



2009 LEGISLATIVE SESSION FOR TAPG BILL LOOKS TO BE IN PROGRESS!



Joe McCullough
TAPG Ex. Dir

The State Board is contemplating opening up the State Geoscientist legislative act in 2009 to make some needed adjustments in the Geoscientist rule making authority.

The Texas Board of Professional Geoscientist is in the process of gathering information regarding changes they may want to consider in addition to targeted Board rule adjustments in the 2009 legislative session.

While this is not a **"LEGISLATIVE RED ALERT"** situation now... it is however, cause for some reflection. Geoscientist now have a position and standing legislatively in the State of Texas which includes Geoscientist professionally, via the law in Texas, as "professionals in the field" alongside State Professional Engineers.

To this end, which is legislatively significant, TAPG members should not relax this coming legislative year and must be prepared to defend and or unite if called upon to fight for your professional rights to do business in Texas. This **"Call to Action"** could take place even before...the 2009 session begins. There are other professions who would wish to diminish our legislative capabilities, and try to make over 6,000 registered Geoscientist take a back seat to more established professions which Geoscientist compete with for business.

Stay tuned... for more 2009 legislative session news as it gets closer everyday!

TAPG Board Meeting:

March 28, 2008

Austin, Texas

(From L to R)

Rene D. Peña, CPA, Vice-Chairman

Matt McCowan, TAPG President

Y. Lynn Clark, P.G., Chairman

Barbara O. Roeling, P.G.



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Points of Interest:

2009 Legislative rule adjustments possibly affecting TAPG

Hotels and the CheckINN card...up to 50% off!

Synopsis of the TBPG Board Meeting March 28th, 2008

NEW TAPG MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT

TAPG members can now save **30-50% off every hotel stay** with the CheckINN card



Go to the front page of www.tapg.org and find the hotel discount advantage card which can save you significant dollars on your business travel and hotel stays. It's easy to sign up for and when you receive your TAPG membership benefit card... carry it in your wallet and get discounts from well know participating hotel chains from 30-50% off the advertised room rates. As TAPG's Executive Director I've used it, and it is simply money in hip-national-bank every time you use it. It beats internet rates and it's as simple as calling the 800 number to find a hotel for the city you need. Just go online download the CheckINN Card information and start saving money when you have business travel needs.

Other TAPG benefits online which deal with travel, auto, health and more...check us out.

YOUR MEMBERSHIP DOLLARS ARE AT WORK!



Matt McCowan
TAPG President

Every TBPG Board Meeting is being monitored and TAPG is often recognized or asked to give comments at these meetings. Your membership dollars and support of the association is very much appreciated. The last meeting of the State Board (TBPG) even recognized TAPG's submission of comments regarding "Public vs. Private Practice Geoscience"

Through the efforts of TAPG members, through the guidance of the TAPG Board and some diligence from your TAPG President TAPG has submitted position papers and watched out for our Professional interests in Texas. We want to thank our members who make our efforts worth while.

News from the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists

The following is a quick synopsis of the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientist meeting that occurred March 28, 2008 in Austin, Texas.

- A Reciprocity agreement with Mississippi has been signed. The reciprocity agreement streamlines the process for a license holder in Texas who has taken the ASBOG exam to obtain licensure in Mississippi. Those that Grandfathered can have the exam waived provided they have practice for 5 years trouble free. The board of each respective state reserves the right to require additional examinations and also reserves the right of refusal of a license. The Board will now approach Idaho and California to negotiate reciprocity agreements. A copy of the agreement can be found here: <http://www.tbpg.state.tx.us/reciprocity%20agreement%20MS.pdf>
- The Board has stated that it favors a reduction of fees based upon age or disability. The issue is being studied to see if a statute or rule change is needed to make the fee reduction possible.
- The Board noted that the rules state that guidelines for pre-approval of Continuing Education course would be developed in 2008. The board is leaning towards following the example of the Professional Engineering Board which does not pre-approve any courses that are offered but instead leaves it up to the judgment of the license holder to determine if the course meets the criteria that the Boards has already set forth in the rules.

- The Board has stated that 152 firms have registered as a geoscience firm. According to the Texas Board of Geoscientist "It is mandatory that any firm, corporation, sole-proprietorship, partnership and/or joint stock association that engages or offers to engage in the public practice of geoscience in the state of Texas be registered with TBPG". More information concerning firm registration can be found at 22 TAC §851.30.
- The Board has stated that they would like to add a Geoscientist-In-Training program to the Professional Geoscientist Act. The Board also would like to see the changes to the Professional Services Code as well. Draft bills need to be ready by fall. It was noted that 13 states already have some form of a GIT program in place
- The Board is considering additions to the Memorandum of Understanding with the Texas Board of Professional Engineers. The additions would clarify "work that is both geoscience and engineering" to help better define that issue for licensees of both Boards.
- Next meeting of the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientist will be June 6, 2008

In The News...



Col. Michael Hess

Colonel Mike Hess Executive Director for TBPG has been serving in Iraq for a couple of years and is scheduled to return to Austin pending orders sometime in June or July 2008.

Vincent Houston has been serving in Michael Hess stead as Acting Executive Director*/CFO during Hess' tour of duty