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Fellow ASPE Members,

As you may have heard, ASPE's Board of Directors has authorized a Working Group to advance the idea of Professional Registration for Plumbing Engineers within our membership who meet the minimum requirements to take such an exam. At the same time, efforts are being made to advance an engineering curriculum specific to Plumbing Engineering.

As we should all be aware, the future of our Society and profession hinges on the nurturing and mentoring of young engineers and designers who might be considering this field as their chosen profession or those already in the field who are looking for advancement.

ASPE is the recognized authority in plumbing design and engineering globally. As such, the time has come to raise the stature of the profession and those engineers who are Plumbing Engineers as well as Registered Professional Engineers.

An engineer is a person who has been educated in a specific branch of engineering such as mechanical, electrical, civil, chemical, aeronautical, computer, etc. Engineers evaluate and develop conceptual ideas using applied science and the laws of physics to advance the principles and practices of their profession. It is intended that, ultimately, these individuals would follow the established procedures to become a Registered Professional Engineer (P.E.), a person licensed to practice engineering by acquiring the necessary experience and examination, morally and ethically bound by law to protect public health and safety above all else.

Professional Engineers are, by the requirements enacted by the various Boards of Registration, limited to practice within their areas of verifiable expertise. That verifiable expertise may be determined by examination, an individual's record of design, or their experience in the practice of engineering.

As the plumbing profession has grown, it has moved in many unique directions. With recent advancements in science, shortages of clean water, and the variations in the types of buildings and available technologies, along with an increase in sophistication, the need for experienced and qualified Plumbing Engineers is growing.

Plumbing Engineering has grown immensely to address health and safety concerns such as energy and water conservation, scalding balanced against pathogen growth within potable systems, and biofilms, among others. With this level of technical demand, Plumbing Engineering as a discipline can no longer be considered a subsidiary of the Mechanical Engineering profession. Indeed, it has developed into a stand-alone discipline unto itself.

The knowledge level required within the Plumbing Engineering profession continues to become ever more demanding. It is unrealistic to expect the current practitioners of Mechanical Engineering to develop a professional and thorough understanding of both heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning (HVAC) and the increasing complexity of plumbing systems.

The time has come to provide an examination option specific to the discipline of Plumbing Engineering. This will allow those who meet the other requirements for professional registration to test and demonstrate their competency in the specialized discipline known as Plumbing Engineering. It will also provide that the engineer in responsible charge has the experience and competency to protect the public's health and safety.

This effort will be neither quick nor short term. This Working Group, on behalf of the Society, will need to accomplish the following as a minimum:

- Obtain the concurrence of at least 10 State Boards of Registration in Engineering that the recognition of Plumbing Engineering is appropriate and in the public's best interest.

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- Work with the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) to develop multiple professional exams. NCEES is the organization responsible for the development and administration of national (also used internationally) professional exams in engineering and surveying. All of the Boards of Registration have membership in NCEES. The Society also will need to become a member of NCEES.
- Provide qualified members (members who are Registered Professional Engineers with a core competency in plumbing engineering) to serve on an exam development and maintenance committee.
- Work with the membership, especially those who hold professional registration, to assist in elevating the Society's public stature.

What the Society and Working Group need from you, the membership, is to assist in advancing this and other goals toward the advancement of the profession and the Society. You can help by:

- Opening up communication with the Board of Registration for Engineering within your state. While all members should work on this effort, it is most important for the Registered Professional Engineers within your Chapter to begin contacting the Boards with which they have registration. Boards do listen to all who contact them, but they listen with greater interest to those who are registered with them.
- Assisting the Working Group in developing specific justification to support the need for an exam in Plumbing Engineering.
- Volunteering to contribute your knowledge and expertise in developing exams by serving on committees or working groups.

This is the first in what will be several steps in advancing the status of the Society and its membership, but it is the most important step in obtaining professional registration. A second step, on a parallel path, will be an effort to develop a college-level curriculum in plumbing engineering as well as a curriculum designed toward enhancing the Certified in Plumbing Design (CPD) certification.

This is an exciting time for ASPE. As a member, step forward and assist the Society and your career by actively working to advance professional registration and increasing the visibility and status of the Plumbing Engineering profession, the discipline, and the Society.

Sincerely,



Mitch Clemente, CPD
2014–2016 ASPE President