

Certifying Record Drawings

By David S. Tuttle, Board Counsel

This article replaces the one entitled “Issuance of Record Drawings” published in the Fall 2003 Bulletin that was attributed to David S. Tuttle.

The Board has taken the position that Record Drawings (sometimes referred to as “As-Builts”) must be signed and sealed by the PE who is responsible for issuing the Record Drawings. The thought is that even though the information shown is provided by the contractor (or owner) it should still be certified to assure that the information is ready for release and has had the oversight of the PE. Recognition, representation and acceptance of the changes require engineering education, training or experience. This procedure guards against the unauthorized release of the drawings or obvious errors or changes to the design that should be questioned by the PE.

Generally the engineer is responsible for producing the record drawings and should sign and seal them. It is also important that if the engineer did not personally observe and confirm the record conditions or have it done under his/her direct supervisory control and responsible charge, then he/she cannot sign and seal without clearly indicating the source of the information. The statement may be that the field changes noted are from mark-up drawings supplied by the owner or contractor. The engineer is basically taking credit for accurately reflecting the information given and to evidence awareness of the changes. The true statement of what the “record drawings” represent is what is critical. The client and public will then understand the extent to which they can rely upon the information. Not only is it acceptable to indicate the source of the information and disclaim any verification by the PE, but it is required by the Board to avoid the appearance that the PE personally observed or verified the changes. The purpose of the drawing should be stated by using the title “Record Drawing” and/or clearly noting somewhere on the drawing. Language disclaiming field verification by the PE of the changes is acceptable.

Board Rule .1103(c)(7) provides for language that can be modified to fit a situation where the original design engineer is no longer available to sign and seal as to the original design drawings. The PE responsible for issuing the Record Drawings can certify that changes are shown as provided by the contractor or another party and not verified by the PE and then list the information about the original design engineer to include name, PE number and date of original signing. It must be further stated that the drawing is not considered a certified document as to the original design but only as to the record drawing changes. The rule reads as follows: “(7) Not a Certified Document as to the Original Document but Only as to the Revisions - This document originally issued and sealed by (name of licensee), (license number), on (date of sealing). This document is only certified as to the revisions.”