

## State News for NSPE Members

### Get Ready for Engineers Week!



Engineers Week is [a time to celebrate](#) the important work of engineers and engage the next generation of innovators. Even with social distancing, you can make a difference. Here are a few activities that will be of interest to NSPE-MT members.

#### Future of Engineering

Join NSPE leaders Tricia Hatley, P.E., F.NSPE and Rick Guerra, P.E., F.NSPE, as they discuss the future of engineering and how our changing world will impact the profession during a free webinar on **Monday, February 22** (1 p.m.-2p.m. ET/11 a.m.-12 p.m. MT). Webinar participants can earn one professional development hour.

#### 2021 NSPE Federal Engineer of the Year Award Webcast

NSPE celebrates the 2021 federal agency winners, the Top 10 Finalists, and announces the 2021 NSPE Federal Engineer of the Year via pre-recorded webcast on **Wednesday, February 24 at 12 p.m. ET/10 a.m. MT** on the NSPE [website](#) and [YouTube channel](#).

#### NSPE Trivia Hour

Cap off your Engineers Week with some Friday fun. Join your peers for a lively game of trivia on **Friday, February 26 at 1 p.m. ET/11 a.m. MT**. The cost is just \$15 for members or \$25 for non-members. Sign up to show off your trivia knowledge—or just to play a fun game with new friends.

---

**NCEES April 2021 Test Registration**

The National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying has opened registration for the pencil-and-paper April 2021 PE exams until March 4 (3 p.m. ET).

The exam administration will take place over two days—**Thursday, April 22 and Friday, April 23**. Registration for the computer-based FE and PE exams will remain open year-round.

According to NCEES, every effort will be made to accommodate all registered examinees in a manner that protects the health and safety of everyone involved. All sites for the April 2021 exam administration must operate in compliance with capacity and social distancing requirements. In most cases, this will reduce the number of examinees that can be accommodated at an exam site.

[Access information for registering.](#)

---

## **Governor Backs Trades Education Legislation**

Industry stakeholders, business owners, and education leaders recently testified in support of Governor Greg Gianforte's bill to expand trades education in Montana.

The legislation ([H.B. 252](#)) helps address the growing skilled labor shortage in Montana by creating the Montana Trades Education Credit (M-TEC).

The bill, outlined in Governor Gianforte's *Roadmap to the Montana Comeback* budget, provides \$1 million per year in 50% credits to businesses for their employees to learn a trade. The funding level will support as many as 1,000 scholarships annually. Under the program, employers and employees can decide on training that is best for the business and the employee.

[Read more.](#)

---

## **Bozeman, Helena, and Missoula Team Up for Renewable Energy Agreement**

With parallel goals of addressing the climate crisis and reducing carbon emissions, the city and county of Missoula, along with the cities of Bozeman and Helena, have formally adopted a joint agreement to work with NorthWestern Energy in developing a green tariff.

The agreement, now approved by all four governments, authorizes them to hire a national consultant with expertise in designing utility rates and green tariffs, according to a *Missoula Current* report.

The consultant will collaborate with NorthWestern in developing the tariff—a move intended to help Missoula, Bozeman and Helena move closer to their adopted goals of achieving 100% clean electricity by 2030.

[Read more.](#)

---

## MSU Awarded \$3.5 Million for Advanced Battery Research

As batteries become increasingly important in a world filled with portable electronics, Montana State University is poised to push the boundaries of energy storage technology as part of a \$10 million effort involving universities, national labs and industry partners.

MSU was recently awarded more than \$3.5 million from the Army Research Lab to develop a new generation of batteries that can hold more power and charge faster while also being safer and more resilient to extreme environments. The project is being led by the University of Maryland and includes Stony Brook University, the University of Texas at Austin, Argonne and Brookhaven national laboratories and several private companies.

“MSU has some unique capabilities that we’ve developed over the past couple decades of researching fuel cells,” which are similar to batteries in many ways, said MSU Energy Research Institute Director Lee Spangler, who is leading the MSU portion of the project. “It’s exciting to be applying that expertise to batteries, and this funding is really going to accelerate our research in this area.”

[Read more.](#)

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

---

## New Report: Valuing Professional Licensing

For years, professional associations and regulatory boards lacked hard data that demonstrated the value of licensing. In 2020, the Alliance for Responsible Professional Licensing (ARPL) sought to fill that information gap by commissioning Oxford Economics to help better understand the nuanced impacts of licensing on professions and trade and vocational occupations. NSPE is a founding member of ARPL.

The report [Valuing Professional Licensing in the United States](#), includes several key findings:

- Across all professions and occupations, **licensing is associated with a 6.5% average increase in hourly earnings**, even after accounting for the

job holder's educational attainment, gender, and racial demographics.

- Among professionals in technical fields requiring significant education and training, **a license narrows the gender-driven wage gap by about one third and the race-driven wage gap by about half.**
- Those in trade and vocational occupations can expect a **7.1% hourly wage increase** after becoming licensed, while those in a profession requiring advanced education and training can expect a **3.6% wage increase** after becoming licensed.

ARPL will host a **live webinar on February 24, 2021 (3:00 p.m. eastern standard time)** to review findings and conclusions of the report and share new strategies for lawmaker outreach. [Register now](#) .

---

## Licensing Reform Must Prioritize Public Safety, Says NSPE President

NSPE President Tricia Hatley has once again made the case for keeping public health, welfare, and safety at the forefront of efforts to reform occupational licensure and increase mobility.

In a recent column directed to state and local government leaders, Hatley warns of the risks of implementing one-size-fits-all universal licensure proposals that do not maintain necessary education and experience standards.

*Most people agree professionals should be allowed to move across state lines and earn a living with the least cost and hassle possible. Likewise, most people want to protect the public's health, safety and welfare by ensuring they are being served by qualified professionals who have the knowledge, skills and experience for the job. This is especially true in highly technical, high-impact professions that the Alliance for Responsible Professional Licensing represents like certified public accountants, architects, engineers, surveyors and landscape architects.*

*Here comes the rub: many of the universal licensing proposals being pitched to state lawmakers, including those put forth by the American Legislative Exchange Council and in Arizona, tend to focus exclusively on the first point—improving mobility—while disregarding the second—ensuring standards necessary to protect the public.*

*In other words, universal licensing mandates don't consider the critical importance of substantially equivalent requirements between states. Instead, they dictate that states must accept a license issued by any state without regard for, understanding of, or any input in, the underlying minimum competency requirements behind the*

license.

[Read the full op-ed column.](#)

## PEs Can Strengthen Autonomous Vehicle Safety

NSPE is calling on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to rely on the expertise of professional engineers and follow recommendations in the Society's [Autonomous Vehicle Policy Guide](#) as part of the federal safety frame work for automated driving systems.



In [recent public comments](#) , NSPE President Tricia Hatley informed the agency that NSPE is committed to creating a world where the public can be confident that engineering decisions affecting their lives are made by qualified and ethically accountable professionals. NSPE [Position Statement No. 03-1772](#) states that the testing and deployment of AVs must include a professional engineer. The rationale for the position is rooted in a professional engineer's ethical obligation to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

The Society also recommends that the NHTSA implement a third-party verification process. A third-party verification process should establish that the ADS technology under review meets a minimal level of safety, as determined by an assessment of risk. This can be done through the submittal of risk assessments audited by a professional engineer who is in responsible charge of the third-party verification process.

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**