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Hawaii Begins Licensure of Fire Protection Engineers

Coffman's engineers assist with legislation, Among the first to receive Hawaii FPE licensure

HONOLULU, Hawaii, December 13, 2023 – A historic milestone was achieved on September 12, 2023, as Hawaii became the final state in the U.S. to recognize fire protection engineering (FPE) through licensure. This long-awaited effort culminated when Governor Josh Green signed revisions to Chapter 16-155 of the Hawaii Administrative Rules governing the Hawaii State Board of Professional Engineers, Architects, Surveyors, and Landscape Architects (PEASLA). Prior to this approval, fire protection engineers in Hawaii were licensed in other states.

This pivotal moment represents the culmination of a 32-year campaign led by the Society of Fire Protection Engineers (SFPE) Hawaii Chapter. The commitment of current PEASLA Board Members Kevin Katayama, PE of Kevin Katayama & Associates, and Dan Hirota, PE of Coffman Engineers, was instrumental in navigating the complex rule change process, finally breaking through decades of disappointment.

The success of this initiative owes much to the enduring efforts of countless individuals including Robert Bigtas, PE, FSFPE, Lisa Koshimizu, PE, George Nishimura, PE, and Joe Condlin, PE. Their dedication to establishing the FPE discipline in Hawaii laid the groundwork for this achievement.

The first two engineers to receive the Hawaii FPE license are Kevin Katayama, PE of Kevin Katayama & Associates and Sam Dannaway, PE, FSFPE, Principal Advisor at Coffman Engineers.

Sam Dannaway, a trailblazer in the field, established the first full-service fire protection engineering firm in Hawaii in 1985. For decades, he tirelessly advocated for the recognition of this profession.

"I'm deeply grateful for the vigilance of supporters in this effort over many years," Dannaway said. "While it saddens me that it took so long, I am overjoyed it occurred before my retirement. This achievement is the 'Cherry on the Top' of my career."

Implementing FPE licensure in Hawaii is a significant step forward, ensuring the state's highest standards of practice for fire protection engineering professionals.

About Coffman Engineers



Coffman Engineers is a multidiscipline engineering consulting firm that offers clients local, personalized services by integrating many disciplines including civil, structural, mechanical, electrical, fire protection, and other specialties. Coffman has 780+ employees in 20 offices across the U.S. committed to the team effort it takes to build a better world. Visit coffman.com or connect with us on social media.

About the Society of Fire Protection Engineers (SFPE)

The SFPE is the leading international professional organization for fire protection engineers. Founded in 1950, the SFPE has over 5,000 members in over 80 countries. The organization provides a forum for the exchange of technical information and networking among fire protection professionals. The SFPE also advocates for the advancement of fire protection engineering and the development of codes and standards.

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