



Executive Director – John Thomas

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WOSSA Member Code of Ethics

The Fundamental Principles Members shall uphold and advance the integrity, honor and dignity of the On-site wastewater Profession by:

- I. Using their knowledge and skill for the enhancement of human welfare;
- II. Being honest & impartial, and serving with fidelity the public, their employers and clients;
- III. Striving to increase the competence and prestige of the On-site Wastewater profession;
- IV. Supporting the professional and technical societies of their disciplines.

The Fundamental Canons

1. Members shall hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public in the performance of their professional duties.
2. Members shall perform services only in the areas of their competence & responsibility.
3. Members shall issue public statements only in an objective and truthful manner.
4. Members shall act in professional matters for each employer or client as faithful agents or trustees, and shall avoid conflicts of interest.
5. Members shall build their professional reputation on the merit of their services and shall not compete unfairly with others.
6. Members shall act in such a manner as to uphold and enhance the honor, integrity, and dignity of the profession.
7. Members shall continue their professional development throughout their careers and shall provide opportunities for the professional development of those practitioners under their supervision.
8. Members shall perform their services in such a manner as to enhance and protect the environment.

Guidelines for use with the Fundamental Canons of Ethics

1. Members shall hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public in the performance of their professional duties.
 - a) Members shall recognize that the lives, safety, health and welfare of the general public are dependent upon their judgments, decisions and practices that are incorporated into systems, products, processes and devices.
 - b) Members shall not approve nor seal plans and/or specifications that are not of a design safe to the public health and welfare and in conformity with accepted On-site wastewater practice.

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- c) Should the members professional judgment be overruled under circumstances where the safety, health and welfare of the public are endangered, the member shall inform their clients or employers of the possible consequences and notify other proper authority of the situation, as may be appropriate.
 - (c.1) Members shall do whatever reasonable to provide published standards and quality control procedures that will enable the public to understand the degree of health & safety issues and life expectancy associated with the use of the design, products and systems for which the public are responsible.
 - (c.2) Members will conduct reviews of the safety, reliability & appropriateness of the design, products or systems for which they are responsible before giving their approval to the plans for the design.
 - (c.3) Should Members observe conditions, which they believe, will endanger public safety or health, they shall inform the proper authority of the situation.
 - d) Should members have knowledge that another person or firm may be in violation of any of the provisions of these Guidelines, they shall first bring the apparent violation to the attention of the responsible party. If necessary they shall present such information to the proper authority and shall cooperate with the proper authority and shall cooperate with the proper authority in furnishing such further information or assistance as may be required.
 - (d.1) They shall advise proper authority if an adequate review of the safety and reliability of the products and systems has not been made or when the design imposes hazards to the public through its use.
 - (d.2) They shall withhold approval of products or systems when changes or modifications are made which would adversely affect their performance insofar as safety and reliability & appropriateness.
 - e) Members should seek opportunities to be of constructive service in civic affairs and work for the advancement of the safety, health and well being of their communities.
 - f) Members should be committed to improving the environment to enhance the quality of life.
2. Members shall perform services only in the areas of their competence & responsibility.
- a) Members shall undertake to perform assignments only when qualified by education or experience in the specific technical field of On-site wastewater.
 - b) Members may accept an assignment requiring education or experience outside of their own fields of competence, but only to the extent that their services are restricted to those phases of the project in which they are qualified. Qualified associates, consultants or employees shall perform all other phases of such project.
 - c) Members shall not affix their signature and/or seals to any plan or document with subject matter in which they lack competence by virtue of education or experience, nor to any such plan or document not prepared under their direct supervisory control.
3. Members shall issue public statements only in an objective and truthful manner.
- a) Members shall endeavor to extend public knowledge, and to prevent misunderstandings of the achievements of the field.
 - b) Members shall be completely objective and truthful in all professional reports, statements, or testimony. They shall include all relevant and pertinent information in such reports, statements, or testimony.
 - c) Members, when serving as expert or technical witnesses before any court, commission, or other tribunal, shall express a professional opinion only when it is founded on adequate knowledge of the facts in issue,

upon a background of technical competence in the subject matter, and upon honest conviction of the accuracy and propriety of their testimony.

- d) Members shall issue no statements, criticisms, nor arguments on professional On-site wastewater matters which are inspired or paid for by an interested party, or parties, unless they have prefaced their comments by explicitly identifying themselves, by disclosing the identities of the party or parties on whose behalf they are speaking, and by revealing the existence of any pecuniary interest they may have in the immediate matters.
 - e) Members shall be dignified and modest in explaining their work and merit, and will avoid any act tending to promote their own interests at the expense of the integrity, honor and dignity of the profession.
4. Members shall act in professional matters for each employer or client as faithful agents or trustees, and shall avoid conflicts of interest.
- a) Members shall avoid all perceived conflicts of interest with their employers or clients and shall promptly inform their employers or clients of any business association, interests, or circumstances which could influence their judgment or the quality of their services.
 - b) Members shall not knowingly undertake any assignment which would knowingly create a potential conflict of interest between themselves and their clients or their employers.
 - c) Members shall not accept compensation, financial or otherwise from more than one party for services on the same project, nor for services pertaining to the same project, unless the circumstances are fully disclosed to, and agreed to, by all interested parties.
 - d) Members shall not solicit nor accept financial or other valuable considerations, including free designs from material or equipment suppliers for specifying their products.
 - e) Members shall not solicit nor accept gratuities, directly or indirectly from contractors, their agents, or other parties dealing with their clients or employers in connection with work for which they are responsible.
 - f) When in public service as members, advisors, or employees of a governmental body or department, members shall not participate in considerations or actions with respect to services provided by them of their organization in private or product onsite wastewater practice.
 - g) Members shall not solicit nor accept a contract from a governmental body on which a principal, officer or employee of their organization serves as a member.
 - h) When, as a result of their studies, Members believe a project shall not be successful, they shall so advise their employer or client.
 - i) Members shall treat information coming to them in the course of their assignments as confidential, and shall not use such information as a means of making personal profit if such action is adverse to the interest of their clients, their employers or the public.
 - (i.1) They will not disclose confidential information concerning the business affairs or technical processes of any present or former employer or client or bidder under evaluation without his consent.
 - (i.2) They shall not reveal confidential information nor findings of any commission or board of which they are members.
 - (i.3) When they use designs supplied by clients, these designs shall not be duplicated by the members for others without express permission.

- (i.4) When in the employ of others, members will not enter promotional efforts or negotiations for work or make arrangements for other employment as principals or to practice in connection with specific projects for which they have gained particular and specialized knowledge without the consent of all interested parties.
- j) The member shall act with fairness and justice to all parties when administering a construction (or other) contract.
- k) Members shall admit and accept their own errors when proven wrong, and refrain from distorting or altering the facts to justify their decisions.
- l) Members shall not accept professional employment outside of their regular work or interest without the knowledge of their employers.
- m) Members shall not attempt to attract an employee from another employer by false or misleading representations.
- n) Members shall not review the work of other practitioners except with the knowledge of such practitioners, unless the assignments or contractual agreements for the work have been verified as terminated.
 - (n.1) Members in governmental, industrial or educational employment are entitled to review the work of other professional when so required by their duties.
 - (n.2) Members in sales or industrial employment are entitled to make professional comparisons of their products with products of other suppliers.
 - (n.3) Members in sales employment shall not offer nor give professional consultation or designs or advice other than specifically applying to equipment, materials, systems or service being sold or offered for sale by them.
- 5. Members shall build their professional reputation on the merit of their services and shall not compete unfairly with others.
 - a) Members shall not pay nor offer to pay, directly or indirectly, any commission, political contribution, or a gift, or other consideration in order to secure work, exclusive of securing salaried positions through employment agencies.
 - b) Members should negotiate contracts for professional services fairly and only on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualifications for the type of professional service required.
 - c) Members should negotiate a method and rate of compensation commensurate with the agreed upon scope of services. A meeting of the minds of the parties to the contract is essential to mutual confidence. The public interest requires that the cost of services be fair and reasonable, but not the controlling consideration in selection of individuals or firms to provide these services.
 - (c.1) These principles shall be applied by members in obtaining the services of other professionals.
 - d) Members shall not attempt to supplant other practitioners in a particular employment after becoming aware that definitive steps have been taken toward the others' employment or after they have been employed.
 - (d.1) They shall not solicit employment from clients who already have practitioners under contract for the same work.

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(d.2) They shall not accept employment from clients who already have practitioners for the same work yet not completed or not yet paid for unless the performance or payment requirements in the contract are being litigated or the contracted practitioners' services have been terminated in writing by either party.

(d.3) In case of termination of litigation, the prospective members before accepting the assignment shall inform the practitioners being terminated or involved in the litigation.

- e) Members shall not request, propose or accept professional commissions on a contingent basis under circumstances under which their professional judgments may be compromised, or when a contingency provision is used as a device for promoting or securing a professional commission.
- f) Members shall not falsify nor permit misrepresentation of their, or other associates' academic or professional qualifications. They shall not misrepresent nor exaggerate their degree of responsibility in or for the subject matter of prior assignments. Brochures or other presentations incident to the solicitation of employment shall not misrepresent pertinent facts concerning employers, employees, associates, joint ventures, or their past accomplishments with the intent and purpose of enhancing their qualifications and work.
- g) Members may use display advertising in recognized dignified business and professional publications, providing it is factual, and is not misleading with respect to the members extent of participation in the services or projects described.
- h) Members may prepare articles for the lay or technical press which are factual, dignified and free from ostentation or laudatory implications. Such articles shall not imply other than their direct participation in the work described unless credit is given to others for their share of the work.
- i) Members may extend permission for their names to be used in commercial advertisement, such as may be manufacturers, contractors, material suppliers, etc., only by means of a modest dignified notation acknowledging their participation and the scope thereof in the project or product described. Such permission shall not include public endorsements of proprietary products.
- j) Members may advertise for recruitment of personnel in appropriate publications or by special distribution. The information presented must be displayed in a dignified manner, and can indicate the fields of practice in which the firm is qualified and factual descriptions of positions available, qualifications required and benefits available.
- k) Members shall not maliciously or falsely, directly or indirectly, injure the professional reputation prospects, practice or employment of another practitioner, nor shall they criticize others work.
- l) Members shall not undertake nor agree to perform any service on a free basis, except services which are advisory in nature for civic, charitable, religious or nonprofit organizations. When serving as members of such organizations, members are entitled to utilize their personal expertise in the service of these organizations.
- m) Members shall not use time, equipment, supplies, laboratory nor office facilities of their employers to carry on outside private practice without consent.
- n) In case of tax-free or tax-aided facilities, members should not use student services at less than rates of other employees of comparable competence, including fringe benefits.

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6. Members shall act in such a manner as to uphold and enhance the honor integrity, and dignity of the profession.
 - a) 1. Members shall not knowingly associate with nor permit the use of their names nor firm names in business ventures by any person or firm which they know, or have reason to believe, are engaging in business or professional practices of a fraudulent or dishonest nature.
 2. Members shall not use association with non-members, corporations, nor partnerships as 'cloaks' for unethical acts.
7. Members shall continue their professional development throughout their careers and shall provide opportunities for the professional development of those practitioners within their influence.
 - a) Members shall encourage their technical employees to further their education.
 - b) Members should encourage their technical employees to become certified at the earliest possible date.
 - c) Members should encourage technical employees to attend and present papers at professional and technical society meetings.
 - d) Members should support the professional and technical societies of their discipline.
 - e) Members shall give proper credit for work to those whom credit is due, and recognize the proprietary interests of others. Whenever possible, they shall name the person or persons who may be responsible for designs, inventions, writings or other accomplishments.
 - f) Members shall endeavor to extend the public knowledge of the field, and shall not participate in the dissemination of untrue, misleading, unfair or exaggerated statements regarding the field.
 - g) Members shall uphold the principle of appropriate and adequate compensation for those engaged in onsite Wastewater work.
 - h) Members should assign technical employees duties of a nature which will utilize their full training and experience insofar as possible, and delegate lesser functions to available employees with less training and experience.
 - i) Members shall provide prospective employees with complete information on working conditions and their proposed status of employment, and after employment shall keep them informed of any change.
8. Members shall perform their services in such a manner as to enhance and protect the environment.
 - a) Members shall undertake to understand the critical environmental concerns of the different areas of the state where they perform their work.