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Think Professional Licensure Isn't for You? Your Wallet May Disagree

ALEXANDRIA, VA. (August 23, 2007)— Whether you want to sign and seal engineering plans, open your own engineering firm, or just show you are at the pinnacle of your profession, you can now add another reason to become a licensed professional engineer. According to the latest results from The Engineering Income & Salary Survey, sponsored by the National Society of Professional Engineers, PEs earn an average of 20 percent more in salary than engineers with no professional license.

"While the results aren't necessarily surprising, they do strongly highlight the emphasis many employers are placing on the professional license," said NSPE Executive Director Lawrence Jacobson. "Even if you're not required to sign or seal plans, the license is viewed as proof of competency, adherence to ethical conduct, and it shows you're willing to take that extra step in your professional career. The fact that it also puts more money in your wallet is just icing on the cake."

According to The Engineering Income & Salary Survey, the median income for an engineer with no professional license is \$69,000 while a licensed PE earns a median salary of \$86,000. Other certifications, in addition to the PE license, can push that number even higher. PEs who are also certified land surveyors earn \$99,500, while those who hold a certification in forensic engineering earn a median salary of \$106,624.

Data from past surveys also show a marked rise in salaries for PEs over the past few years, while engineers with no license only saw moderate salary increases. PEs earned a median salary of \$77,000 in 2005, which then rose to \$82,000 in 2006, and then on to the current salary figures. Engineers without a PE license earned \$65,464 in 2005, compared with \$66,600 in 2006. While many conclusions could be drawn from these figures, it is safe to say that salaries for PEs are not only healthy, but also continuing to grow.

"This year is the 100th anniversary of engineering licensure, and we'd like to think there is now a greater significance to becoming a professional engineer," said Jacobson. "Especially with recent events, the PEs level of competency and their commitment to the public health, safety, and welfare should be perceived as a huge bonus to employers, and the clients and public they serve."

Those on the path to licensure, engineers-in-training/engineering interns, also saw healthy increases in their salary numbers. The median salary for an EIT/EI in 2007 was \$55,000, compared to \$52,500 in 2006 and \$51,450 in 2005. And beyond increased salary figures, many companies are now offering EITs/EIs bonuses and incentives for taking and passing the PE exam. In addition to monetary compensation, many can take paid time off to study for the exam or have their examination preparation courses and materials paid for by their employers.

NSPE has been conducting salary surveys since 1952 and updated its survey format in 2004. The Engineering Income & Salary Survey is a continually updated, searchable database providing real-time salary information directly online and is produced in partnership with other engineering societies. The survey tracks salary information by nine categories: length of experience, level of education, professional responsibility, branch of engineering, job function, industry, licensing or certifications status, level of responsibility, and geographic location. Engineers are encouraged to participate in the survey by entering their own salary information at any of the partner association Web sites.

Complimentary reports with salary data for an individual engineer's level of expertise and geographic region are currently available. Engineers are also welcome to purchase a full subscription to The Engineering Income & Salary Survey by visiting <https://nspe.enetrix.com>. With the purchase of an unlimited access subscription, both corporations and individual engineers have the option of purchasing a printed report for their reference containing minority, gender, bonus, layoff, organization structure, benefits reporting, and much more. Also included is a look at salary and benefit trends from previous years.