


October 6, 2009

Welcome to the e.Geo!

Welcome to the e.Geo - CalGeo's new electronic newsletter, delivered each month directly to your inbox. You'll still receive the printed Geogram three times per year, but this new tool will help us keep you better informed of the latest trends and studies, industry events, legislative updates, and industry news that matters to geotechnical professionals.

I hope you find it informative and helpful. If you have any questions, comments or feedback, please email me [here](#). Thanks for reading!



John Hoobs, *President*

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Legislative Update

Proposed service tax a potential threat to geotechnical professionals

Governor Schwarzenegger has announced he will declare a special session of the California Legislature in October to consider the state's "Blue Ribbon Commission on the 21st Century Economy" proposal. This plan includes a Business Net Receipts Tax (BNRT) that would require a new state tax be added to all invoices for engineering and other services. In return, corporate income tax would be eliminated and personal income tax would be lowered, all in an effort to reform California's tax system, which currently depends too much on corporate taxes and high-income individuals.

The BNRT proposal currently lacks the analysis and specificity for proper review, so CalGeo and ACEC California support the efforts of [Californians Against Higher Taxes](#) to halt its advancement through the legislative process. This proposal could potentially pose a threat to our businesses and serve as an unfair tax on our clients, so CalGeo will remain engaged and will keep our members updated as more information becomes available. Click here to [learn more](#) and [voice your opinion](#) to decision-makers in Sacramento.

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Call for Member News: Share Your Success!

Are you or your firm doing something worth noting? Did you win an award, get a promotion or finish a recognizable project? If you're making news, we want to hear about it. Send us your stories to cgea@comcast.net and we'll post them in this space in upcoming editions. Items should be 55 words or less.

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Member News

Former CalGeo Board Member Mike Miller of Stoney-Miller Consultants recently delivered key testimony in support of the City of San Diego's defense of a liability lawsuit stemming from a 2007 landslide in La Jolla. Miller's expert testimony helped relieve the city of responsibility for the damage to 65 homes, saving taxpayers millions of dollars. [Read more here.](#)

Affiliate member Geopier Foundation Company-West is proud to announce it is changing names to GeoTech Foundation Company-West in recognition of the firm's expanding product line. All other aspects of the company will remain the unchanged.

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Technical Corner

Retaining wall survey generates interesting findings, new research program

CalGeo conducted a survey of member firms in late 2008 to better understand member awareness of and standard practices for dealing with new code requirements related to retaining walls. The results, which will be posted shortly on our [Web site](#), indicate there is a broad approach to design methodology as well as selection of peak-ground accelerations for retaining walls.

Many practitioners also shared they have not observed retaining wall failures as a result of major earthquakes in northern and southern California. Based on this information, many members conclude that retaining wall stability is due in large part to our industry's general "overdesign" approach and a lack of understanding of the impact of ground accelerations on ridged walls.

To help our members better design rational, efficient retaining walls for seismic loading, CalGeo is launching a research program in concert with graduate students from Cal Berkeley. We anticipate the study will include literature search, parametric studies and experimental observations. CalGeo will keep members informed of our progress and findings.

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Safety First

Take Precautions to Prevent Heat Illness

Summer may be waning, but heat illness is still a major safety hazard for California's geotechnical professionals. Most heat illness can be prevented, so here are some simple steps to help keep you safe from the dangers of the sun.

- **Training** - Workers and supervisors should be trained in both environmental and personal risk factors, how to recognize the early warning signs, and in first aid measures.
- **Water** - You should be consuming three to four cups of water during each hour of heat exposure to remain hydrated, and avoid coffee, tea and soft drinks.
- **Shade** - Take periodic rest breaks in a cool or shaded area. Even a five-minute break can greatly reduce the potential for heat illness.
- **Planning** - Eat wisely, dress appropriately, apply sunscreen, and develop and follow written procedures for complying with heat illness prevention standards.

For the complete article by Judy Kerry of the State Compensation Insurance Fund, [click here.](#)

State Compensation Insurance Fund is endorsed by CalGeo.

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Welcome New Members

Active Members

Geo Spectra Consulting Engineers, Inc.

3747 S. Plaza Ave, Santa Ana, CA 92704

(877) 645-1414 | Primary Contact: Mohammad Joolazadeh

The Sutton Group

3708 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Ste. 215, Lafayette, CA 94549

(925) 284-4208 | Primary Contact: John Sutton

Laguna Geosciences, Inc.

31655 Coast Highway, Ste. A, Laguna Beach, CA 92651

(949) 499-7874 | Primary Contact: Matthew Hunter

Affiliate Members

Stego Industries, LLC

216 Avenida Fabricante, #101, San Clemente, CA 92672

(949) 493-5460 | Primary Contact: Mike McCarthy

Advanced Geosolutions, Inc.

2425 Colorado Ave., Ste. 310, Santa Monica, CA 90404

(310) 796-9000 | Primary Contact: Juan Baez

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