design loading and code requirements indicated on the respondent's drawing appear appropriate for the local jurisdiction.

The investigation was closed with no further action.

### **Land Surveying:**

#### **2023-04-0536-00SLSV**

The complaint alleged the respondent failed to provide information on a survey map and unprofessional conduct.

# Investigations and Enforcement - continued

It appears from the information provided, the survey which was performed by the respondent in 2022 should have resulted in a survey map filed with the county recorder that reflected the information required on a Record of Survey pursuant to RCW 58.09 and WAC 332-130. When reviewing the survey recorded, it was found deficient of many items as required under WAC 332-130. An amended survey was provided and recorded that appeared to provide the lacking information.

Since the respondent corrected and filed an Amended Record of Survey, the case was closed with no further action.

## 2024-05-1071-00LSV

A complaint was filed alleging a licensed professional land surveyor was hired to complete a residential survey. The fieldwork was completed, but the survey was never filed.

When contacted about the complaint, the respondent promptly researched the job and found he inadvertently forgot to file the survey. It was immediately filed at his own cost.

Following remedial counseling the investigation was closed.

### On-site Septic System Designing:

## 2023-09-1922-00OSW

A complaint was received alleging the respondent was paid to make adjustments to a septic system and handle inspections through the project. The respondent provided the designs and helped with resolving some inspection issues, but when it came time to complete the project the installer informed the complainant that the respondent was no longer available, and the complainant would need to hire another designer to complete the project. The complainant hired another designer and paid additional money.

Six months following notice of the complaint, a response was received. The respondent was physically out of the country and unable to contact the complainant or the Board. Since his return to the United States, he has made contact with the complainant and refunded all of his money. Staff contacted the complainant and confirmed he received a full refund from the respondent. The complainant stated he is satisfied with the outcome and stated he would hire the respondent again in the future.

Therefore, since a response was received and the complainant was satisfied with the outcome, the investigation was closed with no further action.

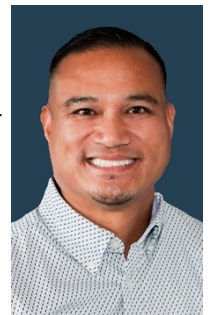
### *The Engineer's Creed*

*I pledge to participate in none but honest enterprise, to place service before profit, the honor and standing of my profession before personal advantage and the public welfare above all other considerations.*

### **BRPELS welcomes new Investigations & Compliance Manager, Randy Garcia.**

Randy will support the Practice Committee and manage investigations and board enforcement. He'll conduct engineering, land surveying and on-site designer investigations.

Randy comes to us from the Department of Licensing (DOL). He began the end of October and will be training for several months.



# BRPELS Presents at Yakima LSAW Chapter

BRPELS staff presented to the Cascade Columbia Chapter meeting of the Land Surveyors' Association of Washington in Yakima, on Tuesday, November 12, 2024.

Agency Deputy Director Kristina Horton, PLS, spoke with the group along with Communication and Outreach Manager, Greg Schieferstein.

Kris reviewed pathways to licensing, the complaint and investigation process, upcoming WAC



changes and professional development hour units. Greg reviewed the BRPELS new website and outreach events.

Both Kris and Greg will be presenting at the South Puget Sound LSAW Chapter on Thursday, December 5. If you would like our agency to present to your group, please [contact us!](#)

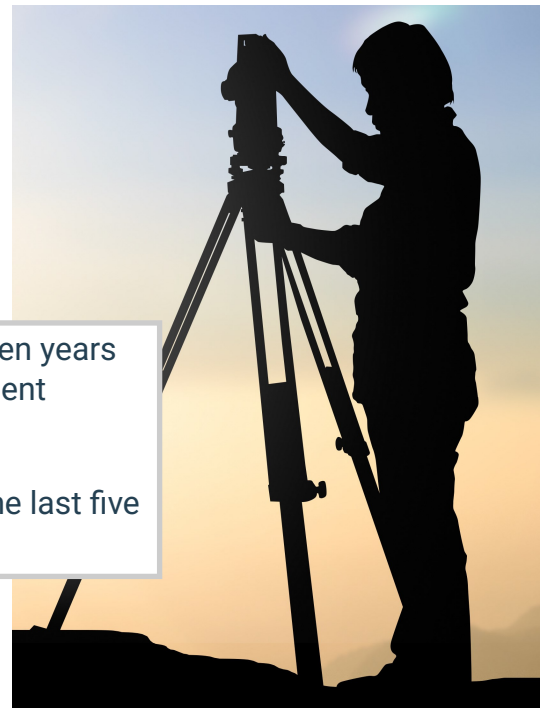
## Do you know someone who would make a good Board member?

**With a retirement this July, the Board is looking for a Professional Land Surveyor**

- Must be actively engaged in the practice for at least ten years following registration, five years just before appointment
- Must be a US citizen
- Must be a resident of Washington State for at least the last five years

The Governor's office accepts applications throughout the year and considers all eligible candidates for upcoming vacancies. The application and instructions are on the Governor's website [here](#).

The Governor's office typically reviews applications in May, with a decision in June or July. Board members and agency staff do not directly screen applicants. However, they may suggest what experience is needed to keep the Board as diverse as possible. For questions, please contact Ken Fuller, PE, Director, at [Ken.Fuller@brpels.wa.gov](mailto:Ken.Fuller@brpels.wa.gov) or Kristina Horton, PLS, Deputy Director at [Kristina.Horton@brpels.wa.gov](mailto:Kristina.Horton@brpels.wa.gov).



# Board Member Lectures at Gonzaga



BRPELS Board member, Mike Harney, PE, P.Eng., ENV SP, spoke to about 40 students and faculty at Gonzaga University, School of Engineering & Applied Science on Wednesday, October 16, 2024.

The group included first and second year engineering students.



Mike spoke on the importance and process of professional licensure and reviewed professional engineering ethics. He took students through an example of an engineering mistake on a client's project, how it was identified and making the correct ethical choice.

## Agency Update for County Engineers

BRPELS Board Chair, Dave Peden, PE, SE, gave an agency update to the Washington State Association of County Engineers on Tuesday, June 25th in Ritzville.

Dave explained the Board's role and authority, along with the Board's activities in the past year. Those include stakeholder input on the title "professional engineer," improving tests for PLS and On-Site exams.

The agency is also partnering with the University of Washington for a transportation study, to help attract students into fields supporting transportation infrastructure. Dave also encouraged the group to call or write BRPELS anytime with questions.



BRPELS Pro Tem Board Member, Walt Dale, PLS, also presented to the Washington State Association of County Engineers in Ritzville. He spoke on "Monument Preservation" on Thursday, June 27, 2024.

The PowerPoint included instructions for field crews on identifying the varying types of monuments, the laws and rules on protecting or replacing monuments and examples of typical problems in the field. For those who have new field crews or some that need a refresher, BRPELS has a video of a similar PowerPoint online, at <https://youtu.be/VwscOvNlbYw>.



## From The Chair

### Continued from page 6

Washington State currently requires an applicant's experience to be evaluated by our board to be able to sit for an exam. However, we know that young engineers have spread the word that one can sit for an exam by declaring their interest in licensure in a different state and, once they have passed the exam, they apply to our state. We are receiving many applications for those that have already passed exams, and we are conferring licensure once their experience is accepted. Although BRPELS is moving towards proceeding to change our regulations to allow decoupling, we discourage applicants from taking the exams before they have acquired their practical experience. PE and PLS exams are practice exams, based on experience, and data shows that repeat takers do not perform as well as initial examinees that have experience.

#### RENEWAL FEES

You very likely have received an email notifying you that BRPELS is raising licensing renewal fees by 10% in the beginning of 2025. I bet you didn't know that it has been 22 years since the last fee increase, and that the total inflation rate in our area is 85% over that timeframe! I am very proud of our agency's efficiency, careful budgeting, and monitoring of costs. BRPELS is one of the few agencies in state government that is completely funded by our licensing fees, and we are always looking to keep the costs low. Please see the article on page xx for more explanation.

#### US/UK MRA

My last, and perhaps most controversial issue, concerns the NCEES and United Kingdom Engineering Council (EngC) Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA). NCEES began working with EngC in 2023 concerning streamlining licensure as requested by US President and UK Prime Minister as a part of their 2023 trade agreement. NCEES and EngC developed a MRA to improve opportunities for comity licensure between our countries for professional engineers. The MRA would allow individuals from the US that have been vetted by NCEES and placed on their IntPE roster to apply for CEng licensure in UK without additional application reviews and examination. The same would be reciprocal for UK engineers. The IntPE roster is already active and if you are interested it is clearly explained on the NCEES website. All of the licensing jurisdictions in the US and the Engineering Institutions in UK are evaluating their decisions to participate and to determine if there are additional specific requirements for their jurisdiction. BRPELS is working on this process.

To step back a bit, our state receives a fair number of applicants from foreign countries. It has been my personal experience that these applicants are mostly coming from Canada, Mexico, Japan, Iran, and Nigeria and most have moved to our state. We require that their educational degrees meet ABET requirements, we carefully evaluate their experience and references same as local engineers, we require that they take the PE exam in their discipline, and our state law review.

I am now going to give you my *personal opinions* and emphasize that this no way represents the position of the board, as we are still evaluating the MRA process. My first opinion is that we need to be sure that we grant licenses to competent individuals that will protect public safety and follow state and local regulations. Secondly, we must treat all applicants equally and fairly. I believe if we provide a different pathway for one country's engineers, then we need to be sure we are fair to others. This raises the issue of allowing UK engineers to obtain licenses without taking a PE exam. UK engineers' competencies are verified in different types of examinations, and they design to different procedures, codes, and regulations. I personally believe that the PE exams we take are valuable for determining minimum competency of our engineers while also requiring individuals to study regulations, codes, and standards to prepare for exams. Our PE exams are not a significant deterrent to those that wish to practice in our state; they are one-day exams and most of them can be scheduled at any time now that they are computer-based.

Washington state has high seismic design requirements, and we want to be sure that PE's are familiar with building code seismic provisions. BRPELS and some of the other western states have already decided that applicants for SE licensure will need to go through our normal process and take the four PE Structural Exams. In addition to this restriction for SE licenses, we are evaluating ways that we can ensure that all building design PE applicants have become familiar with Washington State Building Code requirements in all disciplines.

As mentioned above, we welcome your opinions and questions. Please reach out to us if you'd like, while you peruse our new [website!](#)



# BRPELS

## Board Staff

### BOARD OF REGISTRATION FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS & LAND SURVEYORS

#### Ken Fuller, PE

Director  
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Agency Director and Chief Executive Officer for Board operations. Manages overall staff and program budget. Oversees liaison activities between the Board, other state agencies and stakeholders. Provides guidance on application of statute, rules and policies on engineering, land surveying and On-Site practice.

#### Kristina Horton, PLS

Deputy Director  
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Provides support to the Director related to staff management, guidance on application of statute, rules and policies on engineering, land surveying and On-Site practice. Provides guidance to staff regarding exams and investigations. Supports the Board's Survey Committee.

#### Mackenzie Wherrett

Executive Assistant  
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Executive Assistant to the Board. Coordinates all board meetings, minutes and schedules. Office coordinator and planner.

#### Shanan Gillespie

Regulatory Manager  
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Agency rule-making coordinator, records retention coordinator, public records officer. Supports the work of the Board's Executive Committee.

#### Jill Short

Investigations & Compliance Manager  
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Supports the Practice Committee and manages investigations and board enforcement. Conducts engineering, land surveying and On-Site designer investigations. Tracks Board Order compliance.

#### Randy Garcia

New Investigations & Compliance Manager  
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Randy.Garcia@brpels.wa.gov

Preparing to support the Practice Committee and manages investigations and board enforcement. Conducts engineering, land surveying and On-Site designer investigations. Tracks Board Order compliance.

#### Greg Schieferstein

Communication and Outreach Manager  
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External & internal communications, outreach and education. Manages website, social media, photos and video. Editor of *The Journal* and assists stakeholder relations.

#### Vonna Cramer

Licensing Specialist - Lead  
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Supports the work of the Exam Qualification Committee of the Board. Provides guidance to applicants and licensing staff on application of statute, rules and policies on engineering, land surveying and On-Site designer/inspector practice, as it relates to the licensing process.

#### Nghiem Pham

Licensing Specialist  
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Processes exam applications for PE exams, PE initial licenses, SE exams, Professional Land Surveyors and On-Site Wastewater Designer/Inspector. Handles state specific PLS and OS exams, refunds, renewals, license verifications and general licensing questions.

#### Emily Weston

Licensing Specialist  
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Processes PE comity, SE comity applications, EIT/LSIT exam and certifications and Corp/LLC applications refunds, renewals, license verifications and general licensing questions.

#### Bryce Dickison

Administrative Assistant  
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Schedule and facilitate board meetings, events and resources. Assist licensing and answer general questions by phone and email.







# Contact

## Board Office Access

Board Mailing Address (documents without payments):

Board of Registration for Professional Engineers & Land Surveyors  
PO Box 9025  
Olympia, WA 98507-9025

Board Mailing Address (applications or renewals with payments):

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Department of Licensing  
PO Box 3777  
Seattle, WA 98124-3777

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Website <https://brpels.wa.gov>



Our office is in a secure building and public access is not available without an appointment. If you have a scheduled meeting in our building, please follow the instructions posted at the two main entrances and call our staff. Someone will bring you to your meeting.



## 2025 Events Calendar

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	JAN	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	FEB	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	JUL	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	AUG																							
			1	2	3	4								1	1 & 2 Home & Garden Show - Tacoma																																							
5	6	7	8	9	10	11		9	10	11	12	13	14	15	12 & 13 BRPELS Board Meeting - SeaTac	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	6 & 7 BRPELS Board Meeting - SeaTac																								
12	13	14	15	16	17	18		16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23-25 WOSSA Septic Con - Tacoma	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	19-20 NCEES Annual Mtg - New Orleans, LA										
19	20	21	22	23	24	25		23	24	25	26	27	28	30 & 31 Home & Garden Show - Tacoma	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	27	28	29	30	31	31	27	28	29	30	31	
26	27	28	29	30	31										27	28	29	30	26-28 LSAW Conference - Tulalip	27	28	29	30	27	28	29	30	27	28	29	30	31		28	29	30																		

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Please be sure to like and share!



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