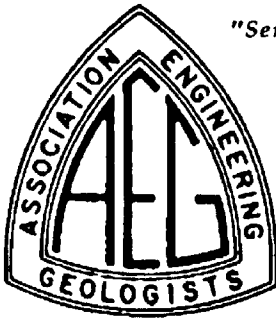


# Association of Engineering Geologists

"Serving Professionals in Engineering, Environmental and Groundwater Geology Since 1957"



Southern California Section

## NEWSLETTER - June 1997

### SECTION OFFICERS

Chairman: David Ebersold  
(818) 796-9141  
dave.ebersold@us.mw.com

Vice Chair.: Thomas L. Slosson  
(818) 376-6540

Treasurer: Mark A. Swiatek  
(818) 785-5244  
swiatek@smartdocs.com

Secretary: Charles Nestle  
(818) 458-4925  
ctnestle@ix.netcom.com

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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(714) 647-0277

Legislative & Regulatory Affairs:  
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Field Trip: Kim Bishop  
(213) 343-2409

Short Course: Sue Tanges  
(619) 442-8022

Education: Ali Tabidian  
CSUN — (818) 677-2536  
atabidian@csun.edu

Publications: Rudy F. Ruberti  
(818) 785-2158

AEG Newsletter Editor:  
Kelly E. Rowe  
(714) 378-3216  
(714) 378-3381 FAX  
2012 Balearic Drive  
Costa Mesa, CA 92626  
e-mail: krowe@ocwd.com or  
krowe@ix.netcom.com

Deadline for submittals to the  
July Newsletter:  
June 24th

Next Meeting July - Joint with  
SDAG & IGS (down south)

### Joint Dinner Meeting Tuesday June 17th with Coast Geological Society

- American Legion Hall  
83 S. Palm Street  
Ventura, California
- Cost - \$12.00 (w/ Res.) \$17.00 (w/out Res.)  
(\$5.00 for full-time students with valid I.D.)  
Sponsors for Meeting (Gorian & Assoc. and Tri-Valley Drilling)
- For reservations call Applied Environmental Tech.  
at (805) 650-1400 by Friday June 13th

**Make reservations by Noon on the Friday before the Meeting**

- 5:30 Social Hour & One-Half
- 7:00 Dinner
- 7:30 Announcements
- 7:45 Program

### Program

**TOPIC Malibu: Strange Landslides,  
Stranger Clients & How to Do a  
Good Job and Still Get Sued**

**SPEAKER Donald B. Kowalewsky**  
Engineering Geologist/President  
Donald B. Kowalewsky, Environmental and  
Engineering Geology

### ROUTE to Ventura Joint Meeting

Northbound: Highway 101 -  
Take California Street Exit,  
West (Left) Thompson Blvd.,  
North (Right) on Palm St.

Southbound: Highway 101 -  
Take Ventura Avenue Exit,  
East (Right) Thompson Blvd.,  
North (Right) on Palm St.

## Program Topic & Speaker

### Malibu: Strange Landslides, Stranger Clients & How to Do a Good Job and Still Get Sued

**Donald B. Kowalewsky**

Two landslides will be discussed as they relate to the tectonically disturbed geologic environment. Santa Monica Mountains are the southernmost range of the Transverse Ranges Province and have been uplifted along an active reverse/thrust fault system which includes multiple segments, from west to east, Santa Rosa Island-Santa Cruz Island-Anacapa-Dume-Mailibu Coast-Potrero Canyon-Santa Monica-Hollywood and Raymond faults. In Malibu the Malibu Coast fault has several east-west trending branches including from north to south, the "Main Trace" Yerkes and Campbell, "Main Trace" Dibblee, Puerco Canyon, Latigo, Ramirez/Escondido, Paradise Cove, Point Dume and various unnamed offshore segments. Malibu coastline formed along this complex fault breccia/gouge zone through tectonic, and erosional processes. As you might expect, rocks reflect the tectonic history.

Faults and landslides are commonly associated. Cross-bedding slope failures occur in Malibu because of the severely fractured, weak nature of the bedrock. By mentally considering the combination of fractured rock, weak mudstone, highly weathered clayey to very hard igneous intrusive and extrusive rocks, and a regional bedding trend that nearly parallels the northerly dip of the fault system, it is not difficult to imagine a very unpredictable subsurface configuration for landslides. In one case, a mega-landslide dammed a canyon, resulting in strange geomorphology. In a second case, a coastal bluff landslide has a toe that can be modeled by a chevron fold with the slide moving down along a plane dipping 38 degrees south to an elevation of 2 feet above sea level and then immediately up along a 46 degree north dipping plane to 32 feet above sea level. Logic would have suggested the slide toed into the ocean. So much for geo-logic.

Now superimpose on that complex geology, a relatively wealthy group of humanity looking for the good life with great ocean views, balmy climate, and that ambiance of the "Malibu Lifestyle". Remembering that most of those folks get their way at the office/studio every day and rarely hear their subordinates say no, or you can't. Take those new mini-estates and irrigate them into lush tropical rain forests. But of course, subsequent slope instability couldn't possibly be their fault and besides with a bad lawyer and a good insurance policy you might even figure out a way to sue yourself (and every one else involved).

The speaker, Donald B. Kowalewsky, has extensive experience in engineering geology issues related to the interesting/complex geology of the Malibu area. He has over 24 years of experience following receipt of his B.S. in Geology at CSU, Long Beach and graduate studies at USC. For the last 14 years he has been the chief geologist at his own firm, Donald B. Kowalewsky, Environmental and Engineering Geology. His responsibilities included being the City Geologist for the City of Malibu, under contract from 1991 to 1994, and continuing ongoing geologic consulting work for the City of Calabasas, from April 1993 to present. Much of this work has been related to landslide stabilization studies, expert witness research and testimony for various landslide, debris flow, drainage and land-use litigation.

## THIS MONTH

June 1997

Kelly E. Rowe  
Hydrogeologist



This month the meeting will be the first joint meeting our section will have with the Coast Geological Society. This group is based in the Ventura/Santa Barbara area. Don Kowalewsky should have interesting case histories to discuss which are similar to case histories many of the "Coast" professionals have experienced or will experience as people will continue to want to develop homes on the coastal hillslopes. LA people will continue to spread out toward and commute to Ventura and Santa Barbara, no matter how crazy it seems. This meeting is a good opportunity to meet the northern AEG Southern California Section members.

Last month Gary Rasmussen presented many aerial photos and descriptions of problems he thinks may be related to "bedrock landslides". He made many good points on this issue based on geomorphic features of the areas he showed he thought supported such landslides. The size of some of these landslides was proposed to be on the order of about a mile wide and several hundred feet thick. After several of the examples were presented I imagined, like chicken little, that there were bedrock landslides all over the place... And as a hydrogeologist I wonder how does the groundwater move through those buggers? Confirmation of these type of landslides will be expensive to prove as it would require very large trenching and bedrock coring operations.

Please note the election ballot for the next-year's section officers in this newsletter. Fill it out and send it in. I expect the slate of candidates will do a great job. Dave Ebersold is compelled to stick around for another year as chairman. He wants to continue to represent our section and get CCGO kicked off to be a successful forum to better represent geologists and the public in California. We are way behind in political savvy to protect ourselves and the public on issues legislators and state administrators are ignorant. They need our help. Thomas Slosson graciously agreed to continue as the vice chairman for next year. This is the most fun job to have: calling officers at other Southern California geo-societies to set up meetings and calling prospective speakers who would be willing to share with us what they know. Martin Lieurance is interested in being the secretary of the section, will keep track of your addresses for the newsletter and will learn what the heck the other officers do. Wendy Schell has volunteered for the post of treasurer: a post I always avoided as a volunteer in this and other organizations. Wendy is the first woman to participate as an officer of the section in way too many years. Please give them all your support...We still need more volunteers...Call them.

Dave Ebersold did not write a "chairman's column" this month. Together, we have frankly fed tons of information to you via the newsletter over the last few months and need a break. Dave now needs to get more rest because he is blessed with the birth of his new son, Craig, born on June 3rd, weighing 7 pounds.

### Employment Opportunity

**Marketing Managers:** Leighton & Associates, Inc., a leading Southern California Geotechnical Engineering Firm, is seeking experienced professional A-E services marketers for 2 business development staff openings in our offices in Walnut (to include inland empire market) and Westlake Village (including Ventura County) for immediate consideration, send your resume to:

LEIGHTON AND ASSOCIATES

ATTN: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

17781 COWAN, IRVINE, CA 92614 (NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE)

# Ballot for AEG Southern California Section Officers - 1997 to 1998

*Chairman*      Dave Ebersold     

Write-In \_\_\_\_\_

*Vice Chairman*      Thomas Slosson     

Write-In \_\_\_\_\_

*Secretary*      Martin Lieurance     

Write-In \_\_\_\_\_

*Treasurer*      Wendy Schell     

Write-In \_\_\_\_\_

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Mail to:    *Joe Cota - Election Committee Chairman*  
              *c/o Geosoils*  
              *6634 Valjean Avenue*  
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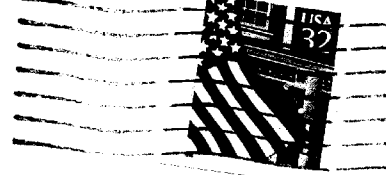
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Address \_\_\_\_\_

to: ZIP-A-DIP, 3891 Ashford Dr. Eugene, OR 97405



**Association of Engineering Geologists**  
Southern California Section



Kelly E. Rowe  
AEG Newsletter Editor  
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