

May 18, 2011

Remembering The 2011 CalGeo Annual Conference

Peace, Love & CalGeo

By Dave Hamilton (Occasionally known as Rik Dürscale)
Hamilton & Associates



The Wayward Sons Rocked the Claremont!

CalGeo's 2011 Annual Conference at the historic Claremont Hotel in Berkeley was a huge success! More than 60 California geotechnical engineering companies, affiliates, and university chapters attended this 40th anniversary gathering. Two founding members (and our first two presidents), Mr. Jack Ralston and Mr. Don Shepardson, were in attendance.

Our keynote speaker, Dr. Leslie Youd of Brigham Young University, talked about the current differences of opinion regarding 'Procedures for Evaluation of Liquefaction Resistance'. The meeting included seven additional presentations on legislative, business practice, and current technical issues, as well as our annual member meeting items and a fun-filled golf tournament.

The closing night banquet was appropriately themed 'Peace, Love and CalGeo,' and the dance floor was packed during live entertainment by the 70's rock band Wayward Sons, featuring CalGeo's own Rik Dürscale on keyboard. [Click here](#) for more on one of CalGeo's best Annual Conferences.

CalGeo thanks everyone who was able to attend.

A Look Inside the Debate Over EERI Monograph MNO 12 Presented by: Professor Leslie Youd

By Fred Potthast

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Professor T. Leslie Youd

Brigham Young University professor T. Leslie Youd provided his views on the EERI MNO 12 debate as the keynote speaker at this year's Annual Conference. He traced evaluation of liquefaction from the "Simplified Procedure" in 1971 through an update in 2001, when a certain "chaos" emerged. Dr. Youd acknowledged that some chaos should be expected, as this process is still in development, and alternative viewpoints are necessary. He noted differences proposed since 2001, including an upcoming study commissioned by the Arkansas Transportation Department. He concluded that the various procedures appeared to yield FS results

within 10 percent to 30 percent of a mean, a range similar to many other accepted geotechnical calculations. He stressed that input parameters generated for one procedure should not be utilized in another. He also shared the logic path he uses: Evaluation of liquefaction FS, determination of the potential effects; and acceptance of the potential hazard or mitigation to an acceptable risk level, which may be more cost-effective. [Click here](#) to read more on Dr. Youd's presentation.

[Click here](#) to view Dr. Youd's presentation.

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Seismically Induced Lateral Earth Pressures: A New Perspective

By Ronald E. Loutzenhiser, P.E., G.E.

Taber Consultants

Dr. Nicholas Sitar, a professor at UC Berkeley, captivated a room of Annual Conference attendees with his research into seismically-induced lateral earth pressures (incremental earth pressure loads developed due to a seismic event) for retaining walls with granular backfill. He has been performing research using the UC Davis centrifuge to investigate seismically-induced loads on retaining walls.

He has drawn some preliminary conclusions from his work and research to date on retaining walls, including:

Lateral earth pressure distribution on a retaining wall during a seismic event is similar to that calculated for static active or at-rest pressure, and is a normal triangular load, not a uniform or inverse triangle.

Incremental seismic lateral loading is probably not required for Peak Ground Accelerations (PGA) of up to about 0.3 g for stiff walls or 0.4 g for flexible walls. Above these limits, an incremental pressure increase is probably warranted.

[Click here](#) to read more about Dr. Sitar's presentation.

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Five Free Ways to Win A Lawsuit – Before It's Even Filed

Niv Davidovich, Esq.

Professional Liability Team – Manning & Kass, Ellrod, Ramirez, Trester LLP

By Joe Rafferty

Redwood Geotechnical



Niv Davidovich, Esq.

Conference featured Niv Davidovich, e.Geo's legal contributor (Counsel's Corner). Niv focused on the leading sources of liability to geotechnical engineers in California and several recommendations to limit our exposure. He noted that most geotechnical engineers practicing in California can anticipate a lawsuit sometime in their future and his presentation included several specific recommendations for proposal contract inclusions, a discussion of indemnity clauses, and effective ways to document the job file. These measures can help to win a lawsuit before it's filed - or even position the engineer so that no lawsuit is filed. To learn more of Niv's suggestions, [Click](#)

[here.](#)

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CalGeo 2011 Annual Conference General Membership Meeting

By Danny Cohen

Hetherington Engineering, Inc.

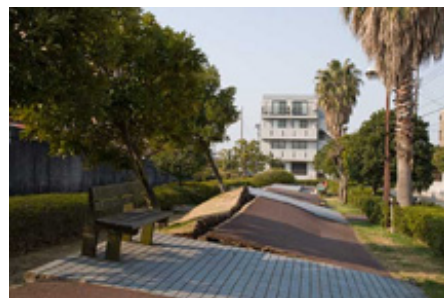
This year's CalGeo Annual Conference, held at the Claremont Hotel in Berkeley, California was extremely well attended by the membership, despite the difficult economic times and hardships being experienced by many of our member firms, particularly the smaller firms.

Due to the compressed conference schedule, this year's general membership meeting (GMM) was split into two sessions and held over two days. The meeting started with a brief introduction of the conference schedule, and then continued onto the board's regular business. Topics discussed included: budget issues, committee updates, business and legislative issues, partnering with other local and national organizations, by-law changes, and plans for the 2012 Maui conference.

The GMM culminated in welcoming our newly elected board member, Martin McIlroy with Taber Consultants. Some of the most active discussion focused on the direction of the Board of Directors and ways in which the board can better serve its members.

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June Regional Meeting and Webcast: "Lessons From The 2011 Tohoku Japan Earthquake"



By now you've seen hundreds (even thousands) of pictures and videos of the Japan earthquake. The Mw = 9.0 Tohoku Earthquake of March 11, 2011 was a tragic event, but it also provides enormous opportunity to advance our understanding of important earthquake processes related to the seismic source, ground motions, tsunami

effects, and the effects of the strong shaking on the civil infrastructure.

Dr. Jonathan P. Stewart of UCLA was a member of an international geotechnical engineering reconnaissance team that investigated the earthquake, and will be our speaker at the June 15 CalGeo webcast and meeting. He will discuss his observations, lessons learned to date, and opportunities for future research.



June Regional Dinner Meeting & Webcast

June 15, 2011

Social Time: 5:30 – 6:00 pm

Dinner: 6:00 – 7:00 pm

Program: 7:00 – 8:30 pm

Doubletree Hotel, Culver City

Prof. Jonathan Stewart

Please join us at the live-event or one of the webcast locations. With 14 sites to choose from, we're sure you'll find one near you so you don't have to miss this important topic. All members and interested non-members are invited to attend. For a complete registration flyer, locations and fee, [Click here](#).

[Click here](#) for more information on the Japan earthquake.

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Technical Corner

ENGEO Wins CalGeo's 2011 Outstanding Medium-Budget Project Award

At the 2011 Annual Conference, CalGeo presented Outstanding Project Awards to four member firms. ENGEO received the medium-budget project award for their work on a transit-oriented reuse development in Oakland known as Pacific Cannery Lofts. This 2.7-acre Brownfield site was redeveloped to offer 163 live/work lofts, including converted warehouse lofts and new townhouse lofts within walking distance to a Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station and minutes from the San Francisco - Oakland Bay Bridge. The project includes the seismic retrofit and reuse of the historic 1919 Pacific Coast Cannery warehouse building as well as a new garage and townhomes. The site is situated along the shoreline of a historic marsh and the majority of the site is underlain by highly organic silty clays known locally as Bay Mud. Micropiles were used to support new shear walls as part of the seismic retrofit of the warehouse building and shallow foundations for the new garage and townhomes are supported on ground improved with rammed aggregate piers (RAPs)/geopiers.



During Construction



[Click here](#) to read more of ENGEO's award winning project. We encourage all members to consider submitting their projects for the 2012 annual Outstanding Project Award.

Member News

LeRoy Crandall

LeRoy "Buzz" Crandall, one of the founders of the geotechnical consulting industry in Southern California and a founding member of CalGeo, passed away peacefully on April 3 at the age of 94.

- To read the obituary printed in the LA Times, [click here](#).
- To read stories about LeRoy sent in by CalGeo members, [click here](#).
- To read more about LeRoy's part in the founding of geotechnical consulting in Southern California, check out the April e.Geo [here](#).

ASCE Life Membership

CalGeo Vice President Rex Upp was pleasantly surprised in April to be presented with a Life Membership by ASCE. Suppose that means no more ASCE dues for Rex!

ACEC Lifetime Award

ACEC's Orange County chapter has announced that its 2011 Annual Awards Banquet will be held June 2, 2011. Iraj Poormand will be honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award. Learn more about the event [here](#).

Hamilton & Associates, Inc. Grows with Key Addition

Hamilton & Associates is pleased to announce that Richard A. Martin, PE, GE and the staff of Coastline Geotechnical Consultants, Inc. have joined the firm. With more than 45 years of experience and a proven track record of success, Richard Martin and his staff bring a wealth of geotechnical knowledge. [Click here](#) for Richard Martin's vCard contact information, or he can be emailed directly at RMartin@hamilton-associates.net.

Hamilton & Associates encompasses all aspects of Geotechnical Engineering and Engineering Geology Site Investigation and Studies, Soils and Materials Testing and Special Inspection. [Click here](#) to learn more about Hamilton & Associates, Inc.

New Job Openings Posted

BSK Associates has an opening for an Engineering and Environmental Branch Manager in its Fresno office. [Click here](#) for details.

BSK Associates also has an opening for a Geotechnical Group Manager in its Fresno office. [Click here](#) for details.

[Click here](#) for more information on other current positions available.

Student Chapter Activities

Annual Geo-Expo at UCLA

You are invited to attend the UCLA Annual Geo Expo on May 23, 2011 at UCLA's Boelter Penthouse. The event is hosted by the CalGeo student chapter at UCLA in conjunction with UCLA advisors, Professors Jonathan Stewart and Scott Brandenburg. [Click here](#) to view the invitation event details and RSVP information.

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Member Contribution

Profitability and Project Management

By Scott David Rudd, PMP

Quality Assurance Manager

R.T. Frankian & Associates

The geotechnical consulting industry has changed significantly over the last few decades; it is in the best interest of all member firms to take project management, and the interaction with project managers outside of our firms, with greater seriousness. The article linked below focuses on the potential for increased profitability by incorporating elements of a globally recognized standard framework for project management that is approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). The standard was assembled by the Project Management Institute and has been successfully used in other industries for almost three decades.

[Read the article here.](#)

David Rudd has more than 27 years of technical and managerial experience in the geotechnical community and holds the Project Management Professional (PMP) credential.

CalGeo encourages members to submit articles that will be of interest to California's geotechnical consulting community. [Click here](#) to learn more about submitting an article.

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What is a Geoprofessional?

By Michael V. Smith PG, CEG

Earth Systems, Inc.

What is a Geoprofessional?



In case you haven't seen this, Joel Carson of Kleinfelder made this video at the ASFE spring conference in St. Louis. It is funny, yet shows how much we need to spread the word about geoprofessionals.

This is truly a "[must-see.](#)"

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The 2011 Salary Survey

It's Coming Soon!

By Danny Cohen

Hetherington Engineering, Inc.

Within the next few weeks all Active member firms will be receiving the 2011 CalGeo Salary Survey questionnaire via e-mail. As you know, we use this tool to give our membership vital information regarding salaries for both technical and non-technical employees. Please fill in the questionnaire carefully and follow the instructions. If you know other firms who may not be members of CalGeo at this time but would be interested in this information, please have them contact Marsha Myers at mmyers@calgeo.org as we are trying to expand our contact database. All active firms that contribute by filling out the salary survey will get a free copy of the survey results. Active member firms that do not participate will pay \$250 for a copy. We appreciate your participation in the survey, and look forward to record-breaking participation this year!

[Questions-Comments-Feedback](#)

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Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors and Geologist (BPELSG) Needs Your Help!

By Mike Laney

There is a need for professional engineers and geologists to step up and volunteer to help BPELS in the areas of exam development, technical advisory and to provide technical review support for enforcement cases. CalGeo strongly urges any of you who are interested to apply for these positions.

[Geology Exam Development](#)

[Geotechnical Engineering Exam](#)

[Engineering Enforcement](#)

[Geology Enforcement](#)

If you have any questions, please contact BPELS by phone at (866) 780-5370 or BPELS_Office@dca.ca.gov.

Safety First

It Pays To Be Safe

“Courtesy of the State Compensation Insurance Fund”

In today’s economy, the cost of doing business is skyrocketing. In order to stay in business, companies are looking for ways to hold down expenses. One way business owners can control costs is to keep their workers safe and healthy. Studies show that the cost of a worker injury or illness can add up to thousands of dollars in medical bills, lost work time, and lost income. But, when companies develop and support an on-going safety and health program, those saved dollars can be put towards profits.

Regardless of the size of a company, its safety and health program should reflect the specific business activity, its location, its workforce, and any regulatory requirement that pertains to the business. The safest companies are those where management and workers partner together to create the program. When workers have a say in establishing the rules that apply to them, they’re more likely to abide by those rules.

The responsibility for the success of the program is a team effort and depends on all workers in the company understanding the various elements of the program and their role in supporting those elements. The elements of the program should be easily integrated into everyday business operations and implemented to the degree necessary to prevent worker injury or illness. Once in place, the program should be continually reviewed to assure that it reflects the existing and any new or changed conditions or hazards.

Although specific details of a safety program may vary from company to company, these are elements common to many successful safety programs:

- There’s top management commitment and leadership
- Employees are involved with responsibilities clearly assigned
- A workplace analysis has identified hazards
- Identified hazards are eliminated or controlled
- Relevant safety and health training and protective equipment is provided
- An accident investigation and recordkeeping systems is in place
- Medical and first aid systems are identified and available
- Performance goals and measurements are established

It pays to be safe. A comprehensive safety program can protect a business against financial losses and it can heighten worker morale and increase production. Every injury or illness that’s prevented is money saved – money that can be put towards profits.

Write For e.Geo!



Maybe some of you are more comfortable writing your good stuff on bathroom walls. Think about it while you're there, but now is the time to get out of that box (stall?) and write something interesting for the e.Geo. [Click here](#) for details of the e.Geo Standards of Publication.

Geotechnical Joke of the Month

Understanding Engineers

Two engineering students were walking across a university campus when one said, "Where did you get such a great bike?"

The second engineer replied, "Well, I was walking along yesterday, minding my own business, when a beautiful woman rode up on this bike, threw it to the ground, took off all her clothes and said, "Take what you want."

The first engineer nodded approvingly and said, "Good choice; the clothes probably wouldn't have fit you anyway."