

William D. Bast, PE, SE

Principal & Regional Director – Midwest, SOCOTEC Engineering



William D. Bast brings 43 years of structural engineering experience to the podium, including 20 years serving as a testifying expert witness in high-profile construction and structural disputes. As Principal and Regional Director for the Midwest Region at SOCOTEC Engineering, Bill specializes in forensic engineering, failure analysis, building envelope evaluation, and expert witness testimony.

Over his career, Bill has led the investigations and design of some of Chicago's most notable structural failures and iconic projects—from the adaptive reuse of Wrightwood 659 to structural renovations at Wrigley Field and Willis Tower. His litigation and expert testimony work spans dozens of cases involving building collapses, construction defects, and workplace injuries, giving him a rare vantage point that bridges rigorous engineering analysis with the demands of the courtroom.

A Past President of both the National Council of Structural Engineers Associations (NCSEA) and the Structural Engineers Association of Illinois (SEAOI), Bill is also a Life Member of ASCE and a Certified Structural Peer Reviewer for the City of Chicago. He holds a B.S.C.E. and M.S.C.E. from Lehigh University and is a frequent speaker on forensic engineering and litigation topics nationwide.

In his keynote, **"The Role of an Expert Witness: From Engineering Analysis to the Courtroom,"** Bill will draw on decades of firsthand experience to explore how technical findings are translated into credible, defensible testimony under legal scrutiny. He has both structural engineering design and forensic experience over his 43 years as a practicing structural engineer, has been deposed as a fact witness 5-10 times and as an expert witness 30-40 times, has participated in 5-10 mediations, and been to trial 6 times.

His talk will cover these topics: Conflict of Interest, Letter of Engagement, Documents, Assignment, Report, Deposition, and Trial.