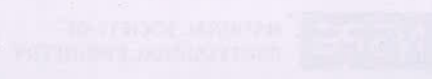




NATIONAL SOCIETY OF  
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS



NSPE Ethics Reference Guide

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# The NSPE

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# Ethics Reference Guide



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## Foreword

Professionalism and ethics are twins, inseparably bound together in the concept that professional status and recognition must be based upon public service under a higher duty than mere compliance with the letter of the law. Ethics provides the framework within which engineers may travel the "second mile," so ably defined by Dr. William E. Wickenden, former president of Case Institute of Technology:

Every calling has its mile of compulsion: Its round of tasks and duties, its prescribed man-to-man relationships, which one must traverse daily if one is to survive. Beyond that is the mile of voluntary effort where one strives for special excellence, seeks self-expression more than material gain, and gives that unrequited margin of service to the common good which invests work with a wide and enduring significance. The best fun of life and most of its durable satisfaction lies in this second mile and it is only here that a calling can attain the dignity and distinction of a profession.

The voluntary assumption of a higher duty imposed by individual conscience is the root principle of ethics. The Foreword of the 1947 *ECPD Canons of Ethics* expresses these principles for the professional engineer in the following terms:

Honesty, justice and courtesy form the moral philosophy which, associated with mutual interest among mankind, constitute the foundation of ethics. The engineer should recognize such a standard, not in passive observance, but as a set of dynamic principles guiding the engineer's conduct and way of life. It is the engineer's duty to practice according to these Canons of Ethics.

It is in the spirit of these cogent observations and principles that the National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE) has adopted a Code of Ethics to lend aid and understanding to all engineers who strive for the dignity and true worth of the professional.

This Code of Ethics is the result of extensive study and deliberation by the NSPE Board of Ethical Review, the review of the codes of ethics of engineering societies and those of other professions, and consultations with a broad cross section of the engineering profession. A code of ethics is not a static document; its purpose is to live and breathe with the profession it serves. Experience and changed circumstance will require continual review and revision of this Code of Ethics to reflect the growing understanding of engineering professionalism in public service. Comments and suggestions from all members of the engineering profession are solicited toward this end.



# Engineers' Creed

As a Professional Engineer, I dedicate my professional knowledge and skill to the advancement and betterment of human welfare.

I pledge:

To give the utmost of performance;

To participate in none but honest enterprise;

To live and work according to the laws of man  
and the highest standards of professional  
conduct;

To place service before profit, the honor and standing of  
the profession before personal advantage, and the  
public welfare above all other considerations.

In humility and with need for Divine Guidance, I  
make this pledge.



Adopted by  
National Society of Professional Engineers  
June, 1954