

OUR ROLE AS ENGINEERS

I used to have a teacher at school who said that if any of us by chance become a civil engineering, we should not look only at the economic side of things, but also at the environment. By that time I still didn't know what I was going to study but I remember that phrase "Don't build the road straight just because it is cheaper regardless everything else". **As I was being started in the engineering world** I realized our decisions have a great impact on the environment, and that sometimes it is not taken in to account when comparing different project alternatives. I think in the past it was not considered at all but nowadays this has improved, engineers are taught about environmental issues, and also constructions sites are more controlled, for instance you cannot take materials from anywhere of deposit discard materials at any place.

I have been working over the summer in a project design office and each project made, has a part regarding its environmental impact. This is something some engineers do not like because when working at the jobsite, a lot of licensees are required and often cause setbacks on the project schedule increasing the overall cost of the project. Nevertheless I think it is necessary because otherwise nobody would care about it, unfortunately this is a word in which money governs all decision, and this needs to change because otherwise we're going to paid later for all the errors made.

Not only engineers have the power to conduct a change in our action, actually everyone has to be aware of the problem that is coming up, and contribute on improvement of the environment and live in a sustainable way, by recycling, and making an effective use of things, because only if every person is concerned the change can be made. I am from Spain and I notice a great different on people way of life when I first came here regarding sustainability. For instance, the diary waste produced per person is much higher, I think people here are not aware about the importance of recycling yet, and as gas is cheap nobody cares about gas mileage, so all this ends in a much larger consumption of resources and a larger production of waste.

Concluding, I think that us as engineers have a great power either to create problems or to solve them, so what we have to do is to carefully examine any possible future consequence of our decisions and take the one which is best for the environment and future generations would thank us.