



Online Ethics Center  
FOR ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

## Code Enforcement (adapted from NSPE Case No. 98-5)

### Year

1999

### Description

An engineer is in the position of having to trade one safety concern for another.

### Body

Ada is director of a building department in a big city. Because of budget concerns, the city has been unable to hire a sufficient number of qualified individuals to perform building inspections. This makes it difficult for the inspectors to do a good and thorough job. At the same time, a new and tougher building code was adopted by the city. While this code promotes greater public safety than the last one, it also contributes to the difficulty inspectors have doing a good and thorough job.

Ada sets up an appointment with the chairman of the city to discuss her concerns. The chairman agrees to hire additional code officials for the building department on the condition that Ada agrees to permit certain specified buildings under construction to be inspected under the older, less rigid enforcement requirements.

Should Ada agree to concur with the chairman's proposal?

[NSPE Code of Ethics](#) An earlier version may have been used in this case.

### Notes

See the original NSPE case at: [Code Enforcement - Case No. 98-5](#).

## **Rights**

Use of Materials on the OEC

## **Resource Type**

Case Study / Scenario

## **Parent Collection**

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## **Topics**

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## **Discipline(s)**

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