

61G15-23.003 Procedures for Signing and Sealing Electronically Transmitted Plans, Specifications, Reports or Other Documents.

(1) Engineering work which must be sealed under the provisions of Section 471.025, F.S., may be signed electronically or digitally as provided herein by the professional engineer in responsible charge. As used herein, the terms “certification authority,” “digital signature” and “electronic signature” shall have the meanings ascribed to them in Sections 668.003(2), (3) and (4), F.S. The affixing of a digital or electronic signature to engineering work as provided herein shall constitute the sealing of such work.

(a) A scanned image of an original signature shall not be used in lieu of a digital or electronic signature.

(b) The date that the electronic signature file was created or the digital signature was placed into the document must appear on the document in the same manner as date is required to be applied when a licensee uses the manual sealing procedure set out in Rule 61G15-23.002, F.A.C.

(2) A professional engineer utilizing a digital signature to seal engineering work shall have their identity authenticated by a certification authority and shall assure that the digital signature is:

(a) Unique to the person using it;

(b) Capable of verification;

(c) Under the sole control of the person using it;

(d) Linked to a document in such a manner that the electronic signature is invalidated if any data in the document are changed.

(3) A professional engineer utilizing an electronic signature to seal engineering work shall create a “signature” file that contains the engineer’s name and PE number, a brief overall description of the engineering documents, and a list of the electronic files to be sealed. Each file shall have an authentication code defined as an SHA-1 message digest described in Federal Information Processing Standard Publication 180-3 “Secure Hash Standard,” October 2008, which is hereby adopted and incorporated by reference by the Board and can be obtained from the Internet Website: <http://www.flrules.org/Gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-00790> or http://csrc.nist.gov/publications/fips/fips180-3_final.pdf. The licensees shall then create a report that contains the engineer’s name and PE number, a brief overall description of the engineering documents in question and the authentication code of the signature file. This report shall be printed and manually signed, dated, and sealed by the professional engineer in responsible charge. The signed and sealed report shall be sent to the authority having jurisdiction either by hardcopy or electronic scan; if scanned and sent electronically. The hardcopy signed and sealed report shall be retained by the licensee in accordance with Rule 61G15-30.009, F.A.C. The signature file is defined as sealed if the signature file’s authentication code matches the authentication code on the manually signed, dated and sealed report. Each electronic file listed in a sealed signature file is defined as sealed if the listed authentication code in the signature file matches the electronic file’s computed authentication code.

(4) A professional engineer signing and sealing a document in electronic form that contains multiple plan sheets or pages may apply a single digital signature as set out in subsection 61G15-23.003(2), F.A.C., or an electronic signature set forth in subsection (3). **A single signature applied to a document in electronic form shall have the same force and effect as signing all of the individual sheets or pages in the set** contained in said document unless otherwise limited by elements of the project for which the engineer does not intend to accept responsibility by use of qualifying language, as set out in subsection 61G15-30.003(3), F.A.C. In the case where multiple engineers of record are to sign and seal a single document file, each shall apply their digital or electronic signature and include qualifying language in said signature, or in the text of the document thoroughly describing what portions they take responsibility for.

Rulemaking Authority 471.025(1), 668.006 FS. Law Implemented 471.025 FS. History—New 8-18-98, Amended 9-4-05, 5-6-09, 1-5-12, 8-20-12, 12-10-13.