National Society of Professional Engineers®

2009
NATIONAL SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS
MILTON F. LUNCH ETHICS CONTEST
(Fact Situation)

FACTS

A developer retains a contractor to design and build a residential subdivision near several high voltage power lines. Engineer A, an electrical engineer employed by the contractor, recommends to the contractor and developer to include a protective steel mesh in the homes to be built to mitigate occupants' exposure to interior levels of low-frequency electromagnetic fields (EMF). While Engineer A understands that in the United States there are no widely-accepted health and safety standards limiting occupational or residential exposure to 60-Hz EMF, he is aware of and concerned about certain scientific research concerning possible causal links between childhood leukemia and exposure to low-frequency EMF from power lines. Because of the added cost associated with the recommendation, the developer refuses to approve the recommendation. Contractor directs Engineer A to proceed in accordance with the developer's decision.

QUESTION

What are Engineer A's ethical obligations under the circumstances?

NSPE CODE REFERENCES

(To be submitted by the contestant(s). Use NSPE Code of Ethics references only.)

DISCUSSION

(To be submitted by the contestant(s). Use the BER format as used in the attached sample case.)

CONCLUSION

(To be submitted by the contestant(s).)

NOTE: ***In order to maintain anonymity for purposes of judging, the actual body of the entry should not include any reference to the state society, chapter, member, student, university, or any other individual group(s) who submitted the entry. However, be sure to provide the name(s), address(es), email address(es), and phone number(s) of (1) your NSPE chapter or state society, and (2) each of the individual(s) responsible for submitting the entry, on a separate cover sheet accompanying your entry. Submissions failing to include this information will be returned to submitter(s) and will not be eligible for the contest.***