

Before You Hire: Protect Yourself From Fraudulent Engineering and Land Surveying Services

The Louisiana Professional Engineering and Land Surveying Board (LAPELS) is alerting the public to an increasing concern involving fraudulent engineering and land surveying services offered through online freelance and marketplace websites.

Engineering and surveying licensing boards around the country have reported advertisements on websites such as Fiverr, Upwork, and other online marketplaces offering engineering and surveying services, sometimes including promises to provide “signed and sealed” documents.

In some cases, these services may be offered by individuals who are not licensed professionals. A document may also contain the name, license number, seal, or signature of a legitimate Louisiana Professional Engineer (PE) or Professional Land Surveyor (PLS) without that professional's knowledge or involvement.

A Professional Seal Matters

A professional seal identifies the PE or PLS who is taking professional responsibility for engineering or land surveying work.

A seal on a document, by itself, does not necessarily establish that the professional identified on the document actually prepared, reviewed, or approved the work.

Before relying on engineering or surveying documents, make sure the professional identified on the document is a current Louisiana licensee and that the professional actually provided the services represented by the document.

Before You Hire an Engineer or Land Surveyor

Consider taking the following steps:

- **Verify the license.**

Use the LAPELS license lookup to confirm that the PE or PLS identified on the document is licensed in Louisiana. <https://www.lapels.com/indivsearch/>

- **Contact the professional directly.**

Before hiring an engineer or surveyor, attempt to contact the person directly. If you have questions about a document or whether a professional was involved in a project, contact the PE or PLS using independently verified contact information—

not simply the contact information provided by an online advertisement or an unfamiliar third party.

- **Be cautious about promises of a “quick” seal.**

Engineering and surveying are professional services. A legitimate PE or PLS must have the appropriate involvement in the work before taking professional responsibility for it.

- **Pay attention to the details.**

A name, license number, seal, or signature appearing on a document does not necessarily mean the professional prepared or approved the work.

What If You Suspect a Fraudulent Seal?

If you believe an engineering or surveying document contains a fraudulent seal, signature, license number, or professional identity, LAPELS encourages you to report it. You can email us at CandE@lapels.com

When contacting LAPELS, provide as much information as possible, including:

- A copy of the document;
- The name and license number of the PE or PLS shown on the document;
- The website or platform where you obtained the service;
- The name and contact information of the person or company offering the service;
- Any related advertisements or communications; and
- Other information that may help LAPELS investigate the matter.

Help Us Protect the Public

LAPELS regulates the practice of professional engineering and land surveying in Louisiana to help protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

If you are unsure whether a professional is licensed or whether a PE or PLS was actually involved in the preparation or review of engineering or surveying work, **verify before you rely on the document.**

When in doubt, check with LAPELS. CandE@lapels.com .