

Why you believe or do not believe that the occupational regulations overseen by your board have been effective:

The Board's position is that the occupational regulations it oversees, Title 171 NAC, are effective. The regulations include provisions on initial and comity licensure for geologists, temporary permits, code of practice, use of the licensee seal, organizational practice requirements, enforcement procedures, and clarifications to the Geologists Regulation Act. The Board is committed to keeping its regulations up-to-date and concise through regular reviews. Because of national trends in licensure standards, task analyses, and processes for geologists, the Board continually works to keep its rules modernized and up-to-date. Much of today's geological practice affects the health, safety, and welfare of the public, the environment, and the economy and feasibility of engineered works. Thus the public deserves to be protected. Unqualified geologists, who are employed in jobs that affect the public, place an undue risk on the health, safety, and welfare of that public.

To this end, the Nebraska Board is a member of the National Association of State Boards of Geology (ASBOG). Board members and staff attend meetings of this organization to discuss common issues and policies that may affect licensure and the quality of licensees. ASBOG also develops and publishes national model language that state governments can use as a general guide for state laws and a realistic benchmark for providing greater uniformity of qualifications for licensure. In addition, by using the national examination developed by ASBOG and model language, the Nebraska Board simplifies interstate licensure and mobility of geologists. This is demonstrated by the fact that over sixty percent of our active licensees have an address of record outside Nebraska.

Licensure also assures that qualified individuals provide accurate geologic information to the public in the areas of geologic mapping; groundwater resource and development protection (supply/declines, water recharge/storage, pipelines and canals); mineral-resource evaluation; oil and gas development; safe oil, gas, water, or mineral drilling; accurate and reliable information to government agencies for public use (financial and public documents related to economic- and energy-resources); environmental geology issues, land surface stability (faults and fissures, landslides, foundation stability for buildings, dams, bridges and roadways, swelling soils, and karst systems); solid waste siting; toxic, nuclear, and hazardous waste disposal siting ; contaminated soil investigations and remediation; groundwater investigations (spring flows, injection wells and groundwater quality); mined-land reclamation; acid mine drainage suppression and remediation; dam and impoundment construction; highway, roadway, and bridge construction. The application of geologic knowledge and experience are integral to many actions involving public health, safety, and welfare (including financial) as noted herein. Professional geologists apply sound geologic knowledge and procedures that serve to avoid endangerment of the public or the environment.

There is also a difference and necessity of a geological approach over a strictly engineered approach to understanding and managing professional work. There are tasks in which only a trained geologist has experience and, therefore, may have significant impacts on local citizens. Few other professions affect the public more than geology, especially in collaboration with the drilling, construction, and engineering professions.

Within the Nebraska Board of Geologists rulemaking process, the Board communicates with stakeholders who have expressed interest, including the Nebraska Geological Society, which is the professional society for geologists in the state; and the Board of Engineers and Architects. The Board is

committed to keeping these organizations informed in order to ensure the Board's regulations are effectively implemented and not burdensome. The Board also publishes notification of the public hearing on rules promulgation well in advance of the actual hearing(s) in order to facilitate additional professional and public input, further ensuring that the regulations are effective.