

# PROPER USE OF THE NARTE STAMP

## A Caution on the Use of NCE – Don't Stamp Your Way Into a Hornet's Nest

By Russell V. Carstensen, PE, NCE

From time to time questions are raised about how to use (that is under what circumstances, not how to transfer the image of) the NARTE certification stamper. The purpose of the stamper is to mark your work with your credentials. Governments have restrictions on who can claim they are engineers (oddly enough there are no restrictions on who can claim to be a technician). This article will help outline the circumstances for acceptable use.

When you buy a stamper from NARTE you can stamp objects with your certification number and the NARTE logo. If you stamp a drawing to show your agreement or that you have reviewed a portion of the drawing (with a suitable annotation of just what your stamping means), that is not advertising your standing as an engineer to the public. That is an integral part of the drawing content. If you stamp anywhere on the title block, that is a declaration of professional competence and runs directly into the legal standing of the jurisdiction in which you work. If you stamp your stamper on a rest room wall (a la "for a hot time call this number"), that is advertising to the general public.

NARTE's function is to validate professional credentials of engineers and technicians in certain narrow specialties not directly covered by engineering registration laws. Our certification process involves a combination of education, work experience peer endorsement and examination. Generally, for engineers the requirement is nine years experience, four of which can be from an accredited college or university and the remainder in field practice. The examination is an eight-hour session of academic questions related to the field of practice. Peer endorsement consists of one supervisory person and three others each familiar with the candidate's experience and in support of the candidate's competence and character.

As assistance to our members, we provide ap-

propriate symbology to clearly and succinctly identify their standing as a NARTE certified professional. For example, we endorse the use of the initials NCE (NARTE Certified Engineer) or NCT (NARTE Certified Technician) as an expression of the individual's credibility in their chosen field. We have a policy statement on the use of the initials NCE and NCT (see side bar).

NARTE has offered copies of its logo for a number of years for member use on business cards and stationary and has sold an embosser for professional marking of individual products for more than ten years. In about April of 2000 NARTE began offering an ink stamper for the same purpose.

You need to know full well when stamping by a registered professional is required. The NARTE stamp is used to demonstrate that the page containing the stamp has been reviewed by a NARTE certified professional and the agency would stand by the contents and conclusions on the page.

To avoid confusion NARTE notifies each of the body of members that buy the stamper of our policy for its use and includes a copy of the policy with each future sale.

All states have some sort of engineering registration law. In essence these laws were created to protect the public. One form of that protection is for engineering products to demonstrate conformity to the registration law by being approved (stamped) by a registered engineer. The NARTE stamper is not intended to usurp, replace or avoid the use of a professional engineering stamp on drawings and other products so required by the individual state in which practice is conducted. Thus you must be careful to both be sure that an engineering registration stamp is present if required and to use your stamp in a fashion that does not leave an impression that the NARTE stamp is the necessary registered engineer stamp. Failure to do so can lead to disciplinary action on the part of the state board of registration in which the incident occurred, or by NARTE or both.

Not all engineering products require validation by a registered engineer. For example, the Federal government requires registration only in limited circumstances. Engineering work performed internally for a company building a device or commodity may not require a licensed engineer if the end product is the

device or commodity, not the engineering associated with it. It is your responsibility to know when stamping by a licensed engineer is required.

The NARTE stamper may be used to indicate or validate your professional standing. NARTE certification represents professional credentials of expertise and achievement to a recognized industry standard. NARTE certification is a standard of excellence in the field of telecommunications. If you are not sure how to use the stamper, here are some suggestions:

On a test or study report, stamp after the author's name and, if possible, include a brief statement on what NARTE certification represents, such as "NARTE certification provides professional credentials of achievement to a recognized industry standard" or "by this stamp, the details herein are endorsed by a communications specialist."

On a drawing, stamp in the area of the title block or in a general note with the explanation of what NARTE certification represents such as "NARTE certification provides professional credentials of achievement to a recognized industry standard."

On correspondence, if the NARTE logo is not used, stamp the lower left- or right-hand corner or below the signature. If the NARTE logo is used, it may be better not to stamp the document to avoid redundancy.

**NARTE Policy on Use of the Acronym NCE and NCT**

We receive many calls regarding the protocol of using the acronym NCE (NARTE Certified Engineer) and NCT (NARTE Certified Technician). Can it be used? Where can it be used? How should it be used? NCE and NCT are indeed very useable and very appropriate abbreviations, which represent distinctive achievement and expertise. They may be used after the name of the certified individual and/or in conjunction with the NARTE logo on business cards, forms, stationery or advertisement. Should you need a camera-ready copy of the NARTE logo, please advise the headquarters. We'll be happy to send the logo (and instructions for use) by mail or email at [narte@narte.org](mailto:narte@narte.org).

NARTE also offers, at our cost, both an embosser and ink stamper which depict the name of the certified individual

**NARTE Logo Use Policy**

Individuals certified by NARTE are encouraged to use the NARTE logo on their business cards and personal stationery. However, NARTE-certified individuals must adhere to the following rules:

- a. NARTE is registered with the United States Patent and Trademark Office. The ® symbol must be used with the word NARTE on first reference.
- b. Permission to use the NARTE logo is extended only while your NARTE certification is current. Permission to use this logo is automatically withdrawn if your NARTE certification is not renewed.
- c. The NARTE Certified individual's first and last name must also appear on any material that includes the NARTE logo.
- d. The typeface and graphic elements of the logo may not be re-typeset, altered, or modified in any way. All elements of the logo typeface and graphics must be clearly legible and recognizable.
- e. The words "Certified" and "Engineer/or Technician" are part of the logo and must be included.
- f. Preferred logo colors are dark blue (Pantone Matching System #289), black or reversed as silver or gold.

To guard against copy and/or misuse, the "NARTE Certified" logo is not to be posted to electronic media such as web sites or email. The NARTE Web logo should be used for linking purposes.

Thank you for adhering to these rules. Misuse of the NARTE logo may result in penalties, including loss of your NARTE Certification. Please contact NARTE at 1-800-89-NARTE if you have questions regarding a logo application.

NARTE, Inc.  
 P.O. Box 678  
 Medway, MA 02053  
 phone: 1-800-89-NARTE  
 fax: 508-533-3815  
 visit: [www.narte.org](http://www.narte.org)  
 email: [narte@narte.org](mailto:narte@narte.org)