

Contracts for Engineers: Intellectual Property, Standards, and Ethics

Robert D. Hunter

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Engineers encounter different types of contracts at nearly every turn in their careers. Contracts for Engineers: Intellectual Property, Standards, and Ethics is a tool to enhance their ability to communicate contractual issues to lawyers—and then better understand the legal advice they receive.

Building on its exploration of contracts, this book expands discussion to:

- Patents, copyrights, trademarks, trade secrets, and other intellectual property issues
- Development of standards and the bodies that govern them, as well as conformity assessment and accreditation
- Ethics at both the micro and macro levels—a concept under major scrutiny after several major disasters, including the Gulf of Mexico oil spill, the collapse of Boston's Big Dig, and a coal-mining accident that resulted in many deaths

With a brief introduction to common law contracts and their underlying principles, including basic examples, the book presents a sample of the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) regarding the sale of goods. It evaluates elements of the different contracts that engineers commonly encounter, such as employee and associated consulting agreements and contracts involved in construction and government.

Approaching intellectual property from a contract perspective, this reference focuses on the many different types of patents and their role in commerce. It touches on the application of trademarks and recent developments in the use of copyright as a form of contract and explains the process of obtaining patents, including the rationale for investing in them. Ethical standards receive special attention, which includes a review of several prominent professional codes of ethics and conduct for both organizations and individual engineers, particularly officers and higher-level managers.

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