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APEGGA

*The Association of
Professional Engineers, Geologists
and Geophysicists of Alberta*

Advertising of Professional Services

Guideline for Professional Members

*Revised
February 2004*

Draft 1.3

FOREWORD

An APEGGA guideline presents procedures and practices that are recommended by APEGGA. In general, an APEGGA member should conform to the recommendations in order to be practising in accordance with what is deemed to be acceptable practice. Variations may be made to accommodate special circumstances if they do not detract from the intent of the guideline. It is not a legal document and is not intended to supersede or replace contractual arrangements designed to satisfy specific situations.

Guidelines use the word *should* to indicate that among several possibilities, one is recommended as particularly suitable without necessarily mentioning or excluding others; or that a certain course of action is preferred but not necessarily required; or that (in the negative form) a certain course of action is disapproved of but not prohibited (*should equals is recommended that*). The word *shall* is used to indicate requirements that must be followed (*shall equals is required to*). The word *may* is used to indicate a course of action permissible within the limits of the guideline (*may equals is permitted*).

This guideline is a revision of the document entitled *Advertising of Professional Services, A Guideline*, September 1996. This version recognizes the changes to professional practice and the Code of Ethics, since that time.

Participants

APEGGA's Practice Standards Committee (PSC) publishes practice standards and guidelines to promote high levels of professional service. At the time the guideline was completed, the committee had the following membership:

Dick Walters, P.Eng., *Chair*
Rory Belanger, P.Eng.
Mark Bowman, P.Eng.
Barry Colledge, P.Eng.
Harry Dowhan, P.Eng.
Ron Kozak, P.Eng.
Herb Kuehne, P.Eng.
Don Montalbetti, P.Eng.
Kevin Moodie, P.Eng.
Bernie Moore, P.Eng.
Alex Nagy, P.Eng.
Rober Pupulin, P.Eng.
Brian Ryder, P.Eng.
Paul Schnitzler, P.Eng.
Grant Smith, P.Geol.
Denis Wiart, P.Eng.

Comments that would help to improve this document should be addressed to:

Lianne Lefsrud, M.Sc., P.Eng.
Assistant Director, Professional Practice
APEGGA

1500 Scotia One, 10060 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4A3
E-mail: <llefsrud@apegga.org>
Fax: (780) 436-1877

CONTENTS

1 OVERVIEW 1
 1.1 Scope 1
 1.2 Purpose 1
 1.3 Definitions..... 1

2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES.....2

3 PROFESSIONAL ADVERTISING GUIDELINES2

1 OVERVIEW

The Code of Ethics establishes the duty of Professional Members to maintain the dignity and prestige of their profession. They must act with fairness and good faith toward other Professional Members in advertising professional services and maintain the image of the professions. Advertising of professional services has significant potential to influence the public perception of the professions as well as the individual relationships between members and their clients.

1.1 Scope

This guideline establishes the parameters within which all advertising of professional services decisions are to be made. Statements of principle are used to create a standard against which member conduct may be measured. The statements are conceptual and are designed to provide guidance for advertising of professional services.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this guideline is to assist members of APEGGA to optimize their long range effectiveness as professionals by maintaining a public image that projects pride, competence and dependability. Electronic media is of ever increasing importance and popularity on the local, national and global scene for the dissemination and gathering of information. With such a large audience it becomes doubly important that the guiding principles for advertising by Professional Members be carefully considered and adhered to.

1.3 Definitions

For the purposes of this standard, the following terms and definitions apply.

Act

The Engineering, Geological and Geophysical Professions Act.

Association

The Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists and Geophysicists of Alberta (APEGGA).

Advertising

Promoting or marketing an engineer, geologist or geophysicists' skills or services.

Electronic

Created, recorded, transmitted or stored in digital form or in other intangible form by electronic, magnetic or optical means or by any other means that has capabilities for creation, recording, transmission or storage and may include but not be limited to email, internet, facsimile, or television.

Professional Member

A professional engineer, professional geologist, professional geophysicist, registered professional technologist (engineering), registered professional

technologist (geological), registered professional technologist (geophysical) or licensee entitled to engage in the practice of engineering, geology and geophysics under the Act.

2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The image of Members as trustworthy, ethical, and technically competent professionals is built on the reasoned, thorough application of scientific principles to problems that assures a positive solution in the public interest.
- Advertising of professional services shall be clear, factual and without exaggeration; designed to enhance this professional image and the stature of the professions.
- Membership in the Association, implying professional quality services and protection of the public, should be displayed at every appropriate opportunity. Professional and permit stamps shall not be displayed for advertising or commercial purposes.
- Members shall build their professional reputations on the merits of their own services and shall not exaggerate, criticize, or claim superiority over competitors.
- The advertising of a professional service means that service is provided under the direct personal supervision of a Member who is available to the extent necessary to provide competent direction of the work.
- Members have a responsibility to assist the public in recognizing when professional assistance is required and in helping select the appropriate professional.
- Advertising of professional services shall not make any reference to fees or charges for services.
- Advertising shall comply with all applicable laws. For example, jobsite signs shall be of a size and in a location that does not contravene any restriction with respect to any Municipal Bylaw or development guidelines (i.e. on public road right of way, within utility easements/rights of ways, etc.).
- Signs shall be directly associated with a project (i.e. jobsite, project or vehicle signs are permissible while billboards on transit buses or benches are not).
- Mass distribution of corporate information for the purpose of soliciting clients shall not be used, such as by electronic communication systems.

3 PROFESSIONAL ADVERTISING GUIDELINES

The common forms of advertising of professional services are identified in this section and members are encouraged to use them effectively. Constraints for each are listed to encourage uniformity. This table provides typical examples from which deviations shall be made only after considering the intent of the guiding principles described in Section 2.

MEDIUM**PERMISSIBLE**

Professional Business Cards

Information on professional cards shall be limited to all or part of the following:

- Name, academic degrees and professional designation
- Business affiliations
- Logo, name, address and telephone/fax numbers and E-mail address
- Fields of specialization
- Date of the founding of the Firm and/or years of service.

Stationery

- Stationery may display all or part of the information permitted on professional cards, company achievement awards and listings of APEGGA members and other key personnel.
- Membership in APEGGA, both individual and corporate, may be displayed on letterheads. If the names of individuals are listed, their respective designations shall be shown.

Office Signs

- Office signs shall be informative, appropriate, and limited to information permitted on professional cards. Signs shall also conform aesthetically to size of existing signage on the premises.

Directories

- Member names, both individual and corporate, may be printed in bold or regular type in the white pages of telephone/fax directories.
 - Advertising in yellow pages of telephone/fax directories, professional or commercial directories shall be restricted to basic corporate and personnel information providing it is factual and presented in a style that maintains the stature and dignity of the profession.
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Advertising Guideline

DRAFT 1.3

Brochures and Websites

- Brochures, websites, and other technical documents may be distributed to inform other prospective clients about a member's experience and capability. Such documents may include photographs, illustrations and technical information describing the actual services provided by the Professional Member to enable the prospective client to judge the experience and capability of the member or permit holder.
- A member may display designs or reports that have been prepared for specific projects in newspapers and magazines subject to the appropriate client approval and conformance to these advertising of professional services guidelines.

Insertions in Publications

- Professional services may be advertised in articles or advertorials in publications providing they are factual and presented in a style that maintains the stature and dignity of the profession.
- The text and photographs in advertisements must ensure that the role played by the Professional Member is accurately described.

Announcements

- Announcements of personnel and corporate changes in the printed and electronic media are permissible. Such announcements may include information permitted for professional cards, a photograph, corporate logo, biographical sketch and brief profile of the company.
- Advertising for recruitment of personnel shall be factual.

Testimonials and Promotional Items

- Testimonials made by a Professional Member on the product or service of his or her employer or client shall be factual.
- The prudent use or distribution of promotional items such as pens, rulers, calendars, etc. inscribed with the name and/or logo of a Professional Member or permit holder is permitted as a method of advertising. Similarly, where sponsoring activities occur the inscribing of athletic caps, sweaters, equipment, etc. with the corporate logo of the Professional Member or permit holder may be used with discretion.

Sponsorships

- The sponsorship of worthwhile public interest activities (scholarships, youth groups, seminars, etc.) are encouraged. The advertising of professional services benefits should be secondary to the public interest of these sponsorships and be carried out in a manner that maintains the dignity of the profession.
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Advertising Guideline

DRAFT 1.3

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| Vehicle Signs | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identification signs on vehicles owned or leased by a member exclusively for professional activities shall be limited to the information permitted on professional cards. |
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| Jobsite/Project Signs | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jobsite/project signs shall be limited to information permitted on professional cards. It is appropriate that special reference be made on the sign to the specialty service being provided on the project.• A Professional Member may, with the consent of the Owner, affix his or her name permanently to the work of which he or she is the Engineer/Geologist/Geophysicist of Record. |
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| Electronic Communication Systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A member may participate in public radio or television networks/programs dealing with the subjects of public interest related to the practice of the professions. Any advertising of professional services shall be secondary to the public interest aspects of such participation.• Recorded statements on telephone or voice mail should be limited to corporate information which is clear, factual and without exaggeration.• Professional services may be marketed on the Internet provided that the information is limited to information normally included in corporate brochures. |
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