



TBPG Newsletter Spring 2020

Actions in Response to COVID-19

Temporary CE Policy for certain license holders. TBPG has taken steps as an agency to assist our employees and P.G. License holders as we continue to monitor and respond to the COVID-19 situation. Considering Governor Greg Abbott's [Disaster Declaration](#) related to the coronavirus (COVID-19), and recognizing the impact that COVID-19 related state/city restrictions will have on opportunities to earn the required 15 hours of continuing education credits, TBPG has adopted a Temporary CE Policy related to continuing education for P.G. licenses that expire in March, April and May, 2020.

TBPG is providing a 9-hour credit (tied to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions) for all P.G. licenses that expire in March, April and May, 2020. This action lowers the required CE hours for licenses expiring during these months to 6 hours. One of those hours must be ethics (TBPG offers an online video called [Ethics in Geoscience](#)). The Board has agreed that the remaining 5 hours can be obtained through any combination of on-line or self directed studies. Examples of self directed include any geoscience/professional growth related opportunities including work projects.

We will continue to monitor and make any necessary business adjustments, and further identify any licensing program/process adjustments as necessary to ensure we remain responsive to our license holders during this rapidly changing situation.

The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) has detailed and up-to-date information about the impact of COVID-19 in Texas and the State's response and efforts: <https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/>

If you have any questions, please contact Compliance@tbpge.texas.gov or call 512.936.4410.

New Fundamentals of Geophysics Exam!

TBPG recently voted in favor of creating the first ever **Texas Fundamentals in Geophysics Examination**. This exam is currently being readied for production and should be available in coming months for use. This exam will allow individuals to test their basic knowledge of the fundamentals of geophysics, and once they pass the exam, they may obtain a Geoscientist-in-Training (GIT) certificate, which leads toward achieving full P.G. licensure in the discipline of Geophysics.

From TBPG's Chair, Becky L. Johnson, P.G.

A WORD OF CAUTION ON DRAFT REPORTS...

Recently, TBPG received information about a draft report that was taken, had the name changed, and then used (without the original author's permission) in a permit application. After a substantial investigation, TBPG found that we had no jurisdiction in this matter, as no TBPG rules were violated. TBPG has no rules that govern the use of draft work other than the sign and seal requirements for drafts. Frustrating for all parties involved.



Most of us understand the need to protect our seal and signature, but many may not have thought about the need to protect draft work. No PG wants to see their work taken, altered, and used in this manner. In fact, I suspect most of us would be furious if this happened, and be even more frustrated with the lack of recourse if it happens. But, we have the power to limit this risk by controlling our draft reports and plans. Here are a few of suggestions for these situations:

1. Ensure that every page of a draft plan or report has a watermark that says "draft" on it. Consider adding a phrase like "do not use without PG signature and seal" to every page as well. While marking things as draft satisfies the TBPG requirements, it may not keep a questionable user from trying to use the draft for their own purposes.
2. Submit drafts to your clients in a form that doesn't allow editing or copying. We do this routinely for final products, but not typically for drafts. While this makes it harder for clients to make comments on draft work, it protects the PG and the potential misuse of a draft plan or report.
3. Ensure that your contracts clearly state who has ownership of all draft work products – consult your attorney to draft the correct language. If your contract doesn't specify that the PG has ownership of drafts, there's not much to stop your client from taking your draft and doing what they please with it!

I hope that you find this information helpful and that 2020 brings you peace and prosperity!

CURRENT TBPG LICENSE AND REGISTRATION TOTALS **March 1, 2020**

Professional Geoscientists - 3521

Geoscience Firms - 349

Geoscientists-in-Training - 158

There are 54 new P.G. license holders for fiscal year 2020
(since September 2019)

TBPG has hired a new Compliance Coordinator!

Ms. Rebecca Funderburg began as TBPG's new Compliance Coordinator on March 1, 2020. She now heads up the agency's compliance activities, so if you need assistance with any compliance issues, be sure to reach out to her at Compliance@tbpg.texas.gov or 512.936.4410.

Highlights from the February 21, 2020 Board Meeting

Ongoing Board Member Training. Implementation of the statutory change to the Texas Geoscience Practice Act, TOC 1002.060, concerning the annual training for board members and distribution of manual. TBPG staff handed out the 2020 annual board member training manual to the Board members, with a short summary of the items included in the manual.

Waiver Requests. The Board considered the following applications for P.G. license:

- Cecil R. Glass, III: Applicant for PG licensure requesting a waiver of the ASBOG Fundamentals and Practice of Geology examinations. The applicant met the requirements of TBPG's policy for waiver of the fundamentals and practice examinations. The Board unanimously approved the waivers for Cecil R. Glass, III, in a vote of 7-0.
- Joseph Martinez: Applicant for PG licensure requesting a waiver of the ASBOG Fundamentals Geology examination. The applicant met the requirements of TBPG's policy for waiver of the fundamentals of geology exam. The Board unanimously approved Mr. Martinez' request for waiver of the fundamentals of geology exam in a vote of 7-0.

- Kera Gautreau: Applicant for PG licensure requesting a waiver of the ASBOG Fundamentals Geology examination. The applicant met the requirements of TBPG's policy for waiver of the fundamentals of geology exam. The Board unanimously approved Ms. Gautreau's request for waiver of the fundamentals of geology exam in a vote of 7-0.
- Hank Zhao: Applicant for PG licensure requesting a waiver of the ASBOG Fundamentals and Practice of Geology examinations. The applicant met the requirements of TBPG's policy for waiver of the fundamentals and practice examinations. The Board unanimously approved the waivers for examination for Hank Zhao, in a vote of 7-0.

Upcoming Meetings. The next Committee and Board meetings are scheduled to occur on April 23 and 24, 2020.

We welcome any suggestions you may have to improve our service to this State, our license holders, and to the geosciences community. Additionally, we welcome any ideas or suggestions on information that would be beneficial to include in future newsletters. In that regard, please feel free to send any comments or suggestions to me by email at rtruan@tbpq.texas.gov

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