

## *State News for NSPE Members*

### **Governor Signs Universal Occupational Bill**

Late last year, we shared that WySPE had provided testimony before the Joint Corporations, Elections & Political Subdivisions Interim Committee regarding proposed Universal Occupational Licensure legislation, including temporary permits for military spouses. Universal Occupational Licensure was signed into law by Governor Mark Gordon on February 9, 2021.

Introduced in January, SF18, Universal Occupational Licensure, affects out-of-state licensees across almost all occupations becoming licensed in Wyoming. Additionally, SF18 creates a three-year “temporary practice permit” for military spouses, “provided the military spouse is making progress toward satisfying the unmet licensure requirements, or until the professional or occupational license for which they have applied has been either granted or denied, whichever first occurs.” The Wyoming Board of Professional Engineers and Professional Land Surveyors has received very few military spouse applications and processes them quickly. The bill was heard and passed by the Senate in late January. Early this month, WySPE President Travis Conklin testified several times before the House Corporations, Elections & Political Subdivisions Committee.

Again, WySPE shared the importance of the Professional Engineers license in protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public. We also expressed concern over three-year temporary permits for Engineers when the State Board can process permanent licenses expeditiously. Shannon Stanfill, Executive Director of the Wyoming Board of Professional Engineers and Professional Land Surveyors, testified that 75% of licensees requesting licensure through reciprocity have a license issued in seven days or less.

WySPE, worked with Representatives Dan Laursen and Evan Simpson, P.E., on a successful amendment that requires “substantial equivalency” in academic requirements. This amendment will facilitate the Wyoming State Board to continue evaluating candidates based on education and experience and act as quickly as possible to help candidates become licensed when reasonable without the need to

issue temporary licenses.

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## **E-Week Program Features PE Who Climbed Everest**

Thursday, February 25th at 7pm, you are invited to attend “Reaching New Heights,” a virtual program presented by Professional Engineer Alan Mallory.

Following two years of planning, Alan embarked on a two month expedition through some of the most exciting yet terrifying conditions imaginable climbing Mount Everest. Alan’s dynamic program is built around this incredible experience. It is an engaging visual and educational journey packed with tools, strategies and innovative ideas that attendees can put into action to make positive changes in their professional and personal lives. Alan puts specific emphasis on maintaining a future mindset, adapting to challenges, mutual goals, overcoming adversity, empowering others, and developing professional relationships.

This live virtual event is presented by NSPE-Colorado, and they are extending their member rate of \$20 to WySPE. [Click here](#) to register and get more information.

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## **Bills Fund Water System Improvements**

The Wyoming House and Senate both approved two water bills that will fund upgrades to aging water infrastructure, [reports WyoFile](#). Among the appropriations: \$4.3 million to study replacement of the Ambursen-style LaPrele Dam and \$7.3 million to rehabilitate the Salt Creek water line to Midwest and Edgerton north of Casper. One provision in the bills would transfer \$7.5 million from a planning to a rehabilitation account to help fund the LaPrele reconstruction. The article says, “The 137-foot high, 325-foot long dam, finished in 1909, may be the poster child for suspect, aging infrastructure.” The 45-mile water line serving Midwest and Edgerton has its own problems. “Until it recently failed, part of the towns’ water system operated on a Windows 95 program and a dial-up modem, consultants wrote. Now operators manipulate valves manually. Water meters are plagued by freezing, poorly insulated pits and neglect.”

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## **UW Program Aims to Improve Construction Training During COVID**

Two educators at the University of Wyoming tell about the civil and architectural engineering department’s effort to improve the state’s workforce training in the construction sector in an [opinion piece for \*Engineering News-Record\*](#). While many companies had to recruit construction talent from other states, the department developed a four-year construction management degree and workforce training

programs, along with a certificate training program. The authors write, “Lectures and class discussions as well as group projects are carried out on Zoom and other online platforms as if meeting in person. This teaching modality allows industry practitioners from across the state to participate in training without leaving their offices or jobsites.”

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## Wyoming Job Opportunities

### Engineering Project Manager

North Fork Engineering

### Senior Civil Engineer/Project Manager

Trihydro Corporation

See other engineering job opportunities on the [NSPE Job Board](#).

Stay up to date on legislative issues through the [NSPE Advocacy Center](#).

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## New Report: Valuing Professional Licensing

For years, professional associations and regulatory boards lacked hard data that demonstrated the value of licensing. In 2020, the Alliance for Responsible Professional Licensing (ARPL) sought to fill that information gap by commissioning Oxford Economics to help better understand the nuanced impacts of licensing on professions and trade and vocational occupations. NSPE is a founding member of ARPL.

The report [Valuing Professional Licensing in the United States](#), includes several key findings:

- Across all professions and occupations, **licensing is associated with a 6.5% average increase in hourly earnings**, even after accounting for the job holder’s educational attainment, gender, and racial demographics.
- Among professionals in technical fields requiring significant education and training, **a license narrows the gender-driven wage gap by about one third and the race-driven wage gap by about half**.
- Those in trade and vocational occupations can expect a **7.1% hourly wage increase** after becoming licensed, while those in a profession requiring advanced education and training can expect a **3.6% wage increase** after becoming licensed.

ARPL will host a **live webinar on February 24, 2021 (3:00 p.m. eastern standard**

time) to review findings and conclusions of the report and share new strategies for lawmaker outreach. [Register now](#).

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## Licensing Reform Must Prioritize Public Safety, Says NSPE President

NSPE President Tricia Hatley has once again made the case for keeping public health, welfare, and safety at the forefront of efforts to reform occupational licensure and increase mobility.

In a recent column directed to state and local government leaders, Hatley warns of the risks of implementing one-size-fits-all universal licensure proposals that do not maintain necessary education and experience standards.

*Most people agree professionals should be allowed to move across state lines and earn a living with the least cost and hassle possible. Likewise, most people want to protect the public's health, safety and welfare by ensuring they are being served by qualified professionals who have the knowledge, skills and experience for the job. This is especially true in highly technical, high-impact professions that the Alliance for Responsible Professional Licensing represents like certified public accountants, architects, engineers, surveyors and landscape architects.*

*Here comes the rub: many of the universal licensing proposals being pitched to state lawmakers, including those put forth by the American Legislative Exchange Council and in Arizona, tend to focus exclusively on the first point—improving mobility—while disregarding the second—ensuring standards necessary to protect the public.*

*In other words, universal licensing mandates don't consider the critical importance of substantially equivalent requirements between states. Instead, they dictate that states must accept a license issued by any state without regard for, understanding of, or any input in, the underlying minimum competency requirements behind the license.*

[Read the full op-ed column.](#)

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## PEs Can Strengthen Autonomous Vehicle Safety

NSPE is calling on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to rely on the expertise of professional engineers and follow recommendations in the Society's [Autonomous](#)

[Vehicle Policy Guide](#) as part of the federal safety frame work for automated driving systems.



In [recent public comments](#) , NSPE President Tricia Hatley informed the agency that NSPE is committed to creating a world where the public can be confident that engineering decisions affecting their lives are made by qualified and ethically accountable professionals. NSPE [Position Statement No. 03-1772](#) states that the testing and deployment of AVs must include a professional engineer. The rationale for the position is rooted in a professional engineer's ethical obligation to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

The Society also recommends that the NHTSA implement a third-party verification process. A third-party verification process should establish that the ADS technology under review meets a minimal level of safety, as determined by an assessment of risk. This can be done through the submittal of risk assessments audited by a professional engineer who is in responsible charge of the third-party verification process.

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