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Monroe Professional Engineers Society

A Chapter of the New York State Society of Professional Engineers

657 East Avenue, Rochester, New York 14607

Dedicated to Professionalism in Engineering in the Interest of Public Safety and Welfare

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NYSSPE Seeks Stricter Penalties for Unethical Practice

The first and foremost responsibility of the professional engineer is to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Recent events have demonstrated the seriousness of this obligation and the tragedy that can occur when this principle is flagrantly disregarded through unethical practice of engineering.

In 2011, Maqsood Faruqi, was contracted as a professional engineer to supervise the inspection of the façade of a building on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. Although Mr. Faruqi signed off on the building façade as being safe, later investigation revealed that he never even visited the site, nor did he review the maintenance records and previous inspections.

On May 17, 2015, two-year old Greta Greene and her grandmother, Susan Frierson, were sitting on a sidewalk bench below the façade that had been certified as safe by Mr. Faruqi. Suddenly bricks became dislodged from the façade and, falling eight stories, struck Greta and her grandmother. Tragically, little Greta died the following day as a result of head injuries.

Faruqi was arrested and pleaded guilty to one count of *offering a false instrument for filing* in exchange for a sentence of probation. In view of such a flagrant violation of engineering ethics and the associated tragic results, this light sentence can be considered a failure of our criminal justice system. There is still a professional misconduct charge pending. According to NYSSPE legal counsel, Mark Kriss, "we want to make certain that the significance of the injury... gets weighed and factored properly" in such cases.

There are currently two similar cases where NYSSPE is concerned that the *filing of false instruments* needs to be seen as a significant danger to public health, safety, and welfare, and needs to carry the proper degree of penalty. NYSSPE is currently working with the State Education Department and the Office of Professions in order to ensure that these cases carry the proper measure of discipline. A brief summary discussion of this topic can be viewed on The New York State Society of Professional Engineers' YouTube channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dBea1oeMt90>.

Sources:

1. Rojas, Rick. "Engineer Accused of Failing to Assess Manhattan Building Where Falling Debris Killed Girl." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 17 Nov. 2015. Web. 09 Mar. 2017.
2. Rosenberg, Rebecca. "Lying engineer takes no-jail plea after faulty building killed baby." *New York Post*. N.p., 25 May 2016. Web. 09 Mar. 2017.
3. Smith, Greg B. "NYC engineer charged after façade bricks killed 2-year-old." *NY Daily News*. N.p., 17 Nov. 2015. Web. 09 Mar. 2017.

Reminder to Register for the 2017 Engineering Symposium in Rochester

The annual Engineering Symposium in Rochester (ESR) will be held on April 18th at the Hyatt Regency, downtown Rochester. The event will feature 37 accredited courses for Professional Engineers, allowing attendees to individually earn up to 7 Professional Development Hours (PDH). Registration is available online at <http://www.engineeringsymposiumrochester.com/>.

As always, we encourage active membership in the Monroe Professional Engineers Society. We are constantly striving to improve your membership but we always need more help. If you are interested in becoming an active member or have any questions, please email me at dcrebertspe@gmail.com or contact MPES through our website at www.monroepes.org/contactus/.

David C. Roberts, P.E., President, MPES