

Codes and Standards Committee

The 2012 Edition of the International Building Code has been published. The next will be the 2015 edition, and **the deadline for receipt of code change proposals is January 3, 2012**. So, now is the time for the DFI technical committees to decide what changes they would like to see, and for DFI as a group to evaluate those proposals and issue consensus code change proposals to the International Code Council.

The committee has been working on two other fronts this year. Some members have been active at the local jurisdiction level (state, county or municipality) to promote local code changes. Generally, structural engineers are most active on these committees, and they encourage input from us on geotechnical issues.

The second front is the continuing success of the structural engineers in passing local laws that require a structural engineering license to design structures,

which sometimes extend to deep foundations, underpinning and retaining walls. In some states, apparently harmless title acts have been used by municipalities or specification writers to require that support of excavation systems be designed by a structural engineer licensed in that state. This proliferation of laws has gradually eroded the ability of geotechnical engineers to practice.

At last some good news from Seattle

Seattle has a long-standing amendment to the building code that requires a structural engineer's stamp for all structures. The exceptions for geotechnical design had been limited. Recently, the city expanded the exceptions to include all SOEs, regardless of height, provided that the geotechnical or civil engineer can demonstrate via letter of request and



resume that they have at least 5 years of experience designing systems of similar size and scope. One cannot submit resumes and

Larry Johnsen, P.E.
Committee Chair
office@hellerjohnsen.com

requests without an active project, but once you are approved by the city you do not need to re-submit for each project.

Our committee sees this local action as an example of how we can change the enforcement of SE laws and preserve our area of practice. We are trying to identify the individual(s) who lobbied this change to give them the recognition they deserve. Do you know who they are? If you do, let the committee know.