

State News for NSPE Members

Vermont Offers EV Incentives to Flood Victims

Vermonters whose cars or trucks were damaged in the recent flooding could be eligible for incentives to upgrade to an electric vehicle under a new state program, [The Center Square reports](#).

The state Agency for Transportation has expanded a package of incentives that could provide up to \$11,000 off the sticker price for a new electric vehicle, including those impacted by the devastating floods.

Governor Phil Scott said the expanded programs will provide more financial support to households affected by this summer's flood events and expedite the transition to plug-in electric vehicles. "As we continue responding to this summer's weather events, we remain focused on transitioning to an electric future, including in the transportation sector," Scott said in a statement. "My team has been focused on making EVs a priority for years, and we will continue to take the lead on these efforts."

Under the Replace Your Ride program, the state offers \$5,000 for those who trade their gas or diesel vehicle for a cleaner alternative. The state has expanded eligibility to include flood-damaged vehicles. Those who purchase a new plug-in vehicle could be eligible for another \$1,000 in incentives. [Read more](#).

South Burlington Explores the Feasibility of Electric School Buses

South Burlington School District in Vermont has taken a step towards clean energy by introducing electric school buses into their fleet, [EnergyPortal.eu reports](#).

A pilot project conducted by Vermont Energy Investment Corporation (VEIC) monitored eight electric school and transit buses in Vermont for a year. The study aimed to determine the feasibility of introducing electric buses into the state's transportation systems. The pilot program report concluded that operating electric

buses in cold weather and varied terrain is feasible.

The report also highlighted the benefits of electric buses, including fuel savings, reduced maintenance costs, and a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. On average, electricity costs saved 26 cents per mile compared to diesel fuel costs. Maintenance costs were also lower, with one electric bus estimated to have saved \$5,500 in maintenance costs over a diesel model.

However, the report also highlighted some challenges that electric buses face. One of the main concerns is battery efficiency in cold weather. While the buses were able to complete their daily routes, the battery range was affected by the cold temperatures. The report recommended careful consideration of charger selection, placement, operation, and maintenance to ensure efficient charging. [Read more.](#)

Amid Soaring Construction Costs, Developers Consider Building Modular Homes

[According to a report from Seven Days VT](#), construction prices have spiked about 33 percent in Vermont since last year, driving up the price of new homes and remodeling projects — and squelching the development of middle-income housing.

The squeeze has developers looking at an alternative: importing modular housing units from out-of-state factories. Thom Lauzon, a real estate developer in Barre who owns dozens of properties, said he's talking to a modular company in Québec about building an 80-unit apartment building. The move would save 5 to 10 percent in construction costs, he said, and quicken the building process.

Some Vermont developers note modular building gets around the labor shortage, too. Modular units are built in factories, often in states with lower salaries than in Vermont, and shipped in pieces to the site to be assembled. The Vermont Housing & Conservation Board, a state affordable housing developer, has purchased some modular units as part of its wide-reaching real estate portfolio, which includes hundreds of units of multifamily housing and some single-family homes. [Read more.](#)

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

Workability Webinars Series to Focus on Emerging Tech

NSPE offers a live webinar series free to members—“WORKability Wednesdays”—to support members with their professional development goals. The first webinar of this



season took place on September 13 - [How New PFAS Regulations Will Impact Water and Wastewater Utilities](#) . A webinar on [What Utilities Want Fleets to Know About Moving to Electric Vehicles](#) will take place on September 27.

NSPE members get free access to the webinars, but must register to attend. Visit the [PE Institute](#) to review the full series line-up and to mark your calendar for these live, online events.

Registration Open: 2023 NSPE Women's Leadership Virtual Fall Symposium

Join us for these live, one-time events to hear from experts in the field and join your colleagues in important discussions organized by NSPE's Women Leadership Program Task Force: [The Cost of Leadership](#); [Leading Yourself: Learning to Increase Your Emotional Intelligence](#); and [Networking Strategies: An Unconventional Approach to Connecting with Others](#) . The webinars will take place on October 12, October 19, and October 26 at 1:00 p.m. (ET). This exclusive package is free and includes all three live, one-time sessions. The sessions will not be recorded and PDH credits will not be issued for them.

[Register now.](#)

#NSPECon23 Revisited

NSPECon23 provided an opportunity to learn and build community in the heart of Louisville, Kentucky. Find photos from the All Things Louisville reception, the first-time attendee mixer, PE Day celebrations, recognition and installation ceremonies, and more on [NSPE's Flickr account](#) . Relive the fun and excitement with all your PE peers that gathered to celebrate the engineering profession.



Save the Date: NSPECon24—Raleigh, North Carolina—August 7–9



A False Solution for Our Workforce Challenges

The Alliance for Responsible Professional Licensing (ARPL) recently posted an opinion column that highlights the risks of weakening professional licensing

requirements to address workforce challenges. NSPE is a member of ARPL.

Workforce shortages, talent pipelines at a trickle and expensive labor are all-too-familiar challenges facing businesses and the public sector. In an attempt to tackle these problems, there is a growing trend of exploring the weakening or elimination of certain key job requirements. These proposals include getting rid of college degree requirements without equivalency alternatives, doing away with requisite testing, and downgrading credentials and licensure for professionals.

To be sure, there are some elements of the occupational licensure process that require continuous improvement and elimination of impediments disparately impacting underrepresented groups. However, in the rush to address workforce challenges, legislators and other policymakers must be cautious not to create new problems that leave employers and the public at risk.

Weakening professional licensing requirements is a false solution to various workforce ills. Minimum qualifications ensured by licensing exist to protect employers and the public they serve. This is particularly important for technical professions with high public impact, such as architecture, certified public accountancy, engineering, landscape architecture and land surveying. Care must be taken to ensure that critical licensing systems for such professions, designed to ensure public and economic protection, are not compromised and swept up in broad-brush calls for occupational licensing reform. [Read more](#) .

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