

State News for NSPE Members

WYSPE Update

Earlier this month WySPE provided testimony to the Joint Committee on Corporations, Elections & Political Subdivisions on a proposed Universal Occupational Licensure bill. One of the major aspects of the proposed bill is allowing military spouses licensed in other states temporary licensure in Wyoming lasting up to three years, in almost all occupations and professions.

Erin Gates, P.E., WySPE member and Wyoming's representative to the NSPE House of Delegates, spoke to the committee. She shared WySPE's thoughts on the value of the licensed Professional Engineer to the health and safety of the public and the necessity for PEs understanding Wyoming law. WySPE shared our support for military families but expressed concern over the proposed duration of the temporary licensure. The Wyoming Board of Professional Engineers and Professional Land Surveyors typically completes the process for licensure in Wyoming quickly for those covered by the proposed bill and others.

The Joint Committee on Corporations, Elections & Political Subdivisions approved the proposed bill being introduced during the upcoming legislative session. WySPE will continue to monitor this and other legislation related to the licensure of Professional Engineers.

The WySPE Board of Directors approved updates to the WySPE Bylaws at the November board meeting. The WySPE Bylaws had not been updated for many years, and the boards work brings the bylaws into agreement with the Constitutional amendments that were approved resoundingly by membership earlier this year. The Constitution provides the broad definition and direction of WySPE. The Bylaws provide more of the detail and day to day process information. Per the Constitution, Bylaws are considered and approved by the board.

Many of the changes were simply clean-up of language or updating to current times. For example, the Bylaws were last updated before email. Language in the

bylaws now include wording that allows for electronic notices or votes. Other changes included reflecting the current business model with NSPE, where dues are set and collected nationally in conjunction with the states. Our thanks to everyone who has been a part of the Constitutional amendments and Bylaws update process.

Wind Farm Regs May Include PE Requirement

As wind energy projects gain traction, commissioners in Albany County are considering updating commercial wind energy siting regulations, [reports the Laramie Boomerang](#). Among the supported rules is one that would require developers to use a Wyoming PE or architect to routinely inspect projects for compliance. Last winter, a Texas company proposed a 504-megawatt wind farm south of Laramie. The farm could include 85-150 turbines on 26,000 acres of state and private land. A draft environmental impact statement is expected by the end of the year.

A Shot at Highway Engineers

In a guest opinion column in the [Jackson Hole News and Guide](#), a Teton County commissioner takes aim at highway engineers for allowing high speeds and unsafe conditions on Hwy 390. The author opines that “we live in a dictatorship of highway engineers.” He adds:

“Here’s the challenge: WYDOT controls Highway 390. Its highway engineers are dedicated public servants. I am especially grateful to the local WYDOT folks who plow snow and maintain our highways. The issue is that speed limits are determined by an agency dominated by a single professional caste: highway engineers. These speed limits do not adequately account for competing values. Their priorities are not the priorities of folks who live along the road and certainly not the priorities of the moose and other critters that inhabit the corridor. The highway engineering profession creates conditions in which motor vehicles move fast and efficiently, while discounting competing values. Period.”

In an earlier [article](#) in the *Rawlins Times* about the issue on 390, a WYDOT district maintenance engineer said, “The multiple requests received to reduce the speed limit are just not supported by engineering data.” Some people, including the author of *News and Guide* opinion piece, argue that the highway should be the responsibility of the county, not the state, but others are concerned about the additional tax burden on residents.

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

PEs, Technicians, and Teamwork

Construction projects come with numerous roles and responsibilities that must be carried out with skill and efficiency to achieve success. For professional engineers, perhaps the most critical relationship is with the project's engineering technicians.

In a recent [NSPE webinar](#) on PEs, technicians, and the engineering team, Shannon Looney, P.E., F.NSPE, called the contributions of skilled technicians “invaluable.” As the senior project manager for the Glenn E. Mitchell and Company Inc. in Knoxville, Tennessee, Looney specializes in concrete construction. He relies heavily on the data collected by technicians—“the technicians with their hands on the ground that work directly with the labor force and is able to tell us the data we need...to make real-time decisions on important aspects of production.”

The webinar covers many aspects of the PE-technician dynamic and the factors that make a strong team. In addition to Looney, the webinar panel included Kent Dvorak, P.E., of Terracon's Salt Lake City office; John Quidley, SET, president and senior quality consultant with Caliber Consulting Services LLC; and Kenny Johnson Jr., P.G., with expertise in the geotechnical and materials testing industry.

The webinar, “Put Me in, Coach! The Engineering Team from Concept to Completion,” can be [accessed online for free](#).

Georgia Adopts Structural PE Requirement

Beginning January 1, a professional engineer who designs, signs, and seals plans for “designated structures” in Georgia must be licensed as a structural engineer. Legislation signed into law in August, creates a professional structural engineer licensing process, which includes a requirement that a licensure applicant take the 16-hour PE Structural exam.

The process [establishes several paths](#) for current licensees to be grandfathered into obtaining an SE license, which is supplemental to the PE license. An individual licensed in Georgia will have to submit an affidavit form and pay fees to the [State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors](#) from November 1 to December 31, 2020 to participate in this grandfather process.

In June, NSPE and the Georgia Society of Professional Engineers expressed concerns that a SE license requirement would create an additional layer of bureaucracy, requiring an engineer who is qualified to practice in more than one area to obtain multiple licenses.

NSPE believes that fragmenting the professional engineering license into

discipline-specific title or practice acts weakens rather than strengthens the integrity of the license. The Society advocates for an alternative structural engineering certification that could be obtained after earning a PE license to offer more flexibility and without drawing a hard line between structural and other engineering disciplines.

Officer Nominations Open

Nominations are now open for the positions of NSPE 2021–22 vice president and 2021–23 treasurer. The individual nominated for vice president will advance to president-elect in 2022–23 and president in 2023–24. The deadline for submitting nomination packages for either position is **January 11, 2021**.

Please share this information with those you believe should be considered for the next leaders in our Society. Additional details can be found in the [Leadership Toolbox](#). If you have any questions, email the NSPE Executive Office at executive@nspe.org.

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