

CHAPTER 470

EXAMINING BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL GEOLOGISTS,
HYDROLOGISTS AND SOIL SCIENTISTS

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470.01 Definitions. In this chapter:

(1) “Examining board” means the examining board of professional geologists, hydrologists and soil scientists.

(1g) “Geology” means a science that involves the study of the earth and the earth’s origin, composition, structure and physical history, including the study of the natural agents, forces and processes that cause changes in the earth and the investigation and collection of data concerning the crust and the interior of the earth and the surface and underground gases, solids and fluids that make up the earth.

(1r) “Hydrology” means a science that involves the study of the waters of the earth, including the study of the occurrence, circulation, distribution, chemistry or quality of water or its role as a natural agent that causes changes in the earth, and the investigation and collection of data concerning waters in the atmosphere or on the surface or in the interior of the earth, including data regarding the interaction of water with other gases, solids or fluids.

(2) “Practice of professional geology” means the performance of or offer to perform any geologic service or work in which the public welfare or the safeguarding of life, health, environment or property is concerned or involved. “Practice of professional geology” includes the collection of geological data, consultation, investigation, evaluation, interpretation, planning or inspection relating to a service or work that applies geology.

(3) “Practice of professional hydrology” means the performance of or offer to perform any hydrologic service or work in which the public welfare or the safeguarding of life, health, environment or property is concerned or involved. “Practice of professional hydrology” includes the collection of hydrological data, consultation, investigation, evaluation, interpretation, planning or inspection relating to a service or work that applies hydrology.

(4) “Practice of professional soil science” means the performance of or offer to perform any service or work related to soil science in which the public welfare or the safeguarding of life, health, environment or property is concerned or involved. “Practice of professional soil science” includes the collection of soil data, consultation, investigation, evaluation, interpretation, planning or inspection relating to a service or work that applies soil science.

(5) “Professional geologist” means a person who engages in the practice of professional geology.

(5m) “Professional geologist section” means the professional geologist section of the examining board.

(6) “Professional hydrologist” means a person who engages in the practice of professional hydrology.

(6m) “Professional hydrologist section” means the professional hydrologist section of the examining board.

(7) “Professional soil scientist” means a person who engages in the practice of professional soil science

(8) “Professional soil scientist section” means the professional soil scientist section of the examining board.

(9) “Soil science” means a science that involves the study of soils between the surface of the earth and bedrock, including the study of natural or human processes or forces that occur in soils,

and the investigation and collection of data concerning soils, including data regarding the interaction of soils with other gases, solids or fluids or living organisms.

History: 1997 a. 300 ss. 15, 16, 62.

470.02 License required. Except as provided in s. 470.025 or 470.045, no person may do any of the following:

(1) Engage or offer to engage in the practice of professional geology, designate himself or herself as a professional geologist, use or assume the title “professional geologist” or any other title, letters or designation which represents or may tend to represent the person as a professional geologist unless the person is licensed by the professional geologist section under this chapter.

(2) Engage or offer to engage in the practice of professional hydrology, designate himself or herself as a professional hydrologist, use or assume the title “professional hydrologist” or any other title, letters or designation which represents or may tend to represent the person as a professional hydrologist unless the person is licensed by the professional hydrologist section under this chapter.

(3) Engage or offer to engage in the practice of professional soil science, designate himself or herself as a professional soil scientist, use or assume the title “professional soil scientist” or any other title, letters or designation which represents or may tend to represent the person as a professional soil scientist unless the person is licensed by the professional soil scientist section under this chapter.

History: 1997 a. 300.

Cross-reference: See also ch. GHSS 1, Wis. adm. code.

470.025 Applicability. This chapter does not require a license for any of the following:

(1) A person lawfully practicing within the scope of a license, permit, registration or certification granted by this state or the federal government.

(2) An officer or employee of the federal government while engaged within this state in the practice of professional geology, hydrology or soil science for the federal government.

(3) A public service company or its regular employees acting in its behalf that engage in the practice of professional geology, hydrology or soil science exclusively in connection with the facilities of the company that are subject to regulation, supervision or control by a commission of this state or the federal government.

(4) A person who engages in the practice of professional geology, hydrology or soil science exclusively as a regular employee of a private company or corporation, by rendering to the company or corporation geological, hydrological or soil science services in connection with its operations, so long as the person is actually and exclusively so employed and no longer, if the company or corporation has at least one professional geologist, hydrologist or soil scientist who is licensed under this chapter in responsible charge of the company’s or corporation’s professional geological, hydrological or soil science work in this state.

(5) A contractor, subcontractor or construction material or equipment supplier who performs or undertakes activities that his-

torically and customarily have been performed by a contractor, subcontractor or construction material or equipment supplier in his or her respective trade or specialty, including the preparation and use of drawings, specifications or layouts within a construction firm or in construction operations, superintending of construction, installation and alteration of equipment, cost estimating, consultation with professional geologists, hydrologists or soil scientists or owners concerning materials, equipment, methods and techniques, and investigations or consultation with respect to construction sites, provided all such activities are performed solely with respect to the performance of the contractor's, subcontractor's or supplier's work on buildings or with respect to supplies or materials furnished by him or her for buildings or structures or their appurtenances which are, or which are to be, erected, enlarged or materially altered in accordance with plans and specifications prepared by professional geologists, hydrologists or soil scientists or by a person specified in subs. (1) to (4).

(6) A person employed by a county or this state who is engaged in the planning, design, installation or regulation of land and water conservation activities under ch. 92 or s. 281.65 and who is certified under s. 92.18.

(7) A land surveyor registered under ch. 443 who is engaged in the planning, design, installation or regulation of land and water conservation activities under ch. 92 or s. 281.65.

(8) A person engaged solely in teaching geology, hydrology or soil science or a related physical or natural science, or a person engaged solely in geological, hydrological or soil science research as an employee of an educational or research institution or a governmental agency.

(9) A well driller who is licensed under s. 280.15 (2m), or an employee of a well drilling business that is registered under s. 280.15 (1), who is engaged in well drilling, as defined in s. 280.01 (8).

NOTE: Sub. (9) is amended eff. 4–1–15 by 2011 Wis. Act 150 to read:

(9) A driller who is licensed under s. 280.15 (2m), or an employee of a drilling business that is registered under s. 280.15 (1), who is engaged in well drilling, as defined in s. 280.01 (8), or heat exchange drilling, as defined in s. 280.01 (2c).

(10) A professional engineer registered under ch. 443 who, while engaged in the practice of professional engineering, as defined in s. 443.01 (6), collects, investigates, interprets or evaluates data relating to soil, rock, groundwater, surface water, gases or other earth conditions, or uses that data for analysis, consultation, planning, design or construction.

(11) A professional geologist, hydrologist or soil scientist who is licensed to engage in the practice of professional geology, hydrology or soil science in another state or country and is providing a consultation or demonstration with a professional geologist, hydrologist or soil scientist who is licensed under this chapter.

(12) A person engaged within this state in the practice of a profession, other than professional geology, hydrology, or soil science, including archaeology, aquatic biology, bacteriology, fish management, forestry, horticulture, limnology, mycology, plant pathology, stream ecology, wetland science, or wildlife management, where the practice of the profession by the person involves knowledge within the range of professional geology, hydrology, or soil science, if the person meets all of the following conditions:

(a) The practice of the profession by the person involves only the incidental practice of professional geology, hydrology, or soil science. For purposes of this paragraph, a practice of professional geology, hydrology, or soil science is incidental to the practice of another profession if professional geology, hydrology, or soil science is related to, but not the main purpose of, the other profession, or if a person engages in a practice of professional geology, hydrology, or soil science while primarily engaged in the practice of the other profession.

(b) The person does not designate himself or herself as a professional geologist, hydrologist, or soil scientist or use any other title, letters, or designation that represents or may tend to represent

that the person is a professional geologist, hydrologist, or soil scientist.

History: 1997 a. 300; 2001 a. 53, 105; 2005 a. 360; 2011 a. 150.

470.03 Duties of the examining board. (1) The examining board shall do all of the following:

(a) Upon the advice of the professional geologist section, promulgate rules establishing requirements and standards for the practice of professional geology by a person who is licensed as a professional geologist under this chapter, including a code of ethics that governs the practice of professional geology.

(b) Upon the advice of the professional hydrologist section, promulgate rules establishing requirements and standards for the practice of professional hydrology by a person who is licensed as a professional hydrologist under this chapter, including a code of ethics that governs the practice of professional hydrology.

(c) Upon the advice of the professional soil scientist section, promulgate rules establishing requirements and standards for the practice of professional soil science by a person who is licensed as a professional soil scientist under this chapter, including a code of ethics that governs the practice of professional soil science.

(2) Upon the advice of the appropriate section of the examining board, the examining board may promulgate rules that establish continuing education requirements that a person must satisfy to be eligible to renew a license that is issued under this chapter.

(3) Upon the advice of the appropriate section of the examining board, the examining board may promulgate rules that exempt a person who is engaged in a profession related to those listed in s. 470.025 (12) (intro.) from the requirement to obtain a license under this chapter if the practice of the profession by the person involves only the incidental practice of geology, hydrology, or soil science, as defined in s. 470.025 (12) (a), and the person does not designate himself or herself as a professional geologist, hydrologist, or soil scientist or use any other title, letters, or designation that represents or tends to represent that the person is a professional geologist, hydrologist, or soil scientist.

History: 1997 a. 300; 2001 a. 53.

470.04 Licensure requirements. (1) The professional geologist, hydrologist or soil scientist section may not grant a license under this chapter unless an applicant does each of the following:

(a) Submits an application for the license to the department on a form provided by the department.

(b) Pays the fee specified in s. 440.05 (1).

(c) Passes an examination under s. 470.05.

(d) Submits to the department letters of recommendation from 5 persons. At least 3 letters shall be from individuals who have personal knowledge of the individual's experience in, depending on the license for which an application is made, geologic, hydrologic or soil science work. At least one letter of recommendation shall be from an individual who, depending on the license for which an application is made, is licensed as a professional geologist, hydrologist or soil scientist under this chapter.

(2) The professional geologist section shall grant a professional geologist license to a person who satisfies the requirements under sub. (1) and who submits evidence satisfactory to the section of all of the following:

(a) Subject to ss. 111.321, 111.322 and 111.335, that he or she does not have an arrest or conviction record the circumstances of which substantially relate to the practice of professional geology.

(b) Subject to sub. (7), that he or she has a bachelor's degree with course credits in geology of a variety and nature sufficient to constitute a geology major from a college or university approved by the examining board.

(c) That he or she has completed one of the following:

1. Subject to sub. (5), at least 5 years of professional experience in geologic work of a character satisfactory to the section

which demonstrates that the applicant is qualified to assume responsible charge of geologic work. At least 2 years of the geologic work required under this subdivision must have been performed under the supervision of any of the following:

a. A person who is licensed as a professional geologist under this chapter or, for work performed before January 1, 1999, who was registered as a professional geologist under ch. 443, 1995 stats.

b. A person who is licensed as a professional geologist in another state or territory or possession of the United States or in another country that has licensure requirements for professional geologists that are substantially equivalent to the requirements for licensure under this chapter.

c. Any other person whom the section determines is qualified to have responsible charge of geologic work.

2. Subject to sub. (6), at least 7 years of professional experience in geologic work of a character satisfactory to the section which demonstrates that the applicant is qualified to assume responsible charge of geologic work, with a satisfactory evaluation of the last 2 years of the professional experience under a peer review system approved by the section.

(3) The professional hydrologist section shall grant a professional hydrologist license to a person who satisfies the requirements under sub. (1) and who submits evidence satisfactory to the section of all of the following:

(a) Subject to ss. 111.321, 111.322 and 111.335, that he or she does not have an arrest or conviction record the circumstances of which substantially relate to the practice of professional hydrology.

(b) Subject to sub. (7), that he or she has a bachelor's degree with course credits in hydrology or water resources of a variety and nature sufficient to constitute a hydrology or water resources major from a college or university approved by the examining board.

(c) That he or she has completed one of the following:

1. Subject to sub. (5), at least 5 years of professional experience in hydrologic work of a character satisfactory to the section which demonstrates that the applicant is qualified to assume responsible charge of hydrologic work. At least 2 years of the hydrologic work required under this subdivision must have been performed under the supervision of any of the following:

a. A person who is licensed as a professional hydrologist under this chapter or, for work performed before January 1, 1999, who was registered as a professional geologist under ch. 443, 1995 stats.

b. A person who is licensed as a professional hydrologist in another state or territory or possession of the United States or in another country that has licensure requirements for professional hydrologists that are substantially equivalent to the requirements for licensure under this chapter.

c. Any other person who the section determines is qualified to have responsible charge of hydrologic work.

2. Subject to sub. (6), at least 7 years of professional experience in hydrologic work of a character satisfactory to the section which demonstrates that the applicant is qualified to assume responsible charge of hydrologic work, with a satisfactory evaluation of the last 2 years of the professional experience under a peer review system approved by the section.

(4) The professional soil scientist section shall grant a professional soil scientist license to a person who satisfies the requirements under sub. (1) and who submits evidence satisfactory to the section of all of the following:

(a) Subject to ss. 111.321, 111.322 and 111.335, that he or she does not have an arrest or conviction record the circumstances of which substantially relate to the practice of professional soil science.

(b) Subject to sub. (7), that he or she has a bachelor's degree with course credits in soil science of a variety and nature sufficient

to constitute a soil science major from a college or university approved by the examining board.

(c) That he or she has completed one of the following:

1. Subject to sub. (5), at least 5 years of professional experience in soil science work of a character satisfactory to the section which demonstrates that the applicant is qualified to assume responsible charge of soil science work. At least 2 years of the soil science work required under this subdivision must have been performed under the supervision of any of the following:

a. A person who is licensed as a professional soil scientist under this chapter or, for work performed before January 1, 1999, who was registered as a professional geologist under ch. 443, 1995 stats.

b. A person who is licensed as a professional soil scientist in another state or territory or possession of the United States or in another country that has licensure requirements for professional soil scientists that are substantially equivalent to the requirements for licensure under this chapter.

c. Any other person who the section determines is qualified to have responsible charge of soil science work.

2. Subject to sub. (6), at least 7 years of professional experience in soil science work of a character satisfactory to the section which demonstrates that the applicant is qualified to assume responsible charge of soil science work, with a satisfactory evaluation of the last 2 years of the professional experience under a peer review system approved by the section.

(5) The appropriate section of the examining board shall reduce the 5-year-experience requirement under sub. (2) (c) 1., (3) (c) 1. or (4) (c) 1. to 4 years if an applicant for a license has one or more advanced degrees, approved by the section, in geology, geophysics, geochemistry, hydrology, engineering geology, geotechnical engineering, soil science or a related science.

(6) The appropriate section of the examining board shall reduce the 7-year-experience requirement under sub. (2) (c) 2., (3) (c) 2. or (4) (c) 2. to 6 years if an applicant for a license has one or more advanced degrees, approved by the section, in hydrology, geology, geophysics, geochemistry, engineering geology, geotechnical engineering, soil science or a related science.

(7) The appropriate section of the examining board may waive a requirement specified in sub. (2) (b), (3) (b) or (4) (b) if an applicant for a license has professional experience in excess of 5 years that the applicant demonstrates to the satisfaction of the section is substantially equivalent to the requirement.

History: 1997 a. 300 ss. 20, 22, 62; 1999 a. 32.

Cross-reference: See also chs. GHSS 1, 2, 3, and 4, Wis. adm. code.

470.045 Firms, partnerships and corporations.

(1) The practice of professional geology, hydrology or soil science pertaining to the internal operations of a firm, partnership or corporation may be performed by employees if the professional geological, hydrological or soil science services are performed by or under the direct supervision of a professional geologist, hydrologist or soil scientist licensed under this chapter or exempt from licensure under s. 470.025. Licensed or exempt professional geological, hydrological or soil science employees may provide professional geological, hydrological or soil science data with respect to the manufacture, sale and utilization of the products of the firm, partnership or corporation to other licensed or exempt professional geologists, hydrologists or soil scientists.

(2) The practice or offer to practice professional geology, hydrology or soil science by individual professional geologists, hydrologists or soil scientists licensed under this chapter, through a firm, partnership or corporation as principals, officers, employees or agents, is permitted subject to this chapter, if all personnel who practice or offer to practice in its behalf as professional geologists, hydrologists or soil scientists are licensed under this chapter and if the firm, partnership or corporation has been issued a certificate of authorization under sub. (3).

(3) (a) A firm, partnership or corporation desiring a certificate of authorization shall submit an application to the department on

forms provided by the department, listing the names and addresses of all officers and directors, and all individuals in its employment licensed to practice professional geology, hydrology or soil science in this state who will be in responsible charge of professional geology, hydrology or soil science being practiced in this state through the firm, partnership or corporation and other relevant information required by the appropriate section of the examining board. A similar type of form shall also accompany the renewal fee. If there is a change in any of these persons, the change shall be reported on the same type of form, and filed with the department within 30 days after the effective date of the change. The appropriate section of the examining board shall grant a certificate of authorization to a firm, partnership or corporation complying with this subsection upon payment of the initial credential fee determined by the department under s. 440.03 (9) (a). This subsection does not apply to firms, partnerships or corporations exempt under s. 470.025 (3).

(b) The renewal date for certificates of authorization under this section is specified under s. 440.08 (2) (a), and the renewal fee for such certificates is determined by the department under s. 440.03 (9) (a).

(4) (a) No firm, partnership or corporation may be relieved of responsibility for the conduct or acts of its agents, employees or officers by reason of its compliance with this chapter, nor may any individual practicing professional geology, hydrology or soil science be relieved of responsibility for professional geological, hydrological or soil science services performed by reason of his or her employment or relationship with the firm, partnership or corporation.

(b) All final drawings, specifications, plans, reports or other papers or documents involving the practice of professional geology, hydrology or soil science that are prepared for the use of a firm, partnership or corporation for delivery by it to any person or that are prepared for public record within the state shall be dated and bear the signature and seal of the professional geologist, hydrologist or soil scientist who was in responsible charge of their preparation. This paragraph does not apply to persons exempt under s. 470.025 (3) or (4).

(5) No firm, partnership or corporation may engage or offer to engage in the practice of professional geology, hydrology or soil science in this state, or use in connection with its name or otherwise assume, use or advertise any title or description tending to convey the impression that it is engaged in the practice of professional geology, hydrology or soil science, nor may it advertise or offer to furnish a professional geological, hydrological or soil science service, unless the firm, partnership or corporation has complied with this chapter.

History: 1997 a. 300; 2007 a. 20.

470.05 Examination. Beginning no later than January 1, 2000, the appropriate section of the examining board shall conduct or arrange for examinations for licensure as a professional geologist, hydrologist or soil scientist at least semiannually and at times and places determined by the section. Examinations under this section shall require an applicant to demonstrate minimum competency in the principles and practice of subjects substantially related to the practice of professional geology, hydrology or soil science and may consist of one or more written or oral tests, or both.

History: 1997 a. 300.

Cross-reference: See also chs. GHSS 2, 3, and 4, Wis. adm. code.

470.06 Reciprocal licenses. Upon application and payment of the fee specified in s. 440.05 (2), the appropriate section of the examining board may issue a professional geologist, hydrologist or soil scientist license to a person who has been issued a similar license by another state or territory of the United States or in another country if he or she submits evidence satisfactory to the section of all of the following:

(1) That, subject to ss. 111.321, 111.322 and 111.335, he or she does not have an arrest or conviction record the circumstances of

which substantially relate to the practice of professional geology, hydrology or soil science.

(2) That the requirements of the other state, territory or country that issued the license are substantially equivalent to the requirements under this chapter.

History: 1997 a. 300.

470.07 Renewal of licenses. The renewal dates for licenses granted under this chapter are specified under s. 440.08 (2) (a). Renewal applications shall be submitted to the department on a form provided by the department and shall include the renewal fee determined by the department under s. 440.03 (9) (a) and evidence satisfactory to the appropriate section of the examining board that the applicant has completed any continuing education requirements specified in rules promulgated under s. 470.03 (2).

History: 1997 a. 300; 2007 a. 20.

470.08 Disciplinary proceedings and actions. (1) Subject to the rules promulgated under s. 440.03 (1), the appropriate section of the examining board may make investigations and conduct hearings to determine whether a violation of this chapter or any rule promulgated under this chapter has occurred.

(2) Subject to the rules promulgated under s. 440.03 (1), the appropriate section of the examining board may reprimand a person issued a license under this chapter, or may deny, limit, suspend or revoke a license under this chapter, if the applicant or license holder has done any of the following:

(a) Made a material misstatement in an application for a license or for renewal of a license.

(b) Subject to ss. 111.321, 111.322 and 111.335, been arrested or convicted of an offense the circumstances of which substantially relate to the practice of professional geology, hydrology or soil science.

(c) Been adjudicated mentally incompetent by a court of competent jurisdiction. A certified copy of the record of an adjudication of incompetency is conclusive evidence of incompetence under this paragraph.

(d) Advertised in a manner that is false, deceptive or misleading.

(e) Advertised, practiced or attempted to practice under another's name.

(f) Subject to ss. 111.321, 111.322 and 111.34, engaged in the practice of professional geology, hydrology or soil science while the person's ability to engage in the practice was impaired by alcohol or other drugs.

(g) Violated any requirement or standard relating to the practice of professional geology, hydrology or soil science established by the examining board by rule.

(h) Engaged in conduct while engaging in the practice of professional geology, hydrology or soil science which evidences a lack of knowledge or ability to apply professional principles or skills.

(i) Failed to cooperate with the examining board in an investigation under this section.

(j) Aided another person in violating this chapter or any rule promulgated under this chapter.

(k) Violated this chapter or any rule promulgated under this chapter.

(3) The examining board may reprimand a firm, partnership or corporation that holds a certificate of authorization issued under this chapter or may limit, suspend or revoke such a certificate if any of the agents, employees or officers of the firm, partnership or corporation has committed any act or has been guilty of any conduct which would authorize a reprimand or a limitation, suspension or revocation of a license under this chapter, unless the firm, partnership or corporation submits evidence satisfactory to the examining board that the agent, employee or officer is no longer practicing or offering to practice professional geology, hydrology or soil science in its behalf.

(4) Any person may make charges that any holder of a license or certificate of authorization issued under this chapter has committed an act for which a reprimand or limitation, suspension or revocation of registration is authorized under sub. (2). Such charges shall be in writing, shall be sworn to by the person making them and shall be submitted to the examining board. The examining board may, on its own motion, make such charges. All charges, unless dismissed by the examining board as unfounded or trivial, shall be heard by the appropriate section of the examining board, subject to the rules promulgated under s. 440.03 (1).

(5) If, after a hearing under sub. (4), 3 members of a section of the examining board vote in favor of sustaining charges specified in sub. (4), the examining board shall reprimand the holder of the license or certificate of authorization or limit, suspend or revoke the license or certificate.

(6) The examining board, for reasons the appropriate section of the examining board considers sufficient, may reissue a license or certificate of record to any person whose certificate has been

revoked if 3 members of the section vote in favor of the reissuance. Subject to the rules of the examining board, the examining board may, upon payment of the required fee, issue a new license or certificate of authorization to replace any license or certificate that is revoked, lost, destroyed or mutilated.

History: 1997 a. 300.

Cross-reference: See also ch. GHSS 5, Wis. adm. code.

470.09 Penalties. (1) A person who violates this chapter or any rule promulgated under this chapter may be required to forfeit not more than \$5,000 for the first offense and may be required to forfeit not more than \$10,000 for the 2nd or any later offense within a year. Each day of continued violation constitutes a separate offense.

(2) A person who willfully violates this chapter or any rule promulgated under this chapter may be fined not more than \$10,000.

History: 1997 a. 300.