

Appraisal Practice Issue #7: What are your professional obligations when a simple typographical error is found that affected a stumpage rate determination? (January 2009)

Situation

A stumpage rate determination is incorrect due to a simple typographical error in data entry. This can result in a substantial revenue impact for either the licensee or Ministry Forests and Range.

Question

What are your professional obligations as a forest professional working for a licensee that receives the stumpage determination notice, or as a forest professional working for the Ministry of Forests and Range, when such an error is discovered?

If a forest professional becomes aware of such an error, then appropriate steps must be taken to inform those affected (or those who may be affected) by the error and subsequently take appropriate steps to correct the error.

We can go to the ABCFP Standards of Professional Practice, bylaw 12.4, Integrity standard for support of this conclusion. The integrity standard states:

“Forest Professionals, in private life, professional practice or outside professional activities, always conduct themselves honourably and in ways which sustain and enhance their professional integrity and the integrity of the profession as a whole.”

The Guidelines for Interpretation of bylaw 12 include the additional definition ...“Integrity includes the essence of competence, independence, honesty, honour, fairness, openness, credibility...”

Intellectual honesty is critical to the maintenance of this standard. Forest professionals conduct themselves with dignity and respect for all those persons with whom they interact. Forest professionals must also treat those they meet in their work with respectful regard. Respectful regard is a positive attitude and includes treating others with respect as you would expect in return as a forest professional.