

## State News for NSPE Members

### Montana Gas Power Plant Can Resume Construction

NorthWestern Energy will resume construction of a natural gas power plant along Montana's Yellowstone River following a two-month delay, a company spokesperson said, after a state judge revived a pollution permit for the project despite lingering concerns over its planet-warming emissions, the [AP News reports](#).

Work on the \$250 million plant near the town of Laurel was largely halted in April when Judge Michael Moses cancelled its permit and said officials had failed to adequately consider the 23 million tons of greenhouse gases it would emit over several decades.

But Moses reversed his earlier order while an appeal from NorthWestern is pending before the Montana Supreme Court. The judge cited a “changing legal landscape” that includes a new state law that eliminated a requirement for state officials to look at climate impacts from emissions. [Read more](#).

---

### Renewable Energy and Health Impacts Highlighted in Climate Trial

Plaintiffs in a first-of-its-kind youth climate lawsuit sought to illustrate both the feasibility of transitioning Montana to fossil fuel-free energy sources and the physical, emotional, and societal dangers of a “business as usual” approach to climate policy in the fifth day of the Held v. Montana bench trial, the [Montana Free Press reports](#).

Friday (June 16) was the plaintiffs' final opportunity to present expert witness testimony before the state will summon its own witnesses to foreground arguments for the defense. Lewis and Clark County District Court Judge Kathy Seeley also heard from two of the youth plaintiffs, Olivia Vesovich and Lander Busse. Like their 14 co-plaintiffs, Vesovich and Busse allege that the state is violating their constitutional right to a “clean and healthful environment” by promoting fossil fuel

energy sources.

Mark Jacobson, director of Stanford University's Atmosphere/Energy Program, drew on his expertise in civil engineering, environmental engineering and atmospheric science to lay out a roadmap that would decarbonize the state's energy grid by 2050 — though the ideal timeline would be closer to 2035, according to his report. The plan calls for building more wind, solar and battery projects and using existing hydropower generation to meet the state's energy needs.

Drawing from an analysis he completed in 2022, Jacobson argued that Montana has more than enough renewable energy — wind in particular — to provide for its energy needs. He said only Alaska and Texas have a stronger wind energy resource than Montana. [Read more.](#)

---

## Summer Camp Gives Indigenous Students Unique STEM Learning Experience

Indigenous high school and middle school students are getting a [unique STEM education](#) at the University of Montana. Professor Aaron Thomas, Director of MT AIMS, gave [MTN News](#) an in-depth tour of the programming by showing various classrooms where lessons were taking place.

"We're trying to create opportunities for our Native students especially those here in Montana," Thomas explained. "They may not get the same opportunities as other students might get especially in larger, more urban communities."

Being on the University of Montana campus, Indigenous students get an insight into college life by staying in the dorms, eating at the dining hall, going to fun evening programs, and doing hands-on studies.

"We're trying to provide them with different ways of looking at STEM, maybe unique ways that they haven't seen before," Thomas stated.

The summer program dives deep into the various topics in science, technology, engineering, and math while also connecting back to traditional Indigenous practices. [Read more.](#)

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

---

## Connect with Your Colleagues at #NSPECon23

# ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE FROM A WHOLE NEW PERSPECTIVE NSPECON<sup>23</sup> REGISTER NOW

AUGUST 2-4 | LOUISVILLE, KY | NSPECON.ORG | #NSPECON23

Register now for NSPECon23 and connect with your colleagues in Louisville, Kentucky, August 2-4. The conference [features multiple education tracks](#) in leadership, trends in the industry, and career development with the opportunity to earn up to 10 PDHs. Also stay tuned for information on engineering-related tours. **Register by June 29 to take advantage of discounted rates.**

[Register Now!](#)

## Keynote Speakers

**Bill Samuels, Jr.**, Chairman Emeritus of Maker's Mark Distillery, will open the NSPECon 23 meeting. Samuels, who helped design both the Gemini and Polaris missiles and became friends with the founding administrator of NASA, will talk about the, "[Trials and Tribulations of a Failed Aerospace Engineer.](#)"



**Megan Bendtzen**, the CEO and founder of TheDoctorofFun.com, will give a keynote presentation on - [Beyond the Blueprint: Mastering the Most Important Project of Your Life](#) . In this clever and entertaining presentation, Bendtzen will completely shift your perspective, debunking the myth of work-life balance and revealing the single biggest lie surrounding the pursuit of happiness.



## Conference Session Highlights

- [Ethical Obligations and Engineering Through a DEI Lens](#)
- [The Engineer's Blueprint: Success Principles for Winning at Work and at Home](#)
- [Lithium: The Race for North American EV Dominance But at What Cost to the](#)

## Industry?

- Finding the Funds for Your Infrastructure Project
- Leaders Leading Leaders
- We Need YOU to Protect the License!
- Meeting the Challenges and Needs of The Engineering Workforce
- Speculative Technology and Exploratory Engineering for Designing the Future

[Access the full conference program.](#)

### Sponsor and Exhibitor Opportunities

NSPECon23 offers sponsorship and exhibitor opportunities to put your company or organization in front of senior executives and other decision-makers from across the industry. Access the [Sponsor and Exhibitor Prospectus](#) for more information.



## New Webinar: Racing Towards Excellence

A new webinar will get you ready for NSPECon23 — [Racing Towards Excellence: Enhancing Customer Experience and Improving Safety at Churchill Downs](#) .

Neil Crawford, P.E., an accomplished engineer and project manager at Qk4 Inc., offers insight into the history of Churchill Downs and the Kentucky Derby and its economic impacts on Kentucky. Learn about recent improvement projects to enhance the customer experience and also projects to improve equine/horseman safety and expand the racing operations.

The webinar is FREE for members and offers 1 PDH. [Register and watch now](#) .

**PE INSTITUTE**  
EDUCATION FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

**Racing Towards Excellence: Enhancing  
Customer Experience and Improving Safety  
at Churchill Downs**

AVAILABLE ON-DEMAND

**PDH.NSPE.ORG**



**NEAL CRAWFORD, P.E.**  
QK4 INC. AND PRESIDENT, NSPE-KY

FREE TO NSPE MEMBERS - Part of the WORKability Wednesdays series

## ARPL Offers New Advocacy Resources

ARPL has released two new advocacy resources. A video, [Universal Licensing: A Closer Look](#), (featuring Rebecca Bowman, Senior Director of Ethics and Professional Practice) and an advocacy document, [The Critical Role of Licensing in Business Success](#), based on recent research. As a sponsoring member of ARPL, NSPE has access to these resources and others on the [ARPL website](#).

You received this e-mail because you are subscribed to *PE Matters* e-newsletter.

To update your e-mail address, visit [www.nspe.org](http://www.nspe.org) and login to manage your account.

If you do not wish to receive any more issues of *PE Matters*, [click here](#) to unsubscribe.

### Share with your network



**National Society of Professional Engineers | 1420 King Street | Alexandria, VA  
22314**