



Florida Digital & Electronic Seals Explained

Frank Bennardo, P.E.

Electronic Seals

Once a physical document - always a physical document. Physical documents must be physically signed, dated and sealed.

Once an electronic document - always an electronic document. Electronic documents must be either electronically or digitally - signed, dated and sealed.

Electronic Seals

Are considered to be signed and sealed by virtue of the fact that the licensee has electronically “locked” the document, thereby preventing any changes from being made without corrupting the document and more importantly without the licensees’ knowledge.

Electronically transmitted documents can be “locked” (signed and sealed) by one of two methods:

- 1) Electronic signing and sealing (free)
- 2) Digital signing and sealing (pay service)

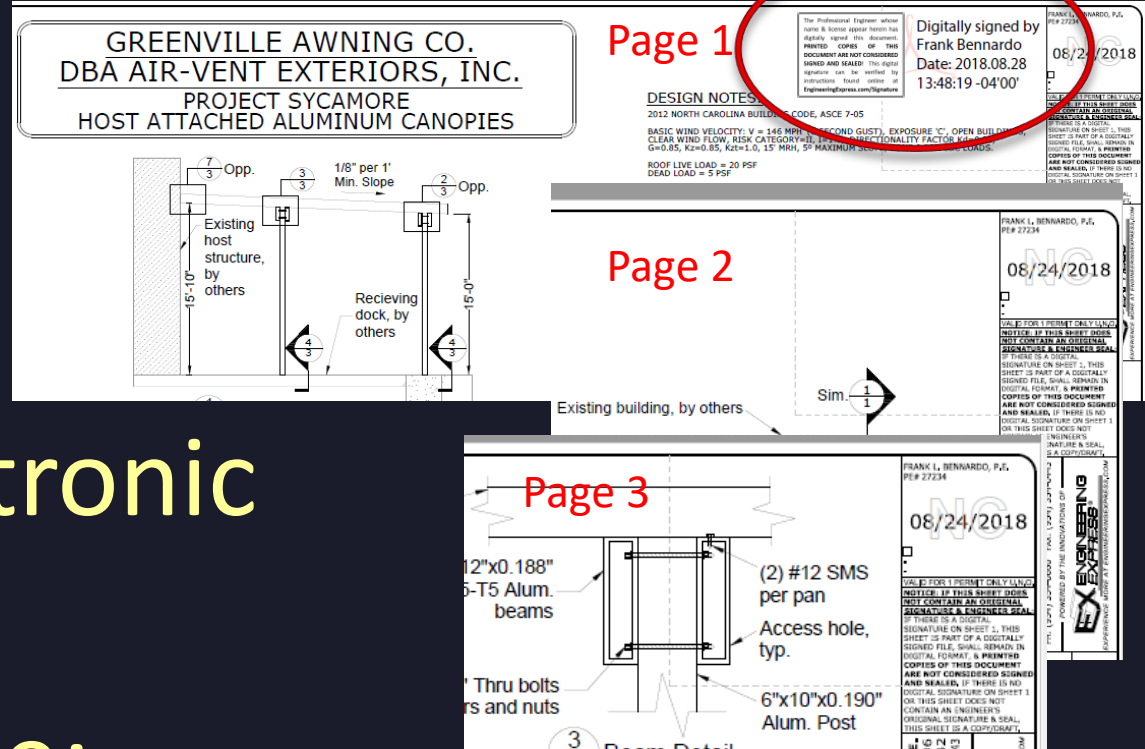
Digital vs. Electronic Seals

Digital signatures are provided by a **third party** whereas the licensee is required to have their identity authenticated by a certification authority

Electronic signatures: licensees are required to create a **“signature” file** and a **“signature” report**. The **“signature” file** is the file that contains the document(s) to be electronically signed and sealed (locked) for submittal.

The **“signature” report** is a singular document intended to summarize what is in the **“signature” file** and is being electronically signed and sealed. This report is required to include a brief overall description of the engineering document(s) being signed and sealed **along with the SHA-1 authentication code**.

Digital & Electronic Seals

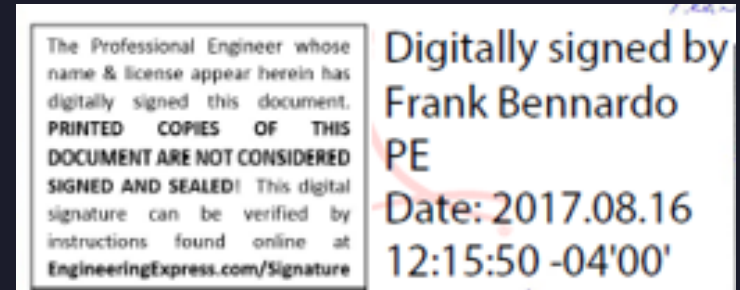


Digital & Electronic
Seals Show
On only 1 Page:
1 'SEAL' PER 'FILE'!

Physical seals must be on all pages
(unless calculation sheets)

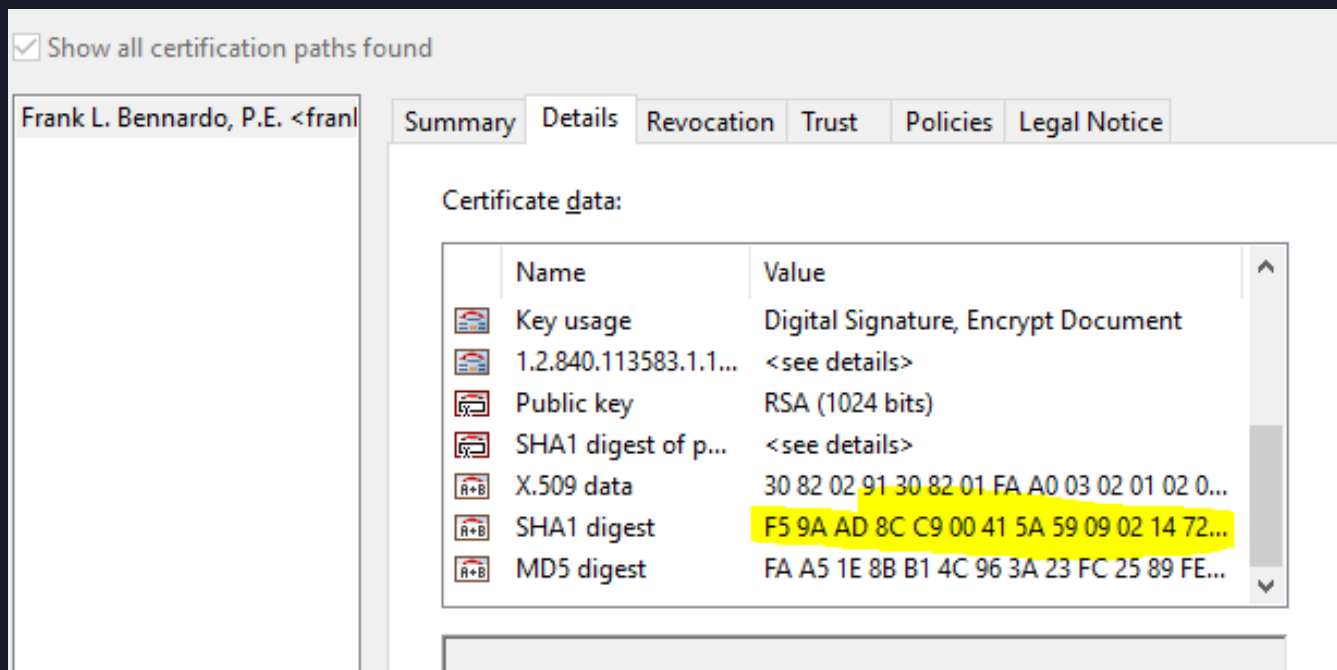
Electronic Seals

Example of an 'electronic' seal"



My digital signature is verified by the SHA-1 authentication code:

F5 9A AD 8C C9 00 41 5A 59 09 02 14 72 10 41 8D 3F 8B 23 CC



Electronic Seals

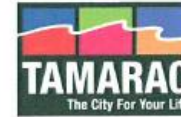
Are Intended for
use with **EACH**
PROJECT

TIME CONSUMING
but legal and 'free'

My digital signature is verified by the SHA-1 authentication code:

F5 9A AD 8C C9 00 41 5A 59 09 02 14 72 10 41 8D 3F 8B 23 CC

BUILDING DEPARTMENT



Claudio Grande
Chief Building Official / Director

Nothing within this provision is intended to waive or enlarge the City's sovereign immunity, including, but not limited to the provisions of section 768.28, Florida Statutes.

Governing Law. The Undersigned understands that the electronic signing and sealing of documents is governed by Florida law, specifically but not limited to sections 481.221 and 472.025, Florida Statutes, architects, the Electronic Signature Act of 1996 (sections 668.01-668.006, Florida Statutes) and Florida Administrative Code sections 61G1-16.005, 61G15-23.003 for engineers, and 5J-17.060 thorough 5J-17.062 for surveyors/mappers, as applicable. The City of Tamarac has attempted to create an electronic signature process in compliance with Florida law but shall not be liable in any manner for any violations of professional licensure regulations. It is the Undersigned's responsibility to ensure compliance with all laws, regulations, and ordinances that govern his/her professional license.

By signing this document, you are not only agreeing to the foregoing but certifying that: Any willful falsification of any information contained herein is grounds for disqualification.

FRANK BENNARDO PE
APPLICANT NAME (Please print)

ENGINEERING EXPRESS
NAME OF COMPANY
FRANK L BENNARDO PE INC

The Professional Engineer whose name & license appear herein has digitally signed this document. **PRINTED COPIES OF THIS DOCUMENT ARE NOT CONSIDERED SIGNED AND SEALED!** This digital signature can be verified by instructions found online at EngineeringExpress.com/Signature

Digitally signed by
Frank Bennardo
PE
Date: 2017.08.16
12:15:50 -04'00'

NOTE FL PE IS 46549. MY DIGITAL SEAL IS FOR 25 STATES I CANNOT CONTAIN THE PE # WHICH IS PRINTED UNDER EACH SEALED PLAN. I FOLLOW ALL STATE REQUIREMENTS.



"Committed to Excellence...Always."

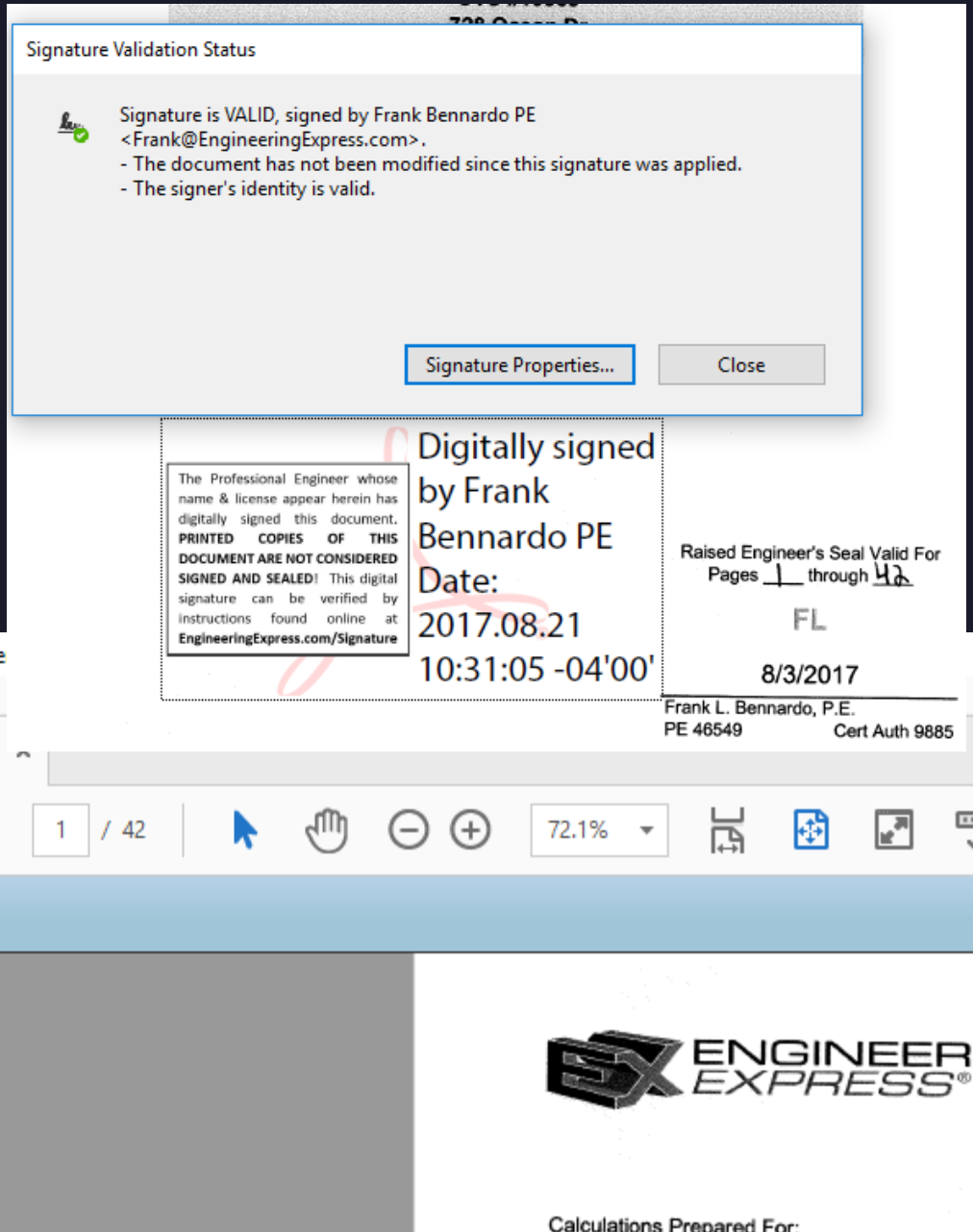
TAMARAC.ORG

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Digital Seal Example

Much larger &
stronger
encryption codes
– the could take
the whole page to
write out



Electronic Seals

ALL Electronically transmitted documents are **required to contain a statement** indicating that the document has been electronically signed and sealed (located immediately adjacent to where the signature would appear) and that printed copies of the document are not considered signed and sealed.

The Professional Engineer whose name & license appear herein has digitally signed this document.
PRINTED COPIES OF THIS DOCUMENT ARE NOT CONSIDERED SIGNED AND SEALED! This digital signature can be verified by instructions found online at EngineeringExpress.com/Signature

This is required so that the recipient of a printed copy of an electronically transmitted document will know that the printed copy is not an original signed and sealed copy.

Source: FBPE Online FAQ's 4/17
<https://fbpe.org/your-fbpe/faqs/legal-faqs/>

Digital & Electronic Seal Format Examples

Acceptable Example



This item has been electronically signed and sealed by *[Licensee, PE]* on *[DATE]* using a **SHA-1 authentication code**.

Printed copies of this document are not considered signed and sealed and the **SHA-1 authentication code** must be verified on any electronic copies.

Acceptable Example

[Licensee] State of Florida, Professional Engineer, License No. **X**
This item has been electronically signed and sealed by *[Licensee, PE]* on *[DATE]* using a **SHA-1 authentication code**.

Printed copies of this document are not considered signed and sealed and the **SHA-1 authentication code** must be verified on any electronic copies.

The Professional Engineer whose name & license appear herein has digitally signed this document. **PRINTED COPIES OF THIS DOCUMENT ARE NOT CONSIDERED SIGNED AND SEALED!** This digital signature can be verified by instructions found online at EngineeringExpress.com/Signature

Digitally signed by
Frank Bennardo
PE

Date: 2017.08.16
12:15:50 -04'00'

Digital / Electronic Seal Takeaways:

- Seal the 'File', not all pages
- Notice that hardcopies are not permitted for use must appear on all pages
- Digital seal must be a trusted third party (the state does not mandate who)
- May be limited for use by disclaimers

61G15.23.004 F.A.C. (9/18)

61G15-23.004 Procedures for Digitally Signing and Sealing Electronically Transmitted Plans, Specifications, Reports or Other Documents.

(1) Engineering plans, specifications, reports or other documents which must be signed, dated and sealed in accordance with the provisions of section 471.025, F.S., and rule 61G15-23.001, F.A.C., may be signed digitally as provided herein by the professional engineer in responsible charge. As used herein, the terms “certification authority,” and “digital signature” shall have the meanings ascribed to them in sections 668.003(2) and (3), F.S.

(2) A professional engineer utilizing a digital signature to electronically sign and seal engineering plans, specifications, reports or other documents 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; and,

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

(3) The affixing of a digital signature to engineering plans, specifications, reports or other documents as provided herein shall constitute the signing and sealing of such items.

(a) A digitally created seal as set forth in rule 61G15-23.002, F.A.C., may be placed where it would appear if the item were being physically signed, dated and sealed.

(b) The date that the digital signature was placed into the document must appear on the document in accordance with subsection 61G15-23.001(4), F.A.C., and where it would appear if the item were being physically signed, dated and sealed.

(c) The engineering plans, specifications, reports or other documents being digitally signed and sealed shall include text to indicate the following and place it where an original signature would appear if the item were being physically signed, dated and sealed:

1. The same information required by subsection 61G15-23.002(2), F.A.C., if a digitally created image of the seal is not use;

2. The item has been digitally signed and sealed; and,

3. **Printed copies of this document are not considered signed and sealed and all signatures must be verified on any electronic copies.**

(d) Formatting of seals and text similar to that depicted below shall be used. While the formatting may be altered, the text must remain identical.

61G15.23.004 (9/18)

1. When a digitally created seal is used:



This item has been digitally signed and sealed by [NAME] on the date adjacent to the seal.

Printed copies of this document are not considered signed and sealed and the signature must be verified on any electronic copies.

2. When a digitally created seal is not used:

[NAME], State of Florida, Professional Engineer, License No. [NUMBER]

This item has been digitally signed and sealed by [NAME] on the date indicated here.

Printed copies of this document are not considered signed and sealed and the signature must be verified on any electronic copies.

(e) When engineering plans, specifications, reports or other documents contain multiple sheets or pages, the licensee may apply

a single digital signature per electronically transmitted item as set out in rule 61G15-23.001, F.A.C. A digital signature applied to an item in electronic form shall have the same force and effect as signing all of the individual sheets or pages contained within that item unless otherwise limited as specified in subsection 61G15-30.003(3), F.A.C.

(f) In the case where multiple licensees sign and seal a single item, each licensee shall apply their digital signature and include qualifying language with those items required in paragraph (e) of this rule, thoroughly describing what portions the licensee is taking responsibility for.

Rulemaking Authority 471.025(1), 471.033(2), 471.008 FS. Law Implemented 471.025, 471.033(1)(j), 668.003, 668.006 FS. History—New 11-3-15, Amended 9-7-17, 6-19-18.



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BY FRANK BENNARDO, PE FIRM PRESIDENT
(2018)