

# SEAI NEWSLETTER

January 2007



## Structural Engineers Association of Idaho

P.O. Box 8733, Boise, ID 83707

[www.seaidaho.org](http://www.seaidaho.org)

### SEAI Mission Statement:

"To promote and enhance the Structural Engineering profession in Idaho by educating the public about the activities of Structural Engineers and their benefit to society and by providing professional development and support to SEAI members that is relevant, reliable, and inspirational to modern engineering practices."

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS & AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

#### President

Sarah McClendon – McMillen Engineering  
[sarah.mcclendon@mcm-eng.com](mailto:sarah.mcclendon@mcm-eng.com) 342-4214 x306

#### Vice-President

Chris Holladay – AHJ Engineers  
[cholladay@ahjengineers.com](mailto:cholladay@ahjengineers.com) 323-0199

#### Treasurer

Brian Garner – Call Engineering  
[bgarner@callengineering.com](mailto:bgarner@callengineering.com) 321-2656

#### Secretary

Kent Soelberg – CH2M Hill  
[Kent.soelberg@ch2m.com](mailto:Kent.soelberg@ch2m.com) 383-6349

#### Director and QBS Representative

Scott Soule – Treasure Valley Engineers  
[ssoule@tveinc.com](mailto:ssoule@tveinc.com) 333-9611

#### Past President

Shawn Reeder – Performance Engineers  
[shawnr@idahotruss.com](mailto:shawnr@idahotruss.com) 888-5200

#### Director

Greg Leishman – Stapley Engineering  
[Gregl@stapley.net](mailto:Gregl@stapley.net) 375-8240

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#### Program/Seminar Chair

Wilson Antoniuk – Trus Joist  
[antoniw@trusjoist.com](mailto:antoniw@trusjoist.com) 395-2458

#### Membership Chair

Ash Hobbs  
[ashhobbs@hotmail.com](mailto:ashhobbs@hotmail.com) 884-8560

#### Newsletter

David Sansotta – EHM Engineers  
[david.sansotta@ehmengineers.com](mailto:david.sansotta@ehmengineers.com) 386-9170

#### Website Editor

Tyler Haney – Treasure Valley Engineers  
[thaney@tveinc.com](mailto:thaney@tveinc.com) 333-9611

#### Building Code Chair

Mike Brown – EHM Engineers  
[Mike.brown@ehmengineers.com](mailto:Mike.brown@ehmengineers.com) 386-9170

## NEXT SEAI MEETING — FEB 20<sup>TH</sup>



SEAI holds regular meetings every third Tuesday of the months September thru June.

**Please RSVP with entrée selection to Wilson Antoniuk at [antoniw@trusjoist.com](mailto:antoniw@trusjoist.com) or 395-2458 by noon the Friday before the meeting.**

We will turn no one away at the door, but if we do not receive your RSVP on time we cannot guarantee that there will be any food for you to eat! Please note that, regardless of whether you eat or not, you will still need to pay meeting fees, so get those RSVP's in! **Also, if you RSVP and decided not to show, Murphy's will still charge SEAI for your lunch and SEAI will politely pass this charge on to you.**

### HAVE A SUGGESTION FOR A MEETING?

If you have any suggestions for future speakers, items of discussion or anything else that you think would be beneficial to the structural engineers attending SEAI meetings, please send your comments/ideas to Wilson Antoniuk by email at [antoniw@trusjoist.com](mailto:antoniw@trusjoist.com) or by phone at 395-2458.

### Meeting Location:

Murphy's Seafood & Steakhouse  
1555 Broadway Ave.  
Boise, ID 83705

### Food Entrées:

- 1) Chicken Caesar Salad
- 2) Whiskey Chicken
- 3) Beef Chop Burger

### Meeting Focus:

Progressive Collapse: Steel Structures

### Speaker:

Ron Hamburger (see [www.seaidaho.org](http://www.seaidaho.org) for more info)

### Schedule:

Social:	11:45 am – 12:00 pm
Lunch:	12:00 pm – 1:00 pm
Program:	12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

### Cost Per Person:

Member:	\$15
Non-Member:	\$20
Full Time Student:	\$10



## ASK A CONSTRUCTION LAWYER

**ATTORNEY FRANKLIN G. LEE**

### A LONG LIST OF STRUCTURAL NOTES

**Question:** The structural notes that I include with my plans and specifications are starting to become very long. In addition to things like material specifications, design loads and special inspections, I include general instruction notes for the contractor. These instruction notes include such things as “Contractor shall review the drawings prior to construction and notify the engineer immediately if any errors or omissions are discovered.”, “Do not scale the drawings.”, and “Specific details and notes take precedence over typical details and notes.” These instruction notes are very generic and seem like obvious things that any qualified contractor would do anyway whether they are written on my drawings or not. From a legal perspective, is it prudent to keep these contractor instructions or can I delete them?

**Answer:** One of the primary purposes of general notes is to inform the contractor of the assumptions that you, as the engineer, have made in the preparation of your plans and specifications. Many engineers assume that contractors and their subcontractors have a certain level of competence or experience in the type of construction that they will undertake. Many engineers also assume that contractors are able to read their drawings and specifications in

the manner intended by the engineer. A few gullible engineers believe that contractors actually read all of the engineer’s plans and specifications. Those assumptions are often wrong. When those assumptions are wrong, the finger of blame may be pointed back at the engineer for preparing a set of plans that confused the “poor innocent” contractor.

If an engineer prepares a set of plans that relies on an assumption, then the engineer should place a general note in the plans regarding that assumption. For example, if an engineer assumes that the contractor will have a particular level of competence or experience, then the general or specific notes on the plans should spell out the required level of competence or experience. If an engineer does not want the plans to be scaled, then the engineer should include that limitation in his or her general notes. If the engineer intends certain plans to take precedence over others, then the engineer’s general notes should clearly indicate which plans take precedence.

Would an engineer fall below the standard of care if he or she omitted certain general notes because they “seem like obvious things that any qualified contractor would do anyway?” Not necessarily. Whether the omission of information is negligent depends on whether a reasonably prudent engineer exercising diligence and care under similar circumstances would have included that information. The danger is in assuming what is or is not obvious to a contractor.

Contractors and subcontractors have widely varying levels of skill and experience.

I subscribe to the general axiom that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. General notes are easy to place on a set of drawings and, if properly incorporated, can place obligations on a contractor that may reduce the likelihood of problems and reduce the engineer's legal exposure. In addition to those listed in the question, the following general sample notes may be appropriate for many projects:

1. Prior to commencing Work, Contractor shall carefully examine, review, compare and contrast each of the Contract Documents, and shall promptly notify Owner and Engineer in writing if Contractor discovers any conflict, ambiguity, inconsistency, error or omission.

2. Contractor shall have a continuing duty to read, examine, review, compare and contrast each of the Contract Documents, shop drawings and other documents related to the construction of the Project. Contractor shall promptly notify Owner and Engineer in writing of any conflict, ambiguity, error or omission discovered before proceeding with the affected Work.

It is possible for a list of general notes to become so long that creates other problems. For example, an inordinately long list of general notes may discourage contractors from bidding on a project. Also, an inordinately long list of general notes may cause the important notes to be lost in a sea of unimportant notes. Whether a

list of general notes is too long is a question of judgment. If the length of the list creates other problems, then it may need to be shortened or broken down into sub lists. Ideally, the general notes should be sufficiently short and well organized to encourage contractors and subcontractors to read the entire list, but long enough to cover the important information you need to convey.

*Frank Lee is an attorney and partner at the local law firm of Givens Pursley LLP who focuses his practice on real estate, construction and land use law.*

**NOTE:** THIS COLUMN ADDRESSES GENERAL LEGAL ISSUES ONLY. IT WILL NOT BE LEGAL ADVICE TO YOU AND SHOULD NOT BE RELIED ON AS SUCH. IF YOU WANT LEGAL ADVICE, YOU WILL NEED TO HAVE A DIRECT CONSULTATION WITH A LAWYER. THE COLUMN IS NOT INTENDED TO CREATE, AND DOES NOT CREATE, A LAWYER-CLIENT RELATIONSHIP. YOU SHOULD NOT ACT UPON ANYTHING IN THIS COLUMN WITHOUT SEEKING PROFESSIONAL COUNSEL

#### **DO YOU HAVE A LEGAL QUESTION THAT WOULD BE OF INTEREST TO THE STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING COMMUNITY?**

Submit it to [sarah.mcclendon@mcm-eng.com](mailto:sarah.mcclendon@mcm-eng.com) with "Ask a Construction Lawyer (c/o Sarah McClendon)" in the subject line or by fax to (208) 342-4216. Although you will not receive a personal reply, your question may be addressed and published as part of this column. All questions will be anonymous, unless specifically directed otherwise.

## President's Report

By Sarah McClendon

I have been asked one question in particular many times. It is a complicated question that once confused me. I have since done a fair amount of research, attended conferences, and conducted several interviews to discover the answer. I will now attempt to give the answer to all of you.

The question: *What is the difference between all of those SEA organizations?*

### National Council of Structural Engineers Associations (NC SEA) [www.ncsea.com](http://www.ncsea.com)

The National Council of Structural Engineers Associations is the umbrella that covers all participating Structural Engineer Association chapters including; all 50 states, 5 US territories, Washington DC, British Columbia, Canada, and the Students of Penn State. (See already it's not so simple!) The participating chapters are referred to as Member Organizations, or MOs.

NC SEA has Board meetings approximately four times a year with at least one annual conference. Each MO is allowed to have one delegate represent them. The delegate is responsible for providing annual written and oral reports stating the current goals and achievements of their member organization. In addition, the delegate is allowed to cast a vote during the board member election or to any amendments to the national bylaws. The location of the board meetings and annual conferences rotate on a three year cycle between the eastern states, the western states, and the middle states.

### Structural Engineers Association International (SEA INT) [www.seaint.org](http://www.seaint.org)

The Structural Engineers Association of California (SEAOC) is one of the first statewide organizations to form in the early 1930's and has since been considered an ideal model for other state organizations to follow. Today the organization is

divided into 4 regional organizations: SEA OCC (Central California), SEA ONC (Northern California), SEA OSC (Southern California), SEASD (San Diego) and one statewide organization that is now referred to as: SEAI NT.

Yes, it is not necessarily intuitive, but SEA International is managed and promoted by the State of California, and [www.seaint.org](http://www.seaint.org) is specifically the web site address for the Southern California regional association. However, don't rule out their website as a valuable resource for information! The site offers links to some of the best technical references, job opportunities, conferences, and national and international structural engineering organizations.

### Western States Council of Structural Engineers Associations (WSC SEA)

The Western States Council currently includes all the Western States except California. So to clarify, the WSC SEA members are: Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Nevada, British Columbia, Arizona, and Hawaii.

California was originally the founding member of WC SEA. This group was formed in 1963 upon the realization by officers from SEA of California that the technical interests of California, Oregon, and Washington were, in large part, remarkably similar especially with reference to their legislative interests and the technical programs of the annual convention hosted by SEA of California. WC SEA was formed to help ensure communication between the western states to help reduce repetitive efforts in their common interests. Idaho, Nevada, and Arizona were then immediately invited to join. Hawaii and British Columbia joined at a later date. Over time the internal politics of the group started to change and California eventually withdrew thus initiating California's transition to and formation of SEA INT.

The remaining states of WSC SEA have continued to have board member meetings once a year. Each member state is allowed to have up to three voting

delegates at the board meetings. The location of the board meetings rotate each year to a different hosting member state.

### **Northwest Council of Structural Engineers Associations (NW SEA)**

The chapter members of this organization are probably the most intuitive as they include Idaho, Washington, Oregon and British Columbia. The Northwest Council only exists to sponsor the annual technical conference. (This conference is the same conference that has been advertised in the SEAI newsletter and that Idaho will be hosting in 2008.)

The council members share similar agendas as with the Western States Council the only difference is that the sub regions of each state are invited to bring their own voting delegates. At this time, the only state with sub regions is Washington which has four regions represented: Seattle, South Central, Southwest, and Spokane. NW SEA has board meetings once a year and each member is allowed to have up to two voting delegates.

### **Structural Engineers Association of Idaho (SEAI) [www.seaidaho.org](http://www.seaidaho.org)**

This is us! SEAI was formed in 1978 and currently has one statewide chapter. SEAI was formed to promote the Structural Engineering profession in the state of Idaho through positive awareness to the public, our clients; and by providing professional development opportunities to our members.

SEAI currently has 66 professional and affiliate members. We have member meetings once a month for the months September through May and we have board meetings once a month year round. All individual members of SEAI are allowed to vote during the annual board member election. Also, all individual members are allowed to vote regarding any changes to the SEAI bylaws.

As a member of SEAI you are automatically a member of NW SEA, WSC SEA, and NC SEA.

### **We're One, But We're Not The Same...**

So, why is it important to know about the different associations and what does it mean to you? These are all different organizations that are involved in changing or protecting your profession. These are also all different ways in which you can get involved and influence your profession.

It is easy to stay informed once you know who to listen to. All of these organizations essentially have the same goal: To Promote Structural Engineering. All of the organizations have been divided into committees that focus on different aspects of that goal. The only real difference is the regional scale at which the organizations have jurisdiction and therefore specialized interest.

Each association has, or has the ability to have, the following board members to represent the individual members.

#### **Board Members:**

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Director
- Past President

Each association has, or has the ability to have; the following committee members represent itself.

#### **Committee Members:**

- Advocacy
- Awards
- Code Advisory
  - Existing Buildings
  - General engineering
  - Seismic Design
  - Wind Design
  - Snow Design
  - Special Inspections
  - Structural Integrity
- Continuing Education
  - Seminars
  - Conferences

Licensing/Exams  
 Membership  
 Publications  
 Emergency Response  
 Student Mentoring

So now you can sit back, relax, and enjoy the knowledge of knowing the difference between all of the different SEA organizations. What you do with your new knowledge is up to you, but if you want my advice I would suggest getting involved! Feel free to ask any SEAI board member to help you choose a committee at either the national, regional, or state level and then you can start being proactive in your profession. Yes, it really is that simple.

### **Code Committee Report: Recruitment** **By: Mike Brown**

It's that time of year again, the holiday season and end of year. As we approach the end of the year, many of us start to look at what we accomplished this year and how that compares to our goals at the beginning of the year. We also start to look at next year as we contemplate our New Year Resolutions. I ask you to think of a new resolution: what can you do for the Structural Engineers Association of Idaho and in turn for the community in general?

The code committee can be a great opportunity to make a difference in our profession. There are many issues regarding the code where our association can make a difference: through education, recommendations to building jurisdictions within Idaho, and even writing portions of the code for review by the ICC.

As many of you know, the 2006 IBC will be adopted by the state of Idaho by the middle of 2007. Due to some past legislation, all other jurisdictions will adopt this code as well. Code enforcement agencies along with other associations are meeting on a regular basis to discuss items in the code that will or will not be adopted along with any addendums. If you have any code issues that you

believe should be adopted, please let me know as soon as possible.

The following items are issues that SEAI wants to start addressing:

- Snow Loads throughout the state of Idaho. A report was done in the past, but it has not been 'formally' adopted by the jurisdictions.
- Educating building officials, architects, engineers, contractors, owners, etc on the code requirements regarding the code's required quality assurance plan and structural observations.
- Other code issues that are brought to our attention.

2007 looks to be another busy year. New Year's resolutions will be made. I hope that you consider becoming an active code committee member. Together, we can make a difference and contribute to our profession.

### **Legislation: Unlimited Engineering Practice** **By: Mike Brown**

Did you know that in the state of Idaho Architects can practice engineering, but engineers cannot practice architecture? Did you know that a professional engineer in the state of Idaho can practice engineering in any discipline, regardless of the exam he/she passed?

If the above concerns you or doesn't concern you, please let me know. SEAI is considering action to address the above issues. These will not be easy items to change, but if there is enough interest amongst our members, we can create a task force with the Idaho Society of Professional Engineers (ISPE) and American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE).

The items up for discussion are as follows:

1. Should Architects be allowed to practice engineering?

2. Should Engineers be allowed to practice architecture?
3. Should Engineers be restricted to practice in only the disciplines where they have proved to be competent through education, experience, and testing?
4. If Engineers should be restricted as stated in item 2 above, should certain structure types be restricted to licensed structural engineers as is the practice in California, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington? What about just restrictions for certain building types within certain seismic categories?

Please provide your opinions to any SEAI board member or myself. I look forward to hearing what you have to say.

#### GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR NEWSLETTER!

The SEAI Newsletter is a monthly publication. Newsletter submissions are encouraged from the SEAI community. If you have a suggestion, feature, link, product review or anything else that may be of interest to the newsletter readers, please email them to our newsletter editor, David Sansotta, at [david.sansotta@ehmengineers.com](mailto:david.sansotta@ehmengineers.com)



#### WISH TO PLACE AN AD IN THE NEWSLETTER?

If so, please contact our Treasurer, Brian Garner, at [bgarner@callengineering.com](mailto:bgarner@callengineering.com) or at 321-2656.

#### Monthly Rates for Advertising

Standard Business Card.....	\$50
Quarter Page.....	\$90
Half Page.....	\$120
Full Page.....	\$150

*10% discount for ads running multiple months*



## Job Description:

Background: iLevel Trus Joist Commercial has been the world leader in Engineered Wood Products for over 40 years. There are tremendous growth opportunities for iLevel associates as part of the Weyerhaeuser family.

We are currently seeking an Engineer in Training to support our growing Commercial Business in Boise, Idaho. Visit us at [www.weyerhaeuser.com](http://www.weyerhaeuser.com) and select careers, then job search, and under search options type job number 01001748.

Under the supervision of registered Professional Engineers, primary responsibility is to provide technical design and support related to iLevel Trus Joist products utilized in commercial construction projects. EITs must exhibit leadership and people management abilities on a daily basis. All EIT associates are encouraged and provided the opportunity to obtain qualifying experience to actively pursue professional registration.

Key Functions: Primary responsibilities include structural analysis and product design using proprietary engineering software, producing and reviewing product plan layout and detailing, creating and reviewing material lists, and producing and reviewing production packages. You will be working directly with contractors, architects, engineers and building officials, and

will be expected to promote safety and excellence in all of your areas of influence. The job function may also include assisting in establishing design methodologies, designing repairs for damaged product in the field, and reviewing product applications. Growth and cross-training opportunities are available in areas such as industrial applications, new product development, and literature/software development. What makes this position exciting is being part of a dynamic entrepreneurial spirited engineering and design organization that supports the ever-changing commercial construction industry with international award-winning technologies!

Requirements: The successful candidate will have a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering, with a preference or an emphasis on structural/wood. Applicants must exhibit competence and understanding in both technical design and building construction methods. Successful candidates will be motivated, dependable, career-minded individuals with previous experience in structural or architectural drafting/design preferred. Leadership experience is a plus. Candidates must possess excellent communication skills and be proficient in reading and interpreting blueprints and other construction documents. Experience with AutoCAD/Architectural Desktop is helpful.

## Announcements:

The 2008 Northwest Structural Engineers Association Conference will be held in beautiful Sun Valley, Idaho. The NW SEA Conference Committee has only one open position left:

**Social Chair.** If you are interested in being part of the Conference Committee and you would like to be in charge of all social activities including planning the meals, night time entertainment, and daytime activities for family members please contact Chris Holladay at [cholladay@ahjengineers.com](mailto:cholladay@ahjengineers.com).

As part of your SEAI membership you should be receiving **STRUCTURE® magazine** in the mail every month. If you are not, please verify that you have paid your SEAI dues this year and then send your name and mailing address to Sarah McClendon at [sarah.mcclendon@mcm-eng.com](mailto:sarah.mcclendon@mcm-eng.com).

### **HAVE AN INTEREST IN STRUCTURAL ASSESSMENT AFTER DISASTERS?**

SEAI has been asked to form a Structural Engineers Emergency Response (SEER) Committee Program. Volunteers will need to complete the SEER training program and then they will be placed on the national SEER committee data base. After successful completion of the training course you could be called to help in the structural assessment of buildings after earthquakes, hurricanes, terrorist attacks, etc. across the nation. If interested, please send your contact information to [sarah.mcclendon@mcm-eng.com](mailto:sarah.mcclendon@mcm-eng.com).

### **SEA NORTHWEST CONFERENCE & WCSEA MEETING — SUMMER 2008**

Thank you to all of those who have volunteered and, if you have not yet considered volunteering, please look into the last position available.

The Structural Engineers Association Northwest Conference and Western States Roundup are to be hosted by the Idaho Chapter during the summer of 2008. This event will be a three day conference combining SEA Board Meetings, technical programs, vendor exhibits, social events, and recreational events all hosted by SEAI. This is a well attended event that brings in structural engineers from Idaho, Washington, Oregon, and British Columbia. Keep checking the Newsletter each month for updated information.

### **IDAHO ASSOCIATION OF BUILDING OFFICIALS WEBSITE**

The IDABO website has been updated with the following information for the cities and counties of Idaho: snow loads, frost depth, wind loads, wind exposure, seismic design category, live loads, and jurisdiction websites. Use this link for easy access to design information for structures in Idaho: <http://www.idabo.org/loads.htm>

### **LET YOUR MEMBERSHIP WORK FOR YOU!**

Please feel free to contact our board members with ideas or suggestions for program/speaker topics or how SEAI can better represent the Structural Engineers of Idaho.

## EVENT CALENDAR

(EVENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

- November 21:** Ed Houston – Katrina Damage
- December:** No Meeting
- January 16:** Ron Reaveley – Lessons Learned in Structural Engineering
- February 20:** Ron Hamburger – Progressive Collapse: Steel Structures
- March 20:** Tony Young – NWCMA Masonry Code Update
- April 17:** **Full Day Seminar: S.K. Ghosh – Transitioning from the 2003 IBC to the 2006 IBC**
- May 15:** Dave Curtis - Responsible Charge

Check out this interesting link:

<http://www.engineeringsights.org/>

This site has a record of engineering sites located throughout the country. If you are going to be traveling and want to see what is along the way, take a look and maybe even take a picture to send into your newsletter.



*Engineering problems are under-defined; there are many solutions, good, bad and indifferent. The art is to arrive at a good solution. This is a creative activity, involving imagination, intuition and deliberate choice.*

*- Ove Arup*

## STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING LINKS

**FEATURED LINK:** *“Structures are held up by both luck and skill”* By Ken Carper  
<http://www.djc.com/special/const97/10023874.htm>

Applied Technology Council - <http://www.atcouncil.org>

Idaho Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors - <http://www2.state.id.us/ipels/>

City of Boise Sp. Insp. Checklist – [http://www.cityofboise.org/pds/applications/Building/Special\\_Inspections.pdf](http://www.cityofboise.org/pds/applications/Building/Special_Inspections.pdf)

Design Build Magazine (McGraw-Hill) - <http://www.designbuildmag.com/>

Engineering & (Bi-Weekly Newsletter) - <http://www.engineeringand.com>

Engineering Forum - <http://www.eng-tips.com/>

Structural Engineers Association International - <http://www.seaint.org/>

Structural Engineers Association of Utah - <http://www.seau.org/>

Structural Engineers Association of Washington - <http://www.seaw.org/>

Structural Engineers of Oregon - <http://www.seao.org/main.htm>

Structural Engineers of Idaho - <http://www.seao.org/main.htm>

National Council of Structural Engineers Association - <http://www.ncsea.com>