

State News for NSPE Members

Outgoing President's Message



What a year this has been (and still is...)! As I transfer the reigns to our new NSPE-AZ President, Karl Obergh, P.E., I think about how all of our lives were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and how we have all been coping and have adapted to what has evolved into the “new normal”. The number of virtual meetings, both professionally and socially have kept us bound together to continue moving business, family, and friendships forward. Your national and state engineering societies throughout the country are no different, as we all have been continuing with society business and holding regular virtual meetings and conferences. I want to take this opportunity to thank members of the Board of the Arizona Society of Professional Engineers, for their time, dedication and support as we have continued to gain momentum that was all but lost during the recession just over 10 years ago.

As I write this message, we are still scheduled to attend the ACEC Roads and Streets Conference in Tucson, AZ from September 23-25, 2020. NSPE-AZ is a proud sponsor of this upcoming event, and I hope to see many of you there. Recently, there has been a spike in COVID cases in Arizona, so please keep checking the ACEC website and the NSPE-AZ for details on the event.

I am proud of the progress that our Board has made over the past year, as we have updated our website, launched our social media platforms, and stepped up

our member outreach. I trust that our growth and traction will continue under the leadership and direction of our new President, and I will continue to serve NSPE-AZ as Immediate Past President and support the Board and our members in meeting and exceeding our society's goals. I'd like to make one final plea to each of you: please consider giving back to our profession by volunteering your time and reaching out to our Board, whether it be with ideas for upcoming activities or events or to provide input during our monthly Board meetings—we welcome your input, and you'll make a difference.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve the Arizona Society of Professional Engineers as your President this past year, and I thank you all for your continued support of NSPE, our state society and our profession.

Respectfully,



David A. Janover, P.E., F.NSPE, CFM
NSPE-AZ Immediate Past President

Incoming President's Message



Well, we are now through the first half of 2020...Weird year for sure, but let's look at the light at the end of the tunnel. As you may have noticed from his "Outgoing President's Message," Mr. David Janover has finished his term as President of NSPE-AZ, but he is going to hang out with me for a year to make sure I do a great job. I will admit that there are some very large shoes to fill and I will do the best possible to make him proud. Thank you, David, for your dedication to NSPE and our beautiful state of Arizona.

Our group is small, but fierce. We are slowly building this organization back up in Arizona and really working to bring out the best in our community. Our Board's focus will be on collaborating with ALL engineering disciplines while still focusing on the future of our industry. We will continue our involvement with Math Counts, the Board of Technical Registration, lobbying, and outreach. Please feel free to join us and be involved!

Respectfully,



Karl G. Obergh, P.E. (Civil)
NSPE-AZ President

Implications of a New Law on Board Membership

On May 20, 2020, the Arizona Legislature passed legislation ([S.B. 1274](#)) that changes the composition of the Arizona State Board of Technical Registration Board to replace technical professionals with public members. In the Summer 2020 issue of the AZBTR newsletter, Executive Director Melissa Cornelius, Esq., explains the serious implications of this board composition change.

The legislation replaces two engineer members and one architect member with public members, leaving the board comprised of one professional engineer—to represent the 17 branches of the profession—one architect member, one land surveyor member, one landscape architect member, one geologist member, and six public members. One public member must have either legal, construction, or design product background.

[Read more.](#)

NSPE-AZ Board Meeting Agenda

June 18, 2020

Call to Order

Roll Call

Approval of 5-21-20 Minutes

Full-Service Tier Conference Call Update

(6-10-2020)

NSPE National Report
Western Pacific Regional Update
Committee Assignments and Reports

- Membership
- MATHCOUNTS
- Arizona BTR
- Future Events

Legislative Update
Financial Report
Website/Social Media Update
Next Meeting—TBD
Adjournment

What's the Status of Bridges in Arizona?

A recent American Road & Transportation Builders Association report provides a snapshot of the status of bridges in the US. The association compiled [state profiles and rankings](#) from the Federal Highway Administration's 2019 National Bridge Inventory Data (released in April 2020).

The recent report showed that more than one third (37%) of US bridges—nearly 231,000 spans—need repair work. More than 46,000 bridges are rated in poor condition and classified as “structurally deficient.” A total of 81,000 bridges should be replaced. While the number of structurally deficient bridges declined by 900 compared to 2018, it still would take more than 50 years to repair them all.

The [profile highlights](#) the following about bridges in Arizona

- Of the 8,320 bridges in the state, 137, or 1.6%, are classified as structurally deficient. This means one of the key elements is in poor or worse condition.
 - This is down from 211 bridges classified as structurally deficient in 2015.
 - The deck area of structurally deficient bridges accounts for 1.6% of total deck area on all structures.
 - 15 of the structurally deficient bridges are on the Interstate Highway System.
 - 195 bridges are posted for load, which may restrict the size and weight of vehicles crossing the structure.
 - The state has identified needed repairs on 1,789 bridges at an estimated cost of \$1.5 billion.
 - This compares to 2,541 bridges that needed work in 2015.
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We Want to Hear from You!

Do you know of engineering news in Arizona that would be great for this newsletter? Maybe it's a project you or your firm is working on, or perhaps you read some interesting engineering news in your local newspaper. Or maybe you know of a fellow PE or student who deserves a little recognition. If so, we want to hear from you. Email your ideas to pemagazine@nspe.org.

NSPE Urges Veto of Structural Engineering Bill

In a letter to Georgia Governor Brian Kemp, NSPE encouraged the veto of a bill to establish a separate licensing system for structural engineers.

President-Elect Tricia Hatley, P.E., F.NSPE, wrote that creating a new licensing system for structural engineering does not improve the public health, safety, or welfare. "Instead, it muddies the water, creating confusion and requiring regulatory authorities to make arbitrary distinctions to define structural engineering," she added. "Rather than reducing regulatory burdens, the change would add a new layer, requiring one engineer to obtain multiple licenses in order to do work that, previously, required only one."

Instead of creating a separate licensing system, NSPE recommends a certification process that occurs after the professional engineering license has already been obtained. "This system would allow for the SE designation, if required or requested by potential employers or RFPs, without drawing the same, hard line between structural and other types of engineering," Hatley wrote.

[Read the full letter.](#)

Take Action on Federal Infrastructure Bills

You have an important opportunity to add your voice to the debate around pending infrastructure legislation.

The first two bills are the House and Senate's surface transportation infrastructure reauthorization bills—the INVEST in America Act ([H.R. 2](#)) and the America's Transportation Infrastructure Act of 2019 ([S. 2302](#)). This is an opportunity to communicate to members of Congress the importance and value of having PEs involved in engineering decisions to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

[Take action on surface transportation reauthorization!](#)

The third bill, the SMART Infrastructure Act ([H.R. 4687](#)), would take decision-making authority away from professional engineers and instead give it to state and local authorities, allowing them to select "appropriate" construction materials. The

bill would establish that these entities would have the flexibility to select appropriate construction materials that meet the performance requirements of the contract and enhance the service life, sustainability, and resiliency of the project.

NSPE opposes this bill because its enactment would prevent PEs from making the final decision on the appropriate construction materials for a project. Additionally, it establishes a federal interagency task force charged with deciding whether state and local procurement practices have artificial barriers to competition for new and innovative materials and recommending actions that can be taken to remove barriers. Their decisions could put the public at risk should these new and innovative materials present unforeseen harms to the public.

[Voice your opposition to H.R. 4687!](#)

Celebrate PE Day!

NSPE is celebrating licensed professional engineers with the [fifth annual Professional Engineers Day](#) on Wednesday, **August 5**. Join the Society in raising awareness about what it means to be a PE and showing appreciation for the work they do every day.

In lieu of in-district meetings with legislators, like those conducted last year, NSPE members will be able to participate in a series of panel discussions. The discussions will include members of Congress and/or their staff, who will share information on pending legislation that impacts the engineering profession. NSPE members will have opportunities to ask questions and to take action on the bills that are discussed by the panel.

PE Day falls within the week of the Virtual **PECon** (August 3–7). As a highlight of PE Day, NTSB Chairman Robert Sumwalt III, will discuss [“The Role and Responsibility of Professional Engineers in Ensuring Safety of Our Nation’s Infrastructure.”](#) His presentation will touch on the NTSB’s recommendation for eliminating the PE license exemption for public utility work, and the requirement for a professional engineer’s seal on public utility engineering drawings, stemming from the tragic pipeline explosions and fires in the Merrimack Valley of Massachusetts.

IBM’s Global Chief Technology Officer Ben Amaba, is also featured as a keynote speaker and will cover the [professional engineer’s role](#) in artificial intelligence and technology.



SUMWALT



AMABA

[Register for the Virtual PECon.](#)

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