Save the Date: Annual Continuing Education Conference

The Utah Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE-UT) will host the Annual Continuing Education Conference on Saturday, May 11, at the University of Utah Warnock Engineering Building. The full-day event is free to all licensed PEs.

The conference, cosponsored by University of Utah Engineering Alumni Association and the Utah Department of Occupational and Professional Licensing, will be a great opportunity to learn and earn continuing education hours toward license renewal. A virtual broadcast will be offered again this year for those not able to attend in-person. Registration information and details will be available in the March newsletter.

NCEES Seeks Structural Engineering Expertise

NCEES is in the process of assembling panels of licensed structural engineers and licensed professional engineers to participate in a series of two-day meetings to determine the cut score, or establish the pass point, for the 2024 Principles and Practice of Structural Engineering exam. This process requires a cross-section of engineers from various employment positions and technical specialties. NCEES asks that you consider volunteering to assist with this important work. Access more information here.

What Does 'Energy Independence' Really Mean for Utah?

Republican leadership at the state Legislature wants Utah to be self-sustaining when it comes to energy production, kuer.org reports. Before the 2024 General Session even started, Speaker of the House Mike Schultz pledged to not let Utah become a place where people "have to turn your thermostat to 80 degrees during the summer because there's not enough power."
"I don't want to rely on other parts of the world or other states to provide the energy for our citizens," he said. "We need to be self-sustaining, especially in the world that we're living in."

Blackouts and electrical grid issues in states like California and Texas are reasons why Schultz and Senate President Stuart Adams say it's in Utah's best interest to become energy independent.

"Let me be clear," Adams told his Senate colleagues on the opening day of the 2024 General Session, "we will not pay for the mistakes of other states and we will not stand by and pay the price or suffer the consequences of their poor policy decisions."

But what that means in practice is another question. "Energy independence means a lot of different things to a lot of different people," said University of Wyoming economics professor Rob Godby. "When you start talking about states being energy independent, of course it's possible. But the question is, at what cost?"

The issue, said Godby, is how the energy market is set up. Free trade allows wind power generated in Oregon or Washington to be transmitted to Utah. The same goes for Utah power, it often goes to out of state consumers if the price is right. Put simply, the market decides the flow of energy, not lawmakers.

Unwinding that complex market will be the challenge, especially for Utah's largest utility company, Rocky Mountain Power, and its parent company, Oregon-based PacifiCorp. Read more.

---

**University Cybersecurity Program in the Works**

Utah State University will be the first school in Utah to offer a four-year cybersecurity engineering degree, according to Jacob Gunther, the head of the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department.

The goal is for the program to begin this fall. The degree is awaiting final approval by USU, but the Utah System of Higher Education, or USHE, supports it, The Utah Statesman reports. The College of Engineering is in the process of hiring two professors with expertise in the cybersecurity field, Gunther said. "We've had a desire to have a cybersecurity program here in the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department for a long time," Gunther said.

Program development has been in the works for years, but only came about after the Utah Legislature allocated funds towards computer science in 2023. That is when the College of Engineering took a chance and submitted their proposed degree to the state.
"An area of computer science is cybersecurity," Gunther said. "We applied to that and were rewarded."

Cybersecurity engineering is a new and somewhat uncommon major — so far, there are only three accredited programs across the country.

Jacob Adams, a computer engineering major, said it seems like security is something missing from the current curriculum. "We don't really talk about security in any of our required classes," he wrote in a text message. "I'm sure it will be a great addition to USU."

According to Indeed, cybersecurity engineers design, develop and implement highly secure network solutions that prevent cyberattacks and hacking threats. Cybersecurity professionals are invaluable to businesses as data is increasingly vulnerable to expensive attacks. The International Business Machines Corporation found in a study of 500 organizations that data breaches cost $4.24 million per incident on average. Read more.

*Stay up to date on legislative issues through the [NSPE Advocacy Center](https://www.nspe.org/advocacy).*

---

**NCEES Seeks PE Expertise to Update Exams**

NCEES is currently seeking licensed professional engineers to participate in a professional activities and knowledge study, or PAKS, to update specifications for the PE Architectural Engineering Exam and the PE Environmental Exam.

**Architectural Engineering**

NCEES requires a cross section of PEs practicing architectural engineering (including those working in industry, consulting, the public sector, and academia) to complete an online survey about the tasks and knowledge required of a licensed architectural engineer with four to six years of experience to practice in a manner that safeguards the public. Access the survey [here](https://www.nspe.org) and participate by April 24.

**Environmental Engineering**

NCEES requires a cross section of PEs practicing environmental engineering (including those working in industry, consulting, the public sector, and academia) to complete an online survey about the tasks and knowledge required of a licensed environmental engineer with four to six years of experience to practice in a manner that safeguards the public. Access the survey [here](https://www.nspe.org) and participate by May 5.

---

**The 2024 Scholarship Season Opens**

The NSPE Education Foundation is now accepting applications for the 2024
scholarship season through an online submission platform. The application deadline is April 1.

**High School**
The Maureen L. and Howard N. Blitman, P.E., Scholarship to Promote Diversity in Engineering is awarded annually to a high school senior from an ethnic minority who has been accepted into an ABET-accredited engineering program at a four-year college or university. The award is for $5,000.

**Undergraduate**
The Steinman Scholarship is awarded annually to undergraduates entering or continuing their junior year in a four-year ABET-accredited engineering program. The award is for $5,000.

The William R. Kimel, P.E., Engineering Scholarship is awarded to an undergraduate student who is a resident of either Kansas or Missouri, enrolled as a junior in an ABET-accredited engineering program in a college or university in either Kansas or Missouri. The award is for $2,500.

**Graduate**
The George B. Hightower, P.E. Fellowship is awarded annually to a current engineering undergraduate or graduate student who is enrolled in, or graduated from, an ABET-accredited engineering program. The award is for $3,000.

---

**PE Institute – 15 Free Webinar Package**

NSPE has moved 15 on-demand webinars out from behind the paywall for viewing by members from the comfort of home or the office. Members can [add the webinar package to their account now](https://www.nspe.org). Once added, the webinars can be viewed through January 15, 2025.

Since 2022, NSPE has offered all PE Institute webinars free of charge to members. Past webinars are also available for viewing in the On-Demand Webinars section of the PE Institute website.