

New Jersey
CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

On January 18, 2010 Governor Corzine signed into law the Mandatory Continuing Professional Competency (MCPC) act for Professional Engineers. Your society worked with the legislature to ensure that the regulations would not be overly onerous and would be compatible with other states, notably Pennsylvania. The intent is to allow comity between the two states for those who have both licenses.

This bill requires Professional Engineers to complete 24 credits of continuing professional competency relating to the practice of engineering every two years, coinciding with their biennial license renewal. The law goes into effect in January 2011 and is overseen by the Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors. Those whose first renewal date occurs within 12 months of the effective date of the law (i.e. before January 2012) would not have to complete the required professional competency credits to renew their license. Those whose first renewal falls more than 12 but less than 24 months after the effective date of the law (i.e. by January 2013) would be required to complete the required professional engineering continuing professional competency credits on a pro rata basis. The law does allow 12 credits to be carried over into the next biennial license period. There are special rules for those with dual survey or landscape architecture licenses.

The State Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors is to establish standards that conform with a national model, such as that of the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying. The legislation does specifically require that two of the credits be in professional practice ethics during each biennial period. In addition, the board is required to approve other equivalent education programs, such as meetings of professional associations “...when an engineering topic is presented as a principal part of the program, examinations, papers, publications, technical presentations, teaching and research appointments, technical exhibits, management, leadership courses and correspondence courses on engineering topics where a final examination is required”. The form that these courses, etc. may take is not spelled out in the legislation. The Board is to establish procedures for the issuance of credit upon satisfactory proof of the completion of these programs.

The Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors is also required to establish procedures to pre-approve providers of the courses and for monitoring compliance. The Board may accept as proof of completion of any educational credits by documentation submitted by a license professional engineer that it meets the Board's standards, or by documentation submitted by an entity offering such a program. This latter acceptance of documentation allows an engineer to take a course that is not pre-approved and to subsequently submit evidence to the Board that it meets their requirements. It is, of course, more risky than taking a pre-approved course.

The New Jersey Society of Professional Engineers will be reviewing the law and rules as they are adopted by the Board so that we may offer programs to assist our members in meeting their requirements.