

WESTERN FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL SURVEYORS

Resolution 2014-01

Support of Mandatory Continuing Education Requirement

WHEREAS, the Western Federation of Professional Surveyors (WFPS) is a regional Association representing Land Surveyors in the 13 western states, and

WHEREAS, the vast majority of WFPS states have a mandatory continuing education requirement for license renewal, and

WHEREAS, WFPS is committed to the protection of the public, which is accomplished by Land Surveyors maintaining an up-to-date knowledge and understanding of current laws, rules, and regulations related to the practice of land surveying, and

WHEREAS, WFPS is committed to keeping Land Surveyors up-to-date, expanding their outlook and ensuring that they are provided the professional resources, outlets and educational advantages needed to succeed; respond rapidly to the ever-evolving professional requirements and,

WHEREAS, continuing education is a proven method of enhancing skills and resources, providing information concerning new technology, developments and issues relating to land surveying; and,

WHEREAS, continuing education is a method of ensuring that the Land Surveyor has formal opportunities to upgrade and update professional knowledge and skills; encouraging the Land Surveyor to learn from other professionals; and assisting the professional to expand his/her professional resource network; **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that WFPS supports a requirement of mandatory continuing education for Land Surveyors.

*Adopted January 11, 2014
WFPS Board of Directors*

Gary R. Kent, PS
18347 Piers End Drive
Noblesville, IN 46062

May 30, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Gary Kent. I have been involved in surveying in Indiana since 1975 and have been licensed as an Indiana Professional Surveyor since 1980. I have presented programs on survey standards and other surveying-related topics in Indiana since about 1990, and have served on the Indiana State Board of Registration for Professional Surveyors since 2004.

Having practiced surveying in Indiana for years, and having presented literally dozens of programs - both before and after the adoption of mandatory continuing education - it is my considered opinion that the practice of surveying has improved considerably since the Board of Registration adopted mandatory continuing education in about 1992.

Since that time, Indiana has made a number of fairly modest modifications to the rule that have improved the rule and made it less burdensome to registrants.

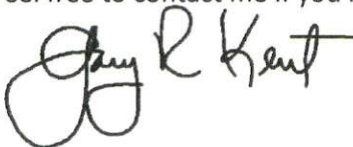
The cost of implementing the continuing education rule is relatively minor. The state audits approximately 20 professional surveyors each renewal period (every 2 years) and one (unpaid) Board member is normally appointed to assist the Indiana Professional Licensing Agency when necessary. (The Board Director and Assistant Board Director for the Professional Surveyors also serve in the same roles for at least 5 other boards, so obviously they cannot have tasks that require much time for any particular board.)

When there have been extenuating circumstances, the rule allows for the Board to exercise flexibility in enforcing the rule and it has done so a number of times.

I cannot speak as to whether or not the number of complaints against surveyors has dropped since adoption of the continuing education rule because it has not been until the last 15 years or so that the State decided to rigorously enforce the various statutes and rules. Thus, we have no yardstick against which to measure.

Nevertheless, I would strongly encourage Colorado to consider adopting a rule requiring continuing education. I truly believe that if such a rule is adopted, and if appropriate programs are offered by providers, the State will see the level of the practice of surveying improve in Colorado.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary R. Kent". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "G".

Gary R. Kent, PS



Indiana Society of Professional
Land Surveyors

9100 Purdue Rd., Ste. 200
Indianapolis, IN 46268

P: 317-454-8309
F: 317-280-8527
E: info@ispls.org

May 23, 2017

Todd G. Beers, PLS
Professional Land Surveyors of Colorado - President
C/O Merrick & Company
5970 Greenwood Plaza Blvd.
Greenwood Village, CO 80111

Dear Todd:

The Indiana Society of Professional Land Surveyors would like to offer our support of mandatory continuing education for Colorado Professional Land Surveyors. I personally have practiced in Indiana both before and after continuing education (CE) was required, and the changes have been noticeable and positive. Indiana began mandatory continuing education several years after implementing minimum standards for the competent practice of land surveying.

The intent of CE was not to punish poor practice, which had already been largely addressed, but instead to promote better service to the public by encouraging surveyors to keep their knowledge and skills current. This can include learning more about the regulations, standards, instruments, hardware, software, common law and many other subjects that too many surveyors were not continuing to study once they became licensed. Examples of changes Indiana surveyors have faced since CE has gone into effect include: The Indiana Supreme Court redefined the requirements for adverse possession and ALTA/NSPS Land Title Surveys now require some knowledge of least squares adjustment related to measurement standards.

I am sure many more surveyors are aware of how changes such as these affect their daily practice with mandatory continuing education in place than would have heard about them before CE. The surveys I see today also tend to be better documented and reflect boundary decisions that follow common law principles more than was the case prior to CE. Lastly, in Indiana the enforcement of CE has not been a large burden as only a small percentage of surveyors have to provide audit information each license renewal cycle.

Sincerely,

Bryan F. Catlin, PS
2017 ISPLS President



NEVADA ASSOCIATION OF LAND SURVEYORS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE: 526 SOUTH E STREET • SANTA ROSA, CA 95404

PHONE: (775) 500- 1257 FAX: (707) 578-4406

nals@nvlandsurveyors.org

June 29, 2017

Todd Beers, PLS, President
Professional Land Surveyors of Colorado
PO Box 441069
Aurora, CO 80044

Dear Mr. Beers:

The Nevada Association of Land Surveyors (NALS) would like to commend you on your effort to establish a continuing education requirement to maintain professional licensing. In Nevada, the continuing education requirement has been essential in keeping licensees current and informed. With the fast pace of technology, and its impact on this ever-changing profession, continuing education is simply a necessity.

The most important aspect of a continuing education requirement is to ensure that the health, welfare, and safety of the public are protected. Although statistics are not available, the Nevada Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors has indicated that mandatory continuing education has been successful in our state and the benefit to the public overrides the cost to implement tracking and maintaining records. Further, there are no added costs to the Board related to PDHs. It's the licensees responsibility to retain their PDH records. Nevada randomly selects 10% of Nevada resident licensees to audit at every license renewal period. The randomly selected licensees are required to submit their documentation supporting their PDHs so there is minimal staff time.

The National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) has adopted the Model Law which has been, in part, adopted by several states. As part of the Model Law, NCEES as adopted Continuing Professional Competency Guidelines for land surveyors and engineers. States are encouraged to adopt similar requirements for the sake of reciprocity.

NALS fully endorses and supports your effort to incorporate continuing education requirements as part of your professional licensing requirements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alan W. Dill".

Alan W. Dill, PLS
President

Jan S. Fokens, P.S.
318 N. Fancher Ave.
Mt Pleasant, MI.
48858

Mr. Todd G. Beers, PLS
Professional Land Surveyors of Colorado-President
C/O Merrick & Company
5970 Greenwood Plaza Blvd.
Greenwood Village, CO. 80111

Re: Mandatory Continuing Education/Professional Development for Professional Land Surveyors

Dear Mr. Beers

In response to your letter of July 7, 2017, I am in total support of you and Professional Land Surveyors in the State of Colorado to require mandatory continuing education for professional licensure in the State of Colorado.

The professional services being provided to the public by the surveying profession today is expanding at a rate requiring professional development not only in the technical fields of surveying but in: human resource management, finance, business development and countless other areas. Continual upgrading of individual skill sets must take place to meet the constant changes that our challenging profession is undergoing.

Having a career in surveying with licensure beginning in the early seventies with the technology of "dragging chain" and turning angles with an engineer's transit to technology of today, having to communicate with satellites and understanding UAV technology. No question, mandatory continuing education/professional development is required. The protection of the health, safety and welfare of the public demands it. Also, I see no difference whether one practices land surveying in the private or public sector, the need for mandatory continuing education applies to all licensed land surveyors.

Continuing education in Michigan has been in place since the passage of The Occupational Code - Act 299 of 1980 requiring continuing education, unfortunately until 2013 with no enforcement. I believe a positive part of P.A.299 was the required four (4) year baccalaureate degree requirement setting in place licensed surveyor having formal education training and individuals with a desire for lifelong learning. I found in these individuals better co-workers and far superior employees. Your letter ask the question -is the level of quality, and completeness improved, without question in my opinion yes!

In Michigan prior to 2013 we too fought an "uphill battle" with the nay-sayers to having mandatory continuing education. The legislative action in 2013 to amend P.A.299 and

Part 5 Continuing Education put in place, with the revised Administrative Rules appears to have removed concerns of those in opposition.

I have enclosed for your review and use:

1. State of Michigan-Professional Surveyors General Rules (1980 P.A.299)
2. MSPS- Michigan Legislative & Administrative Law
3. Continuing Education Hours Activity Log

The activity log is an Excel spread sheet I created for my own use to track personal continuing education/professional development hours earned during the year 2014. I need to retain a file copy for audit purposes for 4 years.

I wish to thank you for the opportunity to express my positive position on the value of mandatory continuing education /professional development. Having now practiced in the profession approaching fifty years, the majority of those years as a survey department head or a private practice business owner those who embrace and participate in continuing education/professional development have improved the land surveying profession.

Sincerely,



Jan S. Fokens P.S.
MSPS Past President
NSPS President



Professional Land Surveyors of Oregon

P.O. Box 230548
Tigard, OR 97281

Phone 503.303.1472 | Toll-free 844.284.5496
office@plso.org | www.plso.org

July 30, 2017

Todd Beers, President
Professional Land Surveyors of Colorado, Inc.
P.O. Box 441069
Aurora, CO 80044

Dear Mr. Beers:

I am the current Chair (2017) for the Professional Land Surveyors of Oregon (PLSO). I am responding to your request of a letter in support for continuing education and professional development in the State of Colorado. Your letter of July 7th was presented at our Summer Board meeting held on July 15th. After a brief discussion, the Board unanimously voted to approve support of a requirement for support of mandatory continuing education and professional development for land surveyors in the State of Colorado.

As you are aware, Oregon has had a requirement for professional development hours since about 2000. Attached for your convenience are the current Oregon Administrative Rules.

There is no doubt that continuing education is necessary for any professional. The world of the professional land surveyor is constantly changing, judicial rulings, legislative changes, and technology to mention a few. Learning does not stop simply because someone has obtained a license.

As professionals, we are held to a higher standard. Most of us have a lot going on. Mandatory development hours require the individual to set aside a specific amount of time for a continuing education subject. This is a simple and objective way to demonstrate our dedication to the profession.

Unfortunately, I do not have statistics at my disposal to answer your questions about improvements in survey products or complaints to the Board of Engineering Examiners. However, I can attest that the quality of surveys has improved greatly in the portion of Oregon where I have practiced over the past 20 years. I can't say that it has been entirely due to continuing education requirements, but it has certainly helped.

Currently the renewal cost for professional surveyors in Oregon is \$150.00 every 2 years. This includes the cost of auditing and enforcement. While I do not have a



Professional Land Surveyors of Oregon

P.O. Box 230548
Tigard, OR 97281

Phone 503.303.1472 | Toll-free 844.284.5496
office@plso.org | www.plso.org

breakdown of Board of Engineering's costs, administering the continuing education and professional development requirement is not prohibitive.

If you have any additional questions please do not hesitate to contact us. We wish you the best of success in your pursuit of Professional Development.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David R. Williams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

David R. Williams, PLS
Board Chair
Professional Land Surveyors of Oregon

Cc: PLSO State Board and Executive Secretary



Wisconsin Society of Land Surveyors
Affiliated with the National Society of Professional Surveyors



Jim I. Morrow, PLS
311 S. Center Ave.
Jefferson, WI 53549

July 28, 2017

Board of Licensure for Architects, Professional
Engineers and Professional Land Surveyors
Division of Professions and Occupations
1560 Broadway, Ste 1350
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Board of Licensure,

I am the Chair of the Education Committee for the Wisconsin Society of Land Surveyors (WSLS) and I am writing in support of the Professional Land Surveyors of Colorado (PLSC) endeavors to have a mandatory continuing education requirement. Because we have gone through this process in Wisconsin, we understand the trepidations felt by professionals and by administration when considering such a policy change. I write in hopes to alleviate such fears.

Upon considering a continuing education requirement as an option for our state, we looked to our neighboring states which had already implemented such a policy change. During the hearings of our Rules Committee of Board of Architects, Landscape Architects, Professional Engineers, Designers and Professional Land Surveyors, it was determined by the Department of Regulation and Licensing (now the Department of Safety and Professional Services) that the proposed administrative code for continuing education, A-E 10, would have "no significant fiscal effect on the private sector" (https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/chr/all/cr_09_032). Furthermore, the estimated costs by the Department were as follows: one-time salary and fringe cost of \$7,682, and a recurring salary and fringe cost of \$3,683. A contributing factor to streamlining the amount of staff time in auditing is the administrative code, because it specifically identifies approved providers for continuing education programs like colleges, state, and national professional societies. In 2010, the Board adopted continuing education as a requirement for professional land surveyors.

This administrative code, A-E 10, requires every Professional Land Surveyor licensee to complete 20 hours of Professional Development Hours (PDHs) every 2 years. One professional development hour is earned after completing 50 minutes of instruction in a survey related topic. It further specifies that a minimum of those required PDHs to be in the following categories of learning: statutes and rules, professional conduct and ethics, and professional land surveying or related science. As a licensed professional, I find the cost of acquiring the required PDHs not burdensome. Our WSLS holds an annual, three-day convention during winter, called the Surveyor's Institute, which 15 to 16 PDHs can be easily obtained. Convention fees have been on average \$290. Many employers help defray the cost for their employees to obtain



Wisconsin Society of Land Surveyors
Affiliated with the National Society of Professional Surveyors



educational credits. If location is an obstacle in attending the Institute, several of the nine regional chapters which make up the WSLs will often host a one-day seminar throughout the calendar year. The cost for the one day seminars has been around \$75 in which 2 to 3 PDHs can be obtained depending on the program presentation. With access to the internet, there are opportunities to learn from approved online learning vendors as well. The cost for one hour of online instruction has been \$49. These vendors offer some exceptional learning opportunities at a reasonable cost.

Continuing education makes us better Professionals. It is easy to be comfortable within one's own niche within the industry, but laws, rules, court decisions, technology change our landscape. When we are better informed, have a broader view, and in touch with an ever changing industry, we better serve our clients and our employers. If we are not actively involved in professional societies, continuing education forces us to interact with other professionals. These interactions can sometimes be challenging and cause introspection with our own professional practices. More importantly, we protect the general public by being mindful of our actions.

A continuing education requirement can be constructed for efficient administration and at reasonable expenditure for the professional. I hope you will support Professional Land Surveyors of Colorado efforts make this a requirement in your State. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim I. Morrow".

Jim I. Morrow, PLS
County Surveyor
311 S. Center Ave., Rm 103
Jefferson, WI 53549
Ph: (920) 674-7147
Email: jimm@jeffersoncountywi.gov



National Society of Professional Surveyors

5119 Pegasus Court, Suite Q, Frederick, MD 21704

Phone: 240-439-4615 * Fax: 240-439-4952

www.nsps.us.com

November 16, 2017

Todd G. Beers, PLS
Professional Land Surveyors of Colorado-President
C/O Merrick & Company
5970 Greenwood Plaza Blvd.
Greenwood Village, CO 80111

Re: Continuing Education for Professional Land Surveyors

Dear Mr. Beers:

On behalf of the National Society of Professional Surveyors (NSPS) I am writing to you to express our support of the initiative to establish mandatory continuing education/professional development standards for Professional Surveyors in Colorado.

Learning is a life-long experience. Continuing to learn is inevitable, and one hopes that the lessons learned help us to adjust to the ever-changing arenas in which we function.

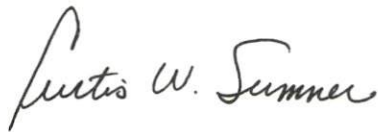
The active pursuit of continuing to learn is especially essential in fields of endeavor that are dramatically affected by rapid changes in technology, applicable law, standards, and areas of practice. The profession of surveying is among these fields.

In some areas of the country, continuing education for Professional Surveyors is important because the availability of post-secondary educational opportunities have not always been as readily available as they are today for those entering the surveying profession. However, regardless of prerequisite educational opportunities and requirements for licensure, the factors noted above are among those requiring that Professional Surveyors maintain currency in their knowledge base throughout their entire career.

The National Society of Professional Surveyors (NSPS) has long endorsed the concept of continuing education for Professional Surveyors. The essential nature of continuing education for surveyors has also been recognized by the vast majority of the licensing boards within the 50 states, as is reflected in their respective statutes governing the practice of surveying. NSPS is not aware of any evidence that the implementation of continuing education requirements has resulted in undue costs being incurred by the state licensing boards. In fact, the respective state surveying societies relieve the licensing boards from the burden of providing the required educational opportunities to licensees by holding workshops at various times throughout each year.

NSPS encourages any board of regulation that is considering the benefits of establishing a continuing education requirement to do so, and to work with the state and national surveying organizations to assure its effectiveness and perpetuation.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Curtis W. Sumner". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Curtis W. Sumner, LS
Executive Director

Land Surveying; A Millennial's Point of View

“Dying profession”...This term is mentioned quite a bit when there is discussion of the land surveying profession these days. Many believe that with the continuing advancement of technologies related to data collection, construction staking, and GIS mapping that there will soon be almost no need for the professional surveyor any longer. If that isn't a major deterrent for someone who may just be getting involved in the profession to hear, then I don't know what is. Do I think that drones and scanners are going to wipe surveyors off the map (no pun intended)? Absolutely not, however, if we don't stop hurting ourselves the way that we have been in recent years, I honestly believe it could happen somewhere down the road. It is up to us, the land surveying community, to do whatever we can to keep this great profession alive and thriving.

“Button Pushers”...We are allowing time, money, technology, and workload to dictate how we train the newer generations of surveyors. It used to be that a novice surveyor worked alongside the same party chief for about 4 years or so before he possessed the knowledge and skills to become a party chief himself. That is 4 years of daily field calcs, stakeouts, topos, and most importantly, questions. These days many surveying and engineering firms are teaching their field surveyors just enough so that he or she can take their data collector to the field and throw stakes in the ground. This generation of surveyors is missing a gigantic piece of what was once the professional standard, the one-on-one mentorship and guidance with someone who knows much more than they do. It is your responsibility as a PLS to make time to teach your subordinates in a similar manner in which you were taught as a junior surveyor. Every PLS should make it a personal goal to help develop truly skilled professionals and not just someone who knows how to operate a data collector. Sit down with them, review plats, discuss what can or should be done when they are unable to find monumentation in particular situations, explain how mistakes can be prevented by taking check shots or making sure a tie in point elevation matches the plan set, etc. Depending upon what type of company you work for, you may have to do some of this on your own time, and I fully understand that sometimes it just isn't ideal for you or for the junior surveyor; but it is our responsibility to make the profession as good as it can be and that to me means that we are responsible for training our people appropriately .

Educational requirements are a major deterrent for many young surveyors. Simply put, someone who does not enjoy school and who really has no intentions of achieving an Associates or Bachelors Degree is almost guaranteed to not get involved in, or stick with the surveying profession. There is now a cap placed on how high that

individual can climb within the industry because he or she will never be able to achieve their professional licensure within most of the United States. I know some of you are probably thinking "well we don't really want someone involved in our profession who isn't willing to work for a degree" and I suppose that is a fair train of thought, however I firmly believe that a person does not need educational credentials to be a fine land surveyor. All they need is a passion for the profession and a thirst for knowledge. The above described individuals are not the only ones that we as a community have now steered away from the profession. Even men and women who would love to attend college now have a serious decision to make about their education and futures. It is no secret that on average civil engineers make more money than land surveyors. When these people are deciding what they want to go to school for, what professional track do you think they are going to choose when the cost of the four year degree is the same and the field of study is within the same industry? I understand wanting to make the profession as good as it can be and filling it with educated minds, however the truth is that we have created a burden for potentially great surveyors, and I don't doubt that we have lost the interest of many who would have turned out just fine.

Continuing Education Unit Requirements (CEU's) are one of the best ways that we can ensure that fellow professionals are staying up to date with technology, state statutes, and generally important information related to the profession. This requirement is enforced by state law and is put in place so that licensed professionals are required to attend a certain amount of continuing education courses each year in order to renew their licensure. This means that every single licensed land surveyor is required to learn or refresh their knowledge within a multitude of different topics related to the profession every single year. CEU's will give a PLS an excuse to take a class on a subject he or she doesn't fully grasp that they otherwise may not ever take. An important topic related to CEU's that I would like to touch on is GPS. I think there are quite a few surveyors out there operating GPS equipment without having a solid understanding of how it truly works. If you believe that you have a firm understanding of GPS equipment, quiz your field crews and see that they share your understanding. It is just as, if not more important that they comprehend what they are doing in the field with this equipment. With CEU's as a requirement, the profession is almost guaranteed to improve its comprehensive knowledge and understanding.

If there is one thing I would like you take away from reading this article, it is this....You may know a lot, you may even know everything, but if your field crews are not taken care of and are not being groomed as if to maybe one day have your slot in the company, then their work will inevitably be flawed. In today's surveying world having a

knowledgeable and skilled party chief is as important as having a good PLS. It is your license on the line and your party chief may know to locate the monument they tied, but may have had no idea the 80 year old fence line 10 feet away could have mattered as well; then you are likely solving a boundary while being completely unaware that a fence line even exists. The next generation of licensed surveyor's skills, competency, and professionalism are heavily dependant upon the values, work ethic, and follow through that you instill into them as being standards for our profession. It is imperative that we do not let deadlines and money pull us astray from the overall greater good of our work.

With much respect and gratitude, thank you for reading.

Anthony Whitlock

Anthony Whitlock, LSI 060482