Engineering ethics

Engineering

Engineering Ethics An engineer's job is rather complex as they have to not only learn about the technicalities of their subject but also be aware of the ethical issues that are inextricably intertwined with what they produce. The issue is not that straightforward as it may seem. Let us consider a hypothetical scenario where the manufacturer of a refrigerator discovers that if the humidity of the room where the refrigerator is kept exceeds a certain level, owing to faulty insulation, anybody touching the machine might experience electric shock that would, though not be fatal but surely would generate a stinging sensation that would last for at least ten minutes. It must also be mentioned that under normal conditions humidity would hardly ever reach levels that might be dangerous. Now what would the manufacturer do? Would they recall all those refrigerators that they feel might be faulty or would they simply keep quiet as humidity would hardly ever reach such dangerous levels? This is a question of engineering ethics and it acquires a special dimension as any decision to keep silent might harm customers while there will be considerable economic loss if all faulty units are recalled. Engineering ethics like ethics in general has intimate connection with the ethos and culture of the country to which the manufacturer belongs. A recent case in point is the recall of 6, 46, 000 City and Fit/Jazz cars by Honda Motor Company for replacement of faulty window switches that might overheat when exposed to liquid resulting in a fire. Though the company feels that only 10% of the switches would actually need to be replaced while for the rest a reinforced waterproofing would be enough, it feels it has the ethical responsibility of checking all the cars produced during a particular period to preclude the possibility of any accident (Scott, 2010). Works Cited Scott, G. (2010, January 29). Honda Recall 2010 after Toyota, List of affected cars .

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