



Successor Engineering

A successor engineer is an engineer who uses and/or relies upon the work, findings, and/or recommendations of a previous engineer. Within the state of Florida, licensed engineers are required to comply with Chapter 471 of the Florida Statutes as well as Chapter 61G15 of the Florida Administrative Code.

Before a successor engineer can take over a job from the original engineer of record, they must complete the following steps:

- The successor engineer is required to notify the original engineer of record, his/her successors, or assigns by certified letter clearly stating the successor's intention to use or reuse the original engineer's work
- The successor engineer should include in the certified letter that he/she will take all professional and legal responsibility for the documents which he/she signs and seals related to the adopted project
- The successor engineer must recreate all work done by the original engineer of record (calculations, site visits, research, etc.) and provide documentation proving such if requested

After completing these steps, the successor engineer may reuse original drawings with proof of documentation of the successor engineer having rethought and reworked the entire design process and after removal of the original engineer's title block, signature and seal. The successor engineer will be completely responsible for every piece of information being presented under their signed and sealed documents. It is unethical and impermissible for a successor engineer to take over a project without completing the steps listed above and punishable by the Florida Board of Professional Engineers.

Regarding the issue of successor engineer, Chapter 471 states:

Chapter 471.033(1) The following acts constitute grounds for which the disciplinary actions may be taken:

(j) Affixing or permitting to be affixed his or her seal, name, or digital signature to any final drawings, specifications, plans, reports, or documents that were not prepared by him or her or under his or her responsible supervision, direction, or control.



And, Chapter 61G15 states:

61G15-27.001 Procedures for a Successor Professional Engineer Adopting As His Own the Work of Another Engineer.

(1) A successor professional engineer seeking to reuse already sealed contract documents under the successor professional engineer's seal must be able to document and produce upon request evidence that he has in fact recreated all the work done by the original professional engineer. In other words, calculations, site visits, research and the like must be documented and produceable upon demand. Further, the successor professional engineer must take all professional and legal responsibility for the documents which he sealed and signed and can in no way exempt himself from such full responsibility. Plans need not be redrawn by the successor professional engineer; however, justification for such action must be available through well kept and complete documentation on the part of the successor professional engineer as to his having rethought and reworked the entire design process. A successor professional engineer must use his own title block, seal and signature and must remove the title block, seal and signature of the original professional engineer before reusing any sealed contract documents.

(2) Prior to sealing and signing work a successor professional engineer shall be required to notify the original professional engineer, his successors, or assigns by certified letter to the last known address of the original professional engineer of the successor's intention to use or reuse the original professional engineer's work. The successor professional engineer will take full responsibility for the drawing as though they were the successor professional engineer's original product.

Specific Authority 471.033(2) FS. Law Implemented 471.033(1)(j), 471.005(6) FS. History—New 8-25-87, Amended 4-21-88, 8-3-88, Formerly 21H-27.001.

A copy of the 2009 Florida Statute Chapter 471 can be found online at:
http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=Ch0471/ch0471.htm

A copy of the Florida Administrative Code 61G15 can be found online at:
<http://www.fbpe.org/userfiles/file/61G15.pdf>