



## New York Water Environment Association, Inc.

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### *The Water Quality Management Professionals*

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# Memorandum

To: Conference Organizers

From: Vin Rubino, P.E. – NYWEA Program Committee/PDH Subcommittee Chair

Date: May 18, 2018

Re: Professional Development Hour (PDH) Approval Guidance

Eligibility for PDH credits has bolstered attendance at NYWEA meetings, including technical sessions at its Annual and Spring conferences, as well as chapter meetings. However, abstract submittals are highly variable, making reviews challenging. This memorandum will provide additional guidance to NYWEA conference organizers, presenters and PDH reviewers to help ensure compliance with the NYS Education Department (NYSED) rules for continuing education requirements for NYS PE licensure. NYWEA is authorized by NYSED as a sponsor of PDH certification. Our subcommittee, called the PDH Subcommittee, is part of NYWEA's Program Committee, and provides review of submittals for PDH credit. (Water and Wastewater Operator credit review is done by a separate group.) This guidance memo is based on the NYSED requirements posted on their web site <http://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/pels/article145.htm>, and NYWEA's experience administering these reviews for over ten years, including several meetings with NYSED auditors.

### Duration

NYSED requires a minimum of 50 minutes "face time" for awarding 1.0 PDH, including time for Q&A (rounding up to an hour). NYWEA awards PDH credit in 0.5 hour increments for easier review and administration and has obtained approval from NYSED for its 30 minute format for presentations by establishing that two topic-related 30 minute presentations would be grouped together in a one hour segment while maintaining time within the 30 minute presentation for Q&A.

### Author's Biography

NYSED also requires that the presenter be well qualified in their field. Therefore, the speaker biographical data must clearly identify their experience pertinent to the subject being presented. A brief bio must be included. Typically, this includes a few sentences on related work, number of years practicing in the field, education and licensure, if any.

### Content

Presentations must be technical. NYSED will not accept non-technical courses such as general business or operations management and public education. Conference organizers must submit the NYWEA Application for PDH Approval Form (see attached) which has been updated to better define the requirements necessary for approval and to streamline the process as much as possible.

The Abstract on-line form (example attached) also has two sections with questions near the end of the form that can provide valuable information on its acceptability:

- State course or activity learning objective – what knowledge or skill will participants gain?
- Briefly describe how the course or activity helps develop, maintain, improve or expand the skills and knowledge of an engineering licensee – topics must be related to professional practice.

Further guidance is noted below:

- **As restated from the NYS Education Department web site, §7201 - Definition of practice of engineering:**

The practice of the profession of engineering is defined as performing professional service such as consultation, investigation, evaluation, planning, design or supervision of construction or operation in connection with any utilities, structures, buildings, machines, equipment, processes, works, or projects wherein the safeguarding of life, health and property is concerned, when such service or work requires the application of engineering principles and data.

- **Acceptable subjects for *Professional Engineering* may include:**

Aerospace engineering, agricultural engineering, architectural engineering, bioengineering, ceramic engineering, chemical engineering, civil engineering, construction engineering, control systems engineering, electrical/computer engineering, environmental engineering, fire protection engineering, geological engineering, industrial engineering, manufacturing engineering, mechanical engineering, materials/metallurgical engineering, mining/mineral engineering, naval architecture/marine engineering, nuclear/radiological engineering, ocean engineering, petroleum engineering, software engineering, structural engineering, systems engineering, architecture, land surveying; or other matters of law and/or ethics which contribute to the professional practice in engineering and the health, safety, and/or welfare of the public; and in other topics which contribute to the professional practice of engineering as such practice is defined in section 7201 of the Education Law.

- **Non-acceptable subjects for continuing education:**

Courses and educational activities must contribute to the professional practice of professional engineering or land surveying. The subject matter of the course or educational activity must be related to professional practice and contribute to the development or maintenance of professional knowledge. Subject areas that are not so related, such as, project management related to improving/maximizing profitability and professional fees; marketing and public relations; expanding a design professional's business; laws related to arbitration, mediation, liens and limiting the design professional's liability (unless they are related to safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of the public); real estate licensing; basic Auto CAD; personal, estate or financial planning; zoning as it relates to increasing a developer or engineer/land surveyor's profitability; design build and/or alternative delivery methods (unless it includes information on the laws related to design build and its limitations in New York State) are non-acceptable subjects.

- **Guidelines for an acceptable professional ethics course**

To be an acceptable ethics course, the live course or educational activity must increase the engineer's knowledge of ethical standards for the practice of his/her respective profession. It must also be at least 60 minutes long. This may include:

- Focusing on the New York State Education Law, Rules of the Board of Regents, and the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. See <http://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/pels/>
- Ethical concerns or issues in the area of specialization or engineering discipline that is inclusive of information on recent litigation with a discussion of case studies in these fields
- Foundation courses that cover such topics as:
  - Introduction to ethical concepts
  - The psychology of moral development
  - Judgement and values
  - The sociology of professions
  - Virtue and the role of ethics
  - Public expectations of engineer's responsibilities
  - Ethical dilemma

- **Other Guidance**

Based on NYSED and experience in administering the PDH review process, some other guidance is provided:

- Presentations on Public Outreach are not acceptable
- Project Management and Asset Management topics can be acceptable. Generally, the amount of technical content is the determining factor. If the topic is more related to running the business or organization from a financial sense, the technical content will not be sufficient.
- Undergraduate presenters are not eligible to present for PDH credit. Graduate students must have a qualified co-author (ex: a professor or faculty advisor).
- If you are not sure whether an abstract has enough technical content to be eligible for PDH credit, you should discuss with another member of the PDH Subcommittee

to get a second opinion. We may also request that the abstract submitter clarify or add content that may make the abstract PDH-eligible.