

State News for NSPE Members

Two Montana Towns Face Contaminated Water

The issue of safe drinking water came to the forefront with the Flint water crisis, but the challenge goes far beyond that city. [Lead contamination is a nationwide problem](#). And that's just one of the obstacles to safe drinking water. [A 2017 investigation](#) found that nearly a fifth of the US population was exposed to potentially unsafe water more than once over the previous decade. In addition to lead, causes included bacterial growth, contamination from factory chemicals, and fecal matter and nitrates from farming.

Two Montana towns are now [facing unsafe drinking water](#), with high nitrate levels found in the Worden Ballantine system. Testing showed ground water contaminated with surface water. Boiling water is not a solution, because it could increase the nitrate concentrations. Building a new water treatment facility [could cost an estimated \\$4–5 billion and take up to five years](#).

Tests are ongoing to better understand the problems and whether they can be resolved. In the meantime, [bottled water donations are helping](#) residents left without drinkable water.

State's Students Skeptical on STEM Jobs

Jobs in science, technology, engineering, and math are increasing in Montana, but [the case for them still needs to be made to students](#).

According to the state's Department of Labor and Industry, STEM jobs were projected to grow 9% between 2014 and 2024. However, the percentage of students in the state interested in pursuing those fields is about half the national average.

According to researchers at American College Testing, which administers the ACT college admissions exam, about 48% of overall high school graduates who take the exam are interested in a STEM field. In Montana, that figure is just 23%, with

9% actually pursuing the areas.

[Find resources on encouraging students in engineering.](#)

Women Power Montana Tech

Montana Tech student body president Ashton Cummings and treasurer McKenna Savage are used to being in the minority, pursuing the male-dominated engineering field and attending a university that's 70% male.

But this year they're in the majority—as two members of the [all-female student government](#).

As of early September, when there were still a few last slots to fill, all of the student government executives and student senators at the school were female.

Regardless of who represents the freshman class, graduate school, and other at-large slots, the executive team will remain all female in 2019–2020.


Cummings and Savage want to encourage other women in STEM. And [they want to demonstrate, at the male-dominated school, how women can lead](#).

The leadership team's goals include improving communication between faculty and students. But they're already making their voices heard. As [one news article notes](#), "The three women agree they were elected to make a difference and show the campus that women can do anything."

Advocacy Campaign a Success—But More Action Needed





 **Trish Hatley** @triciahatley - Aug 7. Met with Senator Inhofe's field rep @BrysonPanas this morning in our @FreeseNichols office to talk about the need to reduce licensure exemptions and how PE's help protect the public health, safety and welfare. [#LicensedPEday](#) [#PEDayAdvocate](#)

More than 100 NSPE members either met with or called their legislators and staffers on August 7 as part of the Society's Professional Engineers Day advocacy campaign. It was the largest such campaign in remembered NSPE history. PEs joined together to speak up for the importance of licensure and passage of a federal bill that would require PE oversight of utility pipelines, following the 2018 Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, gas line explosion.

NSPE's Manager of Government Relations and Advocacy Stephanie Hamilton called the day "a strong success" as enthusiastic NSPE members worked to build lasting relationships that will help them be seen as experts on licensure and technical matters now and in the future.

However, the week before the campaign, the Senate version of the bill was added as an amendment to a larger pipeline safety bill and watered down to remove the PE requirement. According to Hamilton, the Society was "disappointed" and "dismayed" about this change to the Leonel Rondon Pipeline Safety Act, named after the teenager killed.

It's not too late to make a difference, however. NSPE members are urged to contact their legislators.

Read More

- [PE article on the advocacy campaign](#);
- [Hamilton's column on the changes to the bill and how members can take action](#);
- [Popular Mechanics article highlighting the personal impacts of the deadly explosion](#).

2019 Fall Webinar Series Open for Registration



Register now for the [2019 Fall Webinar Series](#) ! Develop your skills and earn continuing education credits this fall. Stay current on a variety of topics from the comfort of your home or office. Don't miss NSPE Deputy Executive Director and General Counsel Arthur Schwartz's Ethics Forum each month—register for individual webinars or [get a special bundle price](#) until **September 17**.

Sign up now for these webinars:

- [Ethics Forum: Conflicts of Interest - Employers and Clients](#)
September 18
- [Leading Project Teams: Emerging Technologies and Smart Design](#)
September 25
- [Mindfulness in Action](#)
October 2
- [Ethics Forum: Conflicts of Interest - Vendors and Colleagues](#)
October 16
- [Clients are from Venus, Consultants from Mars: A Guide to Effective Management of Consultants](#)

November 6

- [Ethics Forum: Conflicts of Interest - Serving the Public](#)

November 13

And don't forget that, as part of your NSPE membership, you also receive access to [15 free online seminars](#) .

Find Quality Candidates or a Great New Job



NSPE's online event for employers and job seekers will take place again on **October 2** from 11 am – 3 pm Eastern.

Whether you're an engineer just starting out or an experienced professional looking for a new opportunity, you can connect with employers from the comfort of your home, office, smartphone, or tablet. The event is free for job seekers.

Companies in search of top talent will be able to access professionals representing all engineering sectors around the country.

[Employers: Learn more and register.](#)

[Job seekers: Learn more and register.](#)

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